

**An Assessment on Consequences of Family Breakdown on
Children's Well-Being: the case of I Care for the Nation a Local
NGO in Addis Ababa**

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Indira Gandhi National Open University

School of Social Work

By: Tenbit Zeleke

Enrollment: ID1114820

Advisor: Mosisa Kejela (MR)

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled AN ASSESMENT ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY BREAKDOWN ON CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING: THE CASE OF I CARE FOR THE NATION A LOCAL NGO IN ADDIS ABABA submitted by me for the partial fulfillment of the MSW to Indira Gandhi National Open University, (IGNOU) New Delhi is my own original work and has not been submitted earlier, either to IGNOU or to any other institution for the fulfillment of the requirement for any other program of study. I also declare that no chapter of this manuscript in whole or in part is lifted and incorporated in this report from any earlier work done by me or others.

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Name: _____

Address _____

Certificate

This is to certify that Mrs. Tenbit Zeleke student of MSW from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi was working under my supervision and guidance for her project work for the course MSWP-001. Her project work entitled An Assessment on Consequences of Family Breakdown on Children's Well-Being: The case of I Care for the Nation a Local NGO in Addis Ababa which she is submitting her genuine and original work.

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Abstract

The study attempt to investigate the consequence of family breakdown on children's educational, economic, social and psychological wellbeing. In addition the study tries to assess causes of family breakdown and its impact on parent- child relationship.

Data collection primary relays on in depth interview with children under family breakdown and their parents/ guardians who are included under the project of I Care for the Nation. The sample size was determined based on purposive sampling in which their fathers left them away.

Focus group discussions, observations and secondary data review from the agency were made to collect data and strengthen the findings of this paper.

Finally, this paper concludes by trying to point out some recommendations.

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Acronym

CSA- Central Statistics Authority

ICN- I Care for the Nation

IDIs- In Depth Interviews

FGDs- Focus Group Discussions

NGO- Non- Governmental Organization

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Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The history of human being is being structured and shaped by means of production used to sustain life. The nature of means of production dictated the form of social organizations started from hunting and gathering to the era of industrialization. Of all systems and structures, family exists as the core element of societies past and present. Therefore family is the basic structure that serves the main function to meet the needs and necessities of its member and society in general (Christian, 2013).

The family is the most fundamental of society's institutions, for it is within the family setting that character, morality, responsibility, ability, and wisdom are nurtured. Stable families are at the core of a strong society. It is within the family environment that an individual's physical, emotional, and mental development occurs, where individuals learn to love, understand right from wrong, and we acquire fundamental social skills such as sharing, empathizing, self-control and communication. The qualities individuals learn as children enable them to develop and flourish at school, engage positively in work, fulfill our potential and grow into adults who are fully integrated into society. A secure, nurturing, loving, stable family environment is therefore crucial and its absence has a profoundly damaging effect on children, families and wider society (Ann, Chris & Marjorie, 2009).

Demographic and social changes in the last thirty years have brought about a transformation in family formations and structures. Each year, over a million American children suffer the divorce

of their parents. (Douglas, 2005). Family breakdown causes irreparable harm to all involved, but most especially to the children. Though it might be shown to benefit some individuals in some individual cases, over all it causes a temporary decrease in an individual's quality of life and some might never fully recover.

Breakdown of families damages society. It consumes social and human capital. Family breakup has psychological, economic and social impact to those who are involved (Walsh, 1999). It substantially increases cost to individuals with pathways to poverty.

Family breakdown is also very closely associated with poor outcomes for children. Especially on children; it is stressful experience for all where the form of reaction may vary depending on their age of developmental level (Eleoff, 2003). According to Sisay, Children whose parents divorced are being at greater risk for psychological and social adjustment than from intact families (Sisay, 1997). Break down of families diminishes children's future competence in all five of society's major tasks or institutions: family, school, religion, marketplace and government. Children who experience family breakdown are more likely to experience behavioral problems; perform less well in school; need more medical treatment; leave school and home earlier; become sexually active, pregnant or a parent at an early age; and report more depressive symptoms and higher levels of smoking, drinking and other drug use during adolescence and adulthood (Patrick & Aaron, 2012).

Adults, likewise, can suffer greatly. According to Walsh F, the negative impact of divorce, continue to the adult hood where adults from divorced family found to have problems in intimate relationship and work than those adults from non- divorced family (Walsh, 1993).Family

breakdown can lead to worse mental health especially depression and lack of self-esteem, which can then hinder effective parenting and lead to multiple relationship transitions and poverty.

The negative impact of divorce is much higher on women in countries like Ethiopia where they have had lower participation and status in education and employment. Therefore, women affected severely economically, which makes the post break up adjustment difficult (Daniel, 1994).

Family breakdown in Ethiopia has shown a significant jump over the past few years. Forty five percent of first marriages in Ethiopia end in divorce within 30 years, and two-thirds of women who divorce do so within the first 5 years of marriage. (Tilson & Larsen, 2000). A data from Addis Ababa City Administration for the year 2011 also revealed a staggering number of divorce rate, way beyond what the Administration expected to perform, which is 128% of its plan. (Addis Standard, 2012). In Ethiopia, Children are facing many end result of the problem. They are sacred by the divorce of their parents and contrary to societies view, they do not completely recover, ever, even in the best situations. The divorce of their parents is the most traumatic event of their lives and it continues to affect them for life. They also are forced to live with other relatives and go to the street which intern brings different abuses in their life.

In Ethiopia there are a number of humanitarian organizations that are implementing different Community development programs in response to the basic needs of children and women who suffer from lots of abuse. Among them I care for the nation is a local NGO that works on bringing community transformation through empowering families. I Care for the Nation (ICN) focuses on revitalize family institutions to create safe environment for children growth. ICN works with Orphan and Vulnerable children and their mothers who are widows, divorced and

abused. In this research the impact of family breakdown is analyzed under the project of ICN children.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Family breakdown is not a single event, but a process that involves a number of risk and protective factors that interact in complex ways both before and after parental separation or divorce to increase or limit the risk of the adverse outcomes associated with family breakdown. These inter-related factors include parental conflict, the quality of parenting and of parent-child relationships, maternal mental health, financial hardship, and repeated changes in living arrangements, including family structure. Besides the negative impacts, in Ethiopia there is no organization aimed at provision of services for individuals and couples in the process of pre marriage, divorce, and remarriage except few attempts by religious institutions.

Family breakdown hinders society by dissolving families and weakening belief in the family as an essential social unit. To sociologists, the family does more than unite people by marriage and blood or adoption; it provides the educational, financial and emotional support its members need to thrive socially. Without this support, children in family break ups are mentally and physically weakened, becoming less productive social participants. More broadly, family breakdown leads people to question whether having a family is worthwhile. Different researches also show that children of divorced households tend to enter high-risk marriages. Even worse, these children often do not marry and start families of their own, a phenomenon that can disturb social harmony. The purpose of this paper is to undertake study that illuminates various facets of impact upon children with the demise of a marriage.

1.3 Research questions:

1. What is the impact of family breakdown on children's well-being?
2. What are the factors that lead to families break up?
3. Who are the first victims of family breakdown?

1.4 Objectives

General objective

The overall aim of this study is to make assessment on family breakdown and demonstrate its impact on children's well-being.

Specific objectives

- To find out consequences of family breakdown and its effect on children's well-being,
- To asses psychological, social, economic, educational impact of family breakdown on children and their relationship with their parents,
- To show the long lasting impact of family breakdown on children.

1.5 Significance of the Study

There was no review and evaluation report on the impact of family breakdown of ICN project. Therefore, this study will provide insight on the existing program of empowering families. It also will indicate which areas of intervention agencies should focus for children under family breakdown. Furthermore, it will help for a base for similar and extensive studies.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Family breakdown: Families who were legally or traditionally married and lived together at one time but legally or traditionally separated during the time of study.

Divorced mother: Women who were married and had child/children but don't live with her husband at the time of the study.

Child parent relationship: A perception of parents about nature of relation with parents.

Psychological impact: Report of feelings, perception or experience of children that reflect the feeling of sadness or hopelessness, stress, depression and satisfaction with personal life.

Social impact: A perception of children of their social relationship with their peers and friends.

Economic impact: The effect of the family breakdown on children's economic status

Educational impact: The effect of the family breakdown on children's educational performance

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the study

The study will be limited to a local NGO I Care for the Nation. It will be conducted on 30 children under the project. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all children of the city. An extensive study covering a longer period and bigger sample sizes need to be carried out for the results to be generalized.

The other limitation is incomparability of this study with others due to the absence of previously conducted evaluation reports on the impact of family breakdown under the project of ICN.

1.8 Chapterization of the Thesis

This research has five chapters. The first chapter shall include an introduction about family breakdown, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, limitations and some operational definitions. The second chapter shall deal with related review of literatures. The third chapter shall explain study area, research design and methodology of the study. The fourth chapter shall focus on discussion and analysis of the data and last chapter shall give suggestions and conclusions.

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to assess related researches in relation to family breakdown and its impact at different level. Research and literature materials review have significant contribution to build a foundation for this study to identify gaps. The review focuses on the theoretical explanation of family break ups and its impact, then on studies done on impact assessment, finally about the consequence of divorce from other countries experience and few local studies.

2.1 Theoretical background of family breakdown impact on children

There are different explanations about the negative consequence of family breakdown on children and parents. These include the social role theory, the crisis theory and the selection theory. Social role theory tries to explain the social and psychological impact of divorce on parents in relation to role transition of divorced parents. This theory maintains that the role of being divorced is inherently more stressful than that of being married as explained by Ross (1998) at Cited in Johnson, (2002) due to the more difficult life circumstances they experience.

This theory explains the consequence of divorce according to Pearlin, at cited in Johnson (2002) as “the relatively constant and enduring or chronic stresses and strain of certain of central roles”. Life after divorce involves social isolation, lack of social support, economic hardship, and added childcare responsibilities. Post divorce is only compounded by internal stress and outside factors aggravate along with less available social support to cope with.

The second theoretical explanation of divorce effects on divorcees is crisis theory that identifies the causes of divorce impact on women. These associated with the higher stress to role transitions, which seems similar to the social role theory from being married to divorce. However, the crisis theory explains the relationship of role transition and stress associated as temporary and time bound stresses of the disruption process. Thus, the disruption process and result of role transitions temporarily elevates distress (Booth & Amato cited in Johnson, 2002).

The above explained type of disruption process of family has direct impact on children psychological, educational and healthcare as a result of the breakdown socialization and economic burden of the breakdown family to fulfill the needs of the children.

According to the crisis theory marital dissolution as a life crisis can temporarily create changes in the state of mental health. The negative consequence of divorce as one of life's crisis is a life event stressor characterized by Wheaton (1999) at cited in Johnson (2002) as "...discrete, observable event, the course of which involves both a beginning and an end". Therefore, one of the negative consequences of divorce is that the psychological distress has inverse relationship with the time length after divorce.

This type of family disruption has also observable vivid negative impact on the educational and socialization of children which have lifelong impact. This has impact for marginalization and isolation of divorced family children.

The third theory is social selection theory which claims that the higher stress levels to divorce. As Aseltine & Kessler, (1993) at cited in Johnson (2002), in support of this theory there were findings of higher proportion of divorced persons with high psychological distress, mental disorders, less probability to remarry. The higher level of psychological distress in divorced

group is because of the risk of selection of divorce among married persons with preexisting mental health problems.

In any case the experts agree on the effect of divorce on divorcees while they disagree on the length and nature of the impacts. According to Johnson (2002), in his conclusion that the size of divorce effect supporting the social selection theory was found one third and crisis theory also challenged by the continuity of the stress and distress after the marital dissolution.

As Robert (1988) at cited in Bohannan (1971), impacts of divorce which are experienced by divorcees in the continuum after divorce in different degree or level depending on divorcee's individual and societal context. The six situations of divorce according to Bohannan in Robert (1988) are the following:

- 1) “ the emotional divorce, characterized by feeling of hurt, anger, loss of attraction and trust,”
- 2) “ the legal divorce, which creates remarriage ability,”
- 3) “ the economic divorce, which marks reorganization of the financial and property arrangements,”
- 4) “ the co-parental divorce, which involves matters of custody and access and which produces in his view the most enduring pain of divorce; for example in the way parents have to come to terms with the realization both that there can be clean break where there are children, and that, situations moral and physical danger, the relationship between one parent and the child ceased to be any business of the other parent,”

- 5) “ the community divorce, which covers the impact of divorce on the social life of divorcees, for example the way married friends treat divorcees and organizations available to meet the needs of information and friendship of divorced people”
- 6) “ the ‘psychic’ divorce, which describes the means by which individual autonomy is recovered. This is thought to be the most difficult yet the most constructive achievement of all.” (Robert, 1988)

Regardless of couples and individual difference in cultural, economic and other variables, divorce creates change in all aspects of divorcees and their children lives. The emotional separation starts before the declaration or pronouncement of divorce. Feeling of failure, anger, frustration, fear and relief of the discomfort situation can make mixed of feelings in the couples which have direct on children survival and development. After separation, the emotional effect may or may not aggravate with context divorce that can change the way of living. In addition the separation of child from one parent shows the devastating and traumatic effect of divorce on children. Processes of initiation and completion of divorce for divorcees and their children will make changes in their position socially and culturally.

The effect of divorce on children as many researchers agrees is not uniform due to age of developmental stage, nature of temperament, the way their parents handled the process and post divorce changes including the economic and social changes (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). Among much theoretical explanation, the economist, and sociological and developmental psychologist frame of analysis included.

To explain the impact of parental divorce on children, the economist theory focuses on the accumulation of resource and access in the family will change by divorce. According to

Furstenberg & Kiernan (2001) divorce disrupted the transfer or sharing of income between parents, diminishes economies of scale, may reduce investment in the children by nonresidential parents afforded by marriage. Post divorce the role of both parents with children or not changed in which at separate place both parents stretch to meet their responsibility alone. Costs that have been shared and resources that have been accumulated in the family depleted due to divorce.

Although there are adverse effect of persistent conflict in the family the presence of both parents according to sociological and developmental psychologists raises skills, social capital, opportunities and a wider network of support for the children's physical and social well-being and will serve as a spring board to the successes and life achievements (Furstenberg & Kiernan, 2001). After divorce, the social capital and networks will not function as positively as before. This is because divorced parents with children will not be able to raise the social capital after divorce with all many responsibilities in and outside home.

2.2 Family breakdown impact on Children in the World (USA, UK and Asia)

Family breakdown is one of social problem challenging family, which is the fabric of society. Regardless of all efforts made by the community and state to protect marriage and family divorce is unavoidable reality for many families in the world. The increase in the rate of divorce in 1960's and 70's in United States was due to the acceptance of divorce as positive adjustment to the damaging effect of unhealthy family (Olson & Defrain, 2000). However, in USA 1990's the rate decreases at about 50% where people have chance of divorce. The big picture of divorce illustrated as more than 1 million children are affected by divorce each year where the median marriage lengths 7 years, in 1996 the figure for marriage and divorce was 2.3 million and 1.2

million consecutively (Olson & Defrain, 2000). A study in United States on the attitudes that are influencing human decision and choice examined that attitude of women's towards divorce between the year 1974 and 2002 found changes toward acceptance of divorce (Martin and Parashar, 2006).

Christian G. (2013) on a Center for Social Justice report of UK declared that over the past 40 years, there has been an escalation in family breakdown across the UK and as parental relationships lay the foundations for children's social and emotional development, it is extremely concerning that by the time children are 15, almost half will no longer be living with both their mother and father.

There are effects of marriage breakdown on adults. Adults also suffer from the breakup of their families. Patrick & Fagan (2012) on their research identified some of the effects including: Shorter life expectancies i.e. married people have consistently lower death rates; Poorer physical health i.e. divorced and separated people experience acute conditions such as infectious and parasitic diseases, respiratory illnesses, digestive disorders, and severe injuries significantly more frequently than other marital status groups; Poorer psychological health i.e. the divorced suffer from higher levels of stress and exhibit more psychiatric disorders; and Lower economic well-being.

Family breakdown has huge economic consequences. The financial cost of family breakdown to UK society is staggeringly high. The Government is estimated to spend a staggering £46 billion every year responding to family breakdown, and this cost is increasing: since 2009 this figure has increased by 24% (Christian, 2013). Family breakdown is associated with numerous poor outcomes, including mental and physical ill-health, addiction to drugs and alcohol, wordlessness,

educational failure, debt and poverty. The reactive costs of these associated outcomes increase the financial cost of family breakdown.

The greatest victims of family breakdown are children. The fact that there are 2.5 million separated families in UK, with around 300,000 families separating each year, matters because of the extensive evidence showing that the stability of the family environment in which a child grows up contributes significantly to their future life outcomes (Christian, 2013).

The effects of divorce on children have to do with number of conflicts between parents before separation, age of children at that time, whether or not they have brothers, sisters or other relatives, their relation with their parents (Gidden, 2007). He continued by referring to a research conducted in California showing the prevalence of intense emotional disturbance at the time of divorce, children also confused and frightened also tended to blame themselves for the separation and frequently worried deeply about its effect on their future and often expresses sharp feeling of anger. Such children tend to be antagonistic to the society and most likely join deviants.

According to Amato and Keith, (1991) at cited in Ann, Chris & Marjorie (2009), a meta-analysis of 92 studies conducted during the 1980s and of 67 studies conducted during the 1990s compared the well-being of children from divorced and two-parent families and found that children from divorced families had significantly lower scores on a range of outcomes including educational achievement, behavior, psychological adjustment, self-concept, social competence and long-term health.

Ann, Chris & Marjori, (2009) in the review of the research evidence on the impact of family breakdown states that children of separated parents compared with children whose parents remain together are at increased risk of growing up in households with lower incomes and poorer

housing; experiencing behavioral problems; performing less well in school and gaining fewer educational qualifications; needing more medical treatment; becoming sexually active, pregnant or a parent at an early age; and reporting more depressive symptoms and higher levels of smoking, drinking and other drug use during adolescence and adulthood.

Ann, Chris & Marjorie, (2009) also stated that family breakdown has Short-term and long-term effects on children's well-being. The length of time that children have been in a particular family structure is an important factor when comparing children from intact and non-intact families. Studies that compare long-established families with families in the immediate outcome of a transition tend to find poorer family outcomes for children in the 'new' families (Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan 2002 cited in Ann, Chris & Marjorie, 2009). Although problems and difficulties associated with parental separation can decline over time and short-term distress, which is common at the time of separation, tends to fade with time but there is evidence that some effects are persistent and enduring (Pryor and Rodgers, 2001; Amato and Keith 1991 cited in Ann, Chris & Marjorie, 2009).

There is some evidence that adolescents are more negatively affected by parental conflict than younger children but that younger children adjust more easily to subsequent re-partnering by their biological parent. On the other hand, children who experience parental separation at a young age are more likely to be exposed to repeated transitions in family structure. Overall, evidence indicates that younger children are at greater risk of adverse outcomes (Ann, Chris & Marjorie, 2009).

Ann, Chris & Marjorie, (2009) on their conclusion put that compared with children growing up in intact families, outcomes across a range of measures are poorer for children who experience family breakdown, and some of these persist into adulthood. For example, they are less likely to gain educational qualifications, and more likely to leave home and become a parent at a younger age.

Another study in Britain indicates a startling relationship by stating children are; Six times more likely to be abused in blended (divorced and remarried) families; Fourteen times more likely to be abused in single mother/living alone families; Twenty times more likely to be abused in families where the natural parents cohabit; and Thirty-three times more likely to be abused when the mother cohabits with a boyfriend. This result shows the risk of children with a family breakdown.

The dissolution of marriage has been quite uncommon and rare in India for a long time. In case of any crisis or threat to stability of marriage, caste, community, kinsmen, tended to have played a dominant say (Singh, 2002). As Singh (2002) stated in his study, the divorce rate in India is less than one percent here according to the 2001 Census of India.

But now days the traditional joint family system in India has undergone both structural and functional changes that lead divorce rates to increase. The joint family system in India has been disrupted due to several factors (Puja, 2012). Family instabilities, poverty, child labour, child marriage and divorce become main problems of Indian community (Singh, 2002).

According to Singh (2002), due to instabilities of families and poverty, Children are forced to join the labour force. The prevalence of child labour is clearly evident in the form of high

workforce participation rate among children, which is higher than that of any other developing country.

2.3 Family breakdown in Africa

As African blog (2012) states, divorce is not common in Africa. People do not have a clear understanding of what divorce actually is. In Uganda, even when a woman is widowed, it is the male relatives who decide her fate. Rural widows are not even allowed to remarry. It is only the urban elite, women who have jobs and money, who can decide their future, but the rural women are still not empowered. (African blog, 2012)

A study on Nigeria by Gimba (2012), states that divorce has direct relationship with children education. The study also states that divorce of parents reduce the children's ability to focus on their education and develop stress in their psychological wellbeing.

Another study on South Africa by Michale (2003) states 85% of parents does not discuss divorce with their children. A father's absence had led to poorer performance at school. A high proportion of delinquent children come from broken homes. Divorce is thus always accompanied by a period of uncertainty, insecurity and disorientation for all family members. Even in the divorce process there are repeated patterns of separation and re-conciliation which is very hurtful and upsetting for children (Michale, 2003).

2.4 Family breakdown in Ethiopia

In case of Ethiopia, the arguments about the increasing number of divorces are both internal to the family and external. The reasons peculiar to the situation of the country are ethnic politics,

job displacement, economic crisis and changing attitude towards divorce (Daniel, 1994). The agreement of spouses and /or a petition for divorce is the outcome of a malfunction of family for many personal, social and economic reasons. According to Pankhurst(1992) at cited in Tilson and Larsen, (2000), on study divorce in Ethiopia the most common reasons women indicated among the Amhara people in north Shewa province as causes of divorce were childlessness, physical abuse, maltreatment, wasting money, adultery, exerting too much control over personal activities, forcing intercourse, homesickness and a larger difference in age. The same study by Pankhurst (1992) about the cause of divorce from men's point of view, were childlessness, adultery, not keeping their house correctly and wives not obeying them or challenging their authority.

Besides the above causes of divorce in similar study, some social and economical factors considered as contributor for the increasing number of divorces in Ethiopia. The empowered position of women, the decreased social stigma towards divorced women and high remarriage rate of divorced women presented to explain the increasing number of divorce (Tefera, 1994 & CSA, 1993 cited in Tilson and Larsen, 2000). In addition the increasing rate of divorce is analyzed in relation to ethnic i.e. Amhara and Oromo and religious i.e. Orthodox Christian and more common Orthodox Christian than Muslim group (Tilson and Larsen, 2000). Even though both group of religion discourage divorce, the variation of divorce rate between the groups is explained in relation to the extent of roles both religion plays in the lives of believers (Tilson and Larsen, 2000).

Central Statistics Authority, (1993) report explained rate of divorce increased and put early marriage and childlessness as the main causes. Among ever- married and divorced women 34% were younger than 15 years, 41% were 15-17 years and 12% were 18-19years at first marriage,

in general 87% of ever married and divorced women were younger than 20 years at first marriage (Tilson and Larsen, 2000). The national research by Tilson and Larsen, 2006 indicated 75% of women who marry earlier than 11 years of age divorce within 20 years, 60% of women who marry between age 11 and 13 divorces within 20 years. Similarly, childlessness was stated as the main cause of divorce as 95% of women who did not have a child divorced within 20 years. Among women 85% divorced within the first five years where women who did have a child divorced about 23% within 20 years.

Family breakdown would also have an economic impact, when family dissolution occurs, relationship between members of the family change in different aspect including the economic one. Family in the term of economic scale builds capital, skill and investment and is basic economic set, which is the subset of the larger economic set. According to Daniel's 1994, study he found out that the average monthly income of divorced women when compared with during marriage significantly decreased. This directly affects the standard of living and the adjustment after divorce. He indicated that from the study among divorced women only 14% indicated being economically well. The majority have faced housing problems, inability to send their children to school, difficulty of covering medical expense, inability to cover food and clothing (Daniel, 1994).

After divorce women strive for survival of themselves and their children's' by engaging in many activities that raises income. In Ethiopia since their educational level determines their lives after divorce particularly their capacity and opportunity to get engaged in some employment to raise income. Daniel's, (1994) study clearly indicate the likelihood of divorced women to face economic crisis through comparative study of their status before and after divorce. The reason behind is also indicated as the primary source of income of the divorced women during marriage

for about 82% was the salary of ex- husband. The occupation of these women during marriage about 62.44% of them were housewives, and did not engage in work outside home while 15.45% were civil servants and 15% had engaged in activities like spinning, selling charcoal and wood and selling traditional alcohols. After divorce this figure changed where the majority women in the study who were housewives about 62.4% decreased to 27%, while women who were doing some economic activity by selling different items increased from 15% to 41.5%.

The issue of child custody often determines the relationship of children with their parents after divorce. In Ethiopia the practice has been according to Article 681(2) Civil Code is that “unless there is a serious reason for deciding otherwise, the children shall be entrusted to their mother up to the age of five years”. From the study by Fasil 1998, 80% of family arbitrators awarded custody to the mother due to the believe mothers provides of a better care.

In a study assessing parental divorce impact on children in Dessie by Sisay (1997), he showed that adolescents from divorced family had more psychological and social adjustment problems than children from stable families. The impact of divorce is further complicated as indicated in the study that adolescents from stepmother families had psychological adjustment problem grater more often than those from single mother families (Sisay, 1997).

Reviewed researches that are available in relation to this specific study indicated that divorce has negative impact on the lives of divorcees and their children primarily. The impacts of divorce included social, economical and psychological issues and are determined by the individual and environmental context. In the local study done in Addis Ababa found that divorce has more economical impact than social (Daniel, 1994). Another local study in Dessie indicated that

children from divorced family have more social and psychological adjustment problems than children living in stable family (Sisay, 1997).

This research review indicates the extent of the problem of divorce and the intensity of its damaging impacts on family in general and on children particularly even though there is lack of recent studies that show the overall impact on children's well-being. Therefore, this study assesses the impact of family breakdown on children's well-being and suggests possible means reduction of family breakdown for the children' well-being.

Chapter Three

3. Study Design and Research Methodology

Description of the Study Area

The study area is located in the Southern section of Addis Ababa City Administration, Akaki-Kality Sub city, Woreda 6. The population of the sub city is 181,270 (CSA, 2007). The area has lots of industries; it is also densely populated area in which most inhabitants are engaged in unskilled labor in the neighboring industries. In the Woreda there are six NGO's operating on different activities. Of these NGO's the study was conducted in one of the local NGO's called I Care for the Nation (ICN). ICN engage in empowering families to create safe environment for children growth. It also works with Orphan and Vulnerable children and their mothers who are widows, divorced and abused. Currently the project has 250 women and 250 children who face different problems in their lives.

3.1 Study Design

This study was carried out on children under the NGO called "I Care for the Nation". It has been employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study combined various instruments such as detailed one to one interviewing with personal observation and focus group discussion. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected by reviewing related literatures, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Data collected were first recorded, organized and summarized to be analyzed. Table, graph, frequency or percentages were employed to show the results.

3.2 Universe of the Study

The study was conducted on children under a local NGO called “**I Care for the Nation**”. The total numbers of children in the program are 250. Children of family breakdown on the age range 3-14 were the main unit of the analysis for the study. Parents of these children, social workers and NGO staffs working with the children were also the subjects of the study.

3.3 Sampling Methods

The sample size is often restricted by the available fund, time and other related reasons. It is often not feasible to study the entire population because of the following reasons: (Rechard, 2013)

- The physical impossibility of checking all items in the population,
- The cost of studying all items in the population,
- The adequacy of sample results and to conduct the whole population would be time consuming.

Therefore, non-probability sampling method; mainly purposive sampling was used to choose the subjects of the study.

To determine the sample size of the main subjects of the study, the lists all children from the project whose families are broken up were taken as a sample frame. From this sampling frame, that is more than 10% of the population size, a total of 30 children were selected due to the reason that their fathers left them away. Parents/guardians of these 30 children were also participated. From the organization, 3 staffs of I Care for the Nation (2 social workers and 1 Program Manager) further participated as key informants in the study.

3.4 Sources of Data

The source of data for this study comprised both primary and secondary sources for information. Primary data was collected by using various data collection instruments or tools such as in depth interviews, Focused Group Discussions and Observations. To supplement these primary data, with available secondary sources from the organization such as children's profile at the organization, children's letter for their sponsors and their school grade report card were reviewed in the analysis to enrich the study.

3.5 Data collection Procedures and Tools

Different data collection techniques were employed to collect data on the impact of family breakdown on children well-being. Structured and semi-structured interview guidelines were prepared. The instruments prepared in English and then translated to local language (Amharic) to ensure the easily understandable nature of the instrument and to make correction of misleading and unclear questions. Quantitative Data Collection Techniques (IDIs, FGDs and Observations) were applied to collect data from the children, their parents/guardians and key informants.

3.5.1 Interview Schedule

In depth interview was conducted with 30 children, 30 parents/guardians, with 3 key informants from the organization. The main thematic areas during IDIs with children and their parents/guardians include:

- Information on the background of the children and parents/guardians,
- Children social connection,
- Children psychological condition and

- Child-parent relationship.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Guide

Focus Group Discussions were conducted to help the researcher to obtain general picture of the research questions that were not able to get answer during the interviews. FGDs were conducted with parents/guardians. FGDs guide were prepared and used for the purpose of conducting group discussions and to prove the consistency of individual interviews response. During the group discussions, carefully selected questions which may stimulate further discussions were raised and thoroughly handled.

3.5.3 Observation Guide

In order to fill the gaps of information after the interviews and focused group discussions, observations were undertaken. Direct observation was made during the interview on the children situation, their ability to socialize with other children at the organization. Observation of Children's communication with the staffs of the organization was also undertaken to produce contextual descriptions about the study's population situation.

3.5.4 Document analysis

Review of relevant documents such as children's file at the organization and children's letters written to their sponsors were undertaken to gather secondary data. The information gathered using this method helped to supplement data gathered using primary data sources.

3.6 Data Processing and Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative data obtained through data collection were analyzed using appropriate methods for analysis. Qualitative information collected through interviews, FGDs and Observation were recorded on a paper first and then again written manually based on the

frequency of the responses in each question. Secondly, the data were organized and summarized thematically and presented in descriptive manner by using interpretation, conceptual generalization comparison and content analysis method using graph/table form. For quantitative data descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage were employed to know the psychological and social condition of children and also parent-child relationship.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher got official permission from the organization to access the sampled children and their parents/guardians and also to access relevant documents.

The children and their parents/guardians were first requested their willingness for participating in the study and were also informed that they had the right to decline their participation at any time of the session underway. The children, their parents/guardians and also the staffs who voluntarily involved in the study had been informed that the data obtained from the interviews and the focused group discussions would be used only for the academic purpose.

Moreover, the participants of the study were clearly informed that the provided data would be kept confidential and their real names would not appear anywhere in the documentation and even they were not requested to tell their names to the researcher.

Chapter Four

4. Results and Discussion

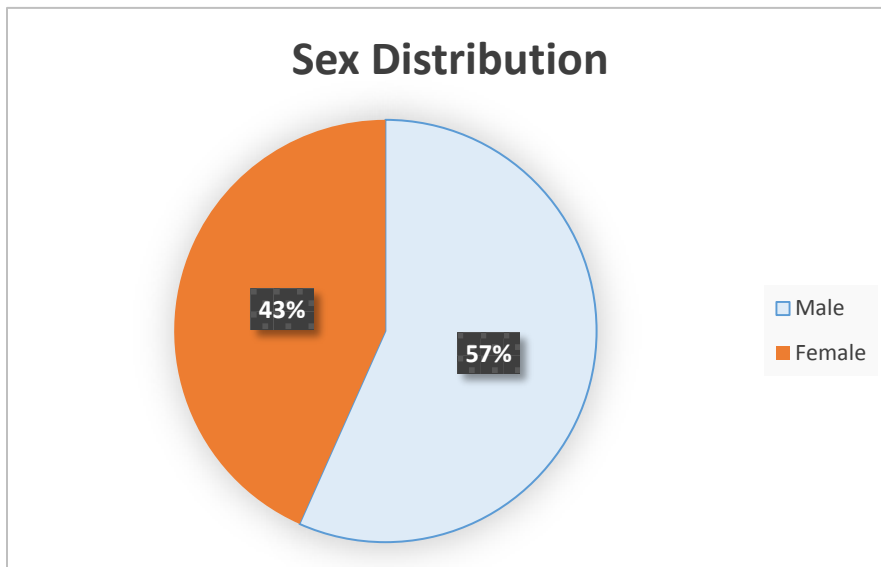
4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents of the Study

As indicated in the methodology section, different data sources were utilized in the study. In this section, the characteristics of respondents are presented:

4.1.1 Sex of Children under Family Breakdown

The first characteristics of children examined were their sex distribution.

Figure 4.1 Sex Distributions of Children under Family Breakdown



Source: Own Survey, 2015

As shown in the above figure, from the total of 30 children, the majority 56.67% were males and 43.33% were females.

4.1.2 Age Range of Children under Family Breakdown

Table 4.1 Age range of Children under Family Breakdown

Age range of Children	Number of Children	Percentage
3-5	5	16.67
6-8	10	33.33
9-11	7	23.33
12-14	8	26.67
Total	30	99.99

Source: Own Survey , 2015

To assess the age range of the children, their age is sub-divided into four groups, i.e 3-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-14. The study of the children whose parents are broke up shows, 5children or 16.67% age ranged from 3 to 5, 10(33.33%) of the participants' aged from 6 to 8, 7(23.33%) participants age ranged from 9 to 11, and 8(26.67%) participants fell under the age range of 12 to 14.

4.1.3 Educational Status of parents/Guardians

Table 4.2 Educational Status of Parents/Guardians

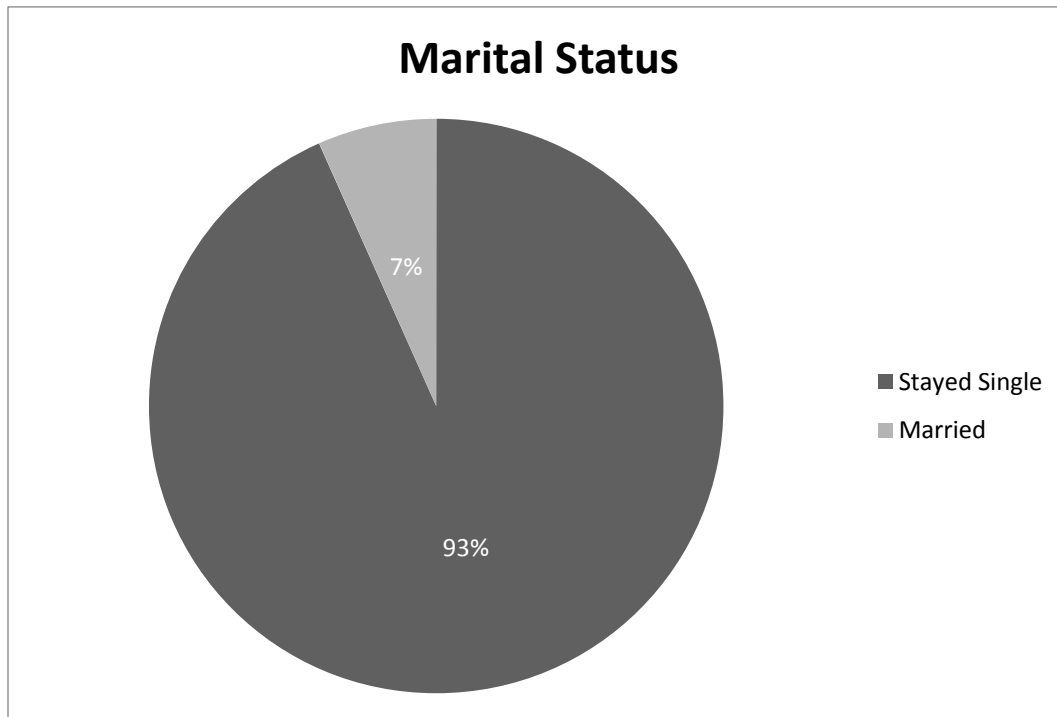
Educational Status of Parents/Guardians	Number of Parents/Guardians	Percentage
Can't read and write	8	26.67
Basic education	14	46.67
1-8 grade	7	23.33
9-12 grade	1	3.33
>Tertiary education	0	-
Total	30	99.99

Source: Own Survey, 2015

Educational level of parents/guardians was also examined. The study shows 26.67% of parents/guardians in the study cannot read and write, 46.67% of parents/guardians simply can read and write but not attend formal school. Parents/guardians of the study who completed primary school are 7 or 23.33%. Only 1 or 3.33% of parents/guardians participated in the study completed secondary education and none of the parents/guardians had attended beyond grade 12.

4.1.4 Marital Status of Parents/Guardians

Figure 4.2 Marital Status of Parents/Guardians



Source: Own Survey, 2015

Regarding the marital status of parents/guardians who participated in the study, as shown in the figure, 93.33% of the parents stayed single after the break-up and 6.67% managed to married again to another person.

4.1.5 Living Arrangements of Children

Children were asked who they do live with after their families break up.

Table 4.3 Living Arrangement of Children

Living Arrangement of Children	No. of Children	Percentage
Children live with their mothers	25	83.33
Children living with their grand parents	3	10
Children living with other relatives	2	6.67
Total	30	99.99

Source: Own survey, 2015

The study revealed that most of i.e 83.33% the children who face parental breakdown ends up living with their mother. Children who live with their grandparents after family breakdown are 3(10%) and 2(6.67%) of the participated children end up living with other relatives.

4.1.6 Causes of Family Break up

As one of the aim of the study was to try to identify what factors lead families to break-up, possible causes for family breakdown are tried to be identified.

Table 4.4 Causes of family breakup

Causes of family break up	No. of Parents	Percentage
----------------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------

Economic problem	13	43.33
Pressure from friends and families	7	23.33
Difference in religion/ethnic background	5	16.67
Unfaithful to once spouse	5	16.67
Total	30	99.99

Source: Own survey, 2015

According to the focused group discussion and also the interview on the causes of break-up, 43.33% replayed the main cause was economic problem. 23.33% of the respondents said the pressure they face from friends and families leads their family to break up. Difference in religion/ethnic background and unfaithful to once spouse was also mentioned as causes by 16.67% of the respondents each.

4.2 Educational impact of family breakdown on children

Parents/guardians of the children were asked whether their children are attending school after the break up or not. The result of the respondents shows all the children are attending school. From the interview with director of the organization, all school fees and schooling materials expenditures are covered by the organization.

Table 4.5 Self Report Academic Performance

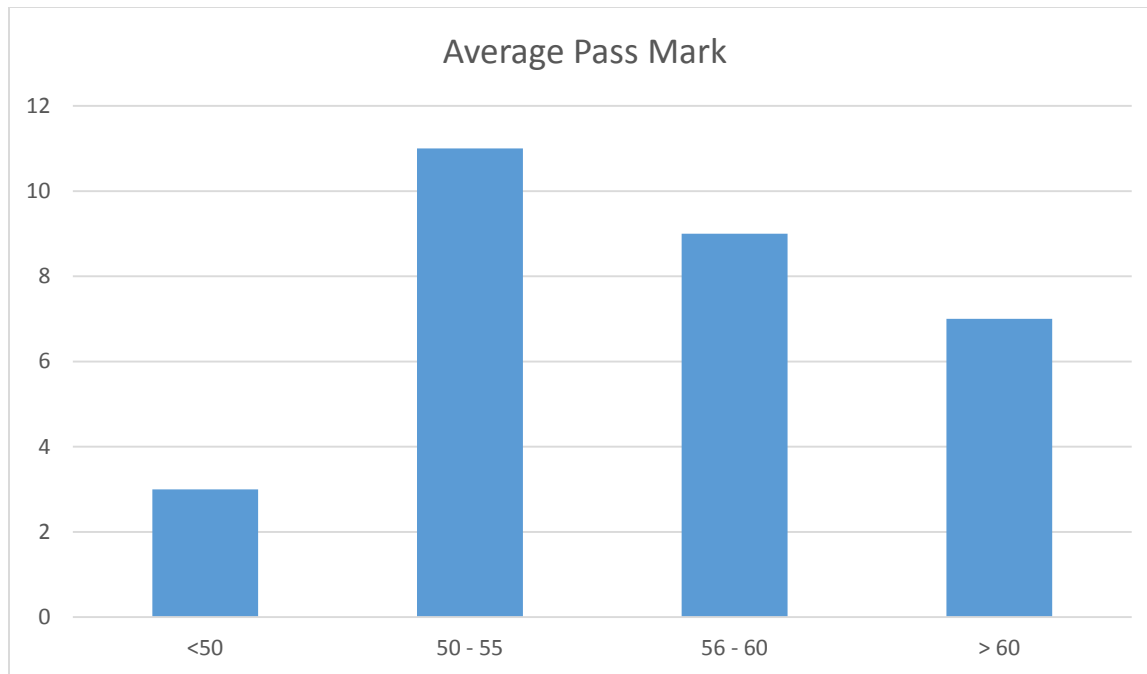
Academic Performance	No. of Children	Percentage
Excellent	1	3.33
Very Good	6	20
Good	13	43.33
Not Good	10	33.33
Total	30	99.99

Source: Own Survey, 2015

Impact of family breakdown on children's education was investigated by taking self report of children on their school result. As shown in the above table, academic performance of the children as reported by themselves, 1(3.33%) excellent, 6(20%) very good, 13(43.33%) Good and 10(33.33%) not good. The review of the study shows, most children whose parents break up perform academically on good and not good sections.

The academic performance of the children under family breakdown was also analyzed by referring secondary data of children's school grade report card average pass mark from the documentation of the Organization.

Figure 4.3 School Grade Report Card Average Pass Mark



Own survey, 2015

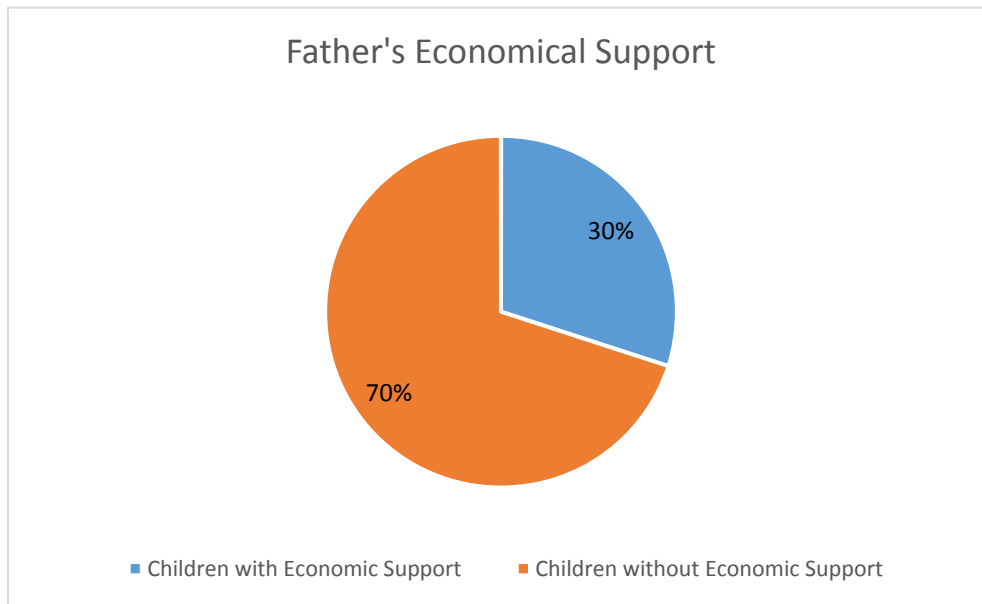
In doing so, their average pass mark is divided to four categories ranging from less than 50, 50-55, 56-60 and greater than 60. As the figure shows significant number of children i.e. 36.67% and 30% had average pass mark for 50-55 and 56-60 respectively.

Generally children's educational performance analysis based on both children's self report on their school result and review of school grade report card shows their poor performance. Therefore, the family breakdown that occurred in their life could be one of the reasons for their low educational status.

4.3 Analysis of Economic Condition

To analyze the economic condition of the family after break up, parents were asked whether the families' average monthly income were reduced or not. According to the respondents, all families' average monthly income was significantly reduced after the break up.

Figure 4.4 Fathers' Economic Support after the Breakup



Source: Own Survey, 2015

The main reason for the decline of family average monthly income was fathers' discontinued economical support to their family. As fathers' were the one who bring the big share of income to family, after the breakup, they left their family away. As the figure explains 21(70%) fathers do not support their children after the breakup and only 9(30%) fathers continue to give support to their family.

The second reason for working mothers for the reduced average monthly income was change of place of living after the breakup. Most mothers change their place of living that forced them to leave their job. Discontinued of financial support from different relatives after break up was also considered as another reason for the decline of average monthly income of broken up families.

Due to the above reasons of decline in family's average monthly income, all respondents had faced economic problem. The consequences of this economic problem on the children are lack

of adequate balanced diet, clothing and shoe. But the family's economic problems get a little relief after the child sign up to the project of ICN. Therefore, the impact of family break down on children's economic situation can be said significant.

4.4 Psychological Measure of Children

4.4.1 Depression and Anxiety

As to the data obtained from the respondents, the emotional well-being of children under family breakdown was characterized to be free from psychological problem. The majority of children are not facing psychological problem such as feelings of hopelessness, unhappiness, fighting with other children in school and out of school, worries and frustration. According to the findings of the study, the reason for the less psychological problem of the children was the support of the agency ICN through rehabilitation and training to overcome the traumatic incident of their family's breakdown. The result of the study also shows less depression and anxiety. But 5(16.67%) reported that they are facing loss of appetite sometimes 7(23.3%) reported that they have problem of falling asleep and 9(30%) have a problem of nightmare.

4.4.2 Self-efficacy and Self Esteem

Almost 100% of the sampled children scored higher for self-efficacy and self-esteem indicating a greater confidence in their ability to finish high school, to complete their high school education and higher education, to get job and avoid violent encounters. Majority of the children have high value and respect for themselves and have higher self-esteem and also do believe that they have some good qualities. The result of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis also shows that majority of the children are happy and are highly motivated and have right attitude to succeed. The respondents have pointed out that they believe that they can be successful in the future, perform equal with their peers and can even think what they want to be in the future.

4.4.3 Self Confidence

From quantitative data analysis result 73.3% of children had high self-confidence score. This shows they believe in their personal worth and likelihood to succeed. They also believe in themselves and their abilities.

According to the key informants, the agency ICN has done a lot of effort through one to one counseling, rehabilitation and training that help the children to develop self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence.

4.4.4 Level of Aspiration

Table 4.6 Aspiration of Children to Get Job after School Completion

Less Expectation of Child to Get Job after Completion of his/her Education	No. of Children	Percentage
Very Agreed	0	0
Agreed	4	13.33
Disagreed	15	50
Very Disagreed	11	36.67

Source: Primary Data, 2015

Children were asked to tell their responses measure their level of aspiration, whether or not they had less expectation to get job after completion of education as indicated in Table 4.4. The result shows the largest proportion (50%) of children answered to have higher level of aspiration. Whereas 13.33% of the children said they have lower level of aspiration to get job after completion of their education. Therefore, children with family breakdown can develop their own vision, future plan and know where their destination will be.

4.5 Child Social Connection

To assess the children's social connection they were asked who they go to in times of need and the result shows that 26(86.67%) of the children reported that they had someone in their life and 4(13.33%) of children had no one to go when they are in problem.

Children were also asked how often they play with their peers at school or out of school. The result shows 25(83.3%) of children play at school or out of school daily, and only 5(16.67%) play once in a week. Therefore, this shows the family breakdown effect did not affect the children's social connection with their peers.

Only 6(20%) of children participate in school and out of school clubs. The majority 24(80%) do not participate in clubs. 23(76.67%) of children responded that they are not comfortable with people whom they don't know well. Similarly 20 (66.67%) of children find it hard to talk to strangers. Therefore, the family breakdown situation in children's life reduced their ability to participate in clubs and also impacted their communication with strangers.

Parents/ guardians of children were asked how often their child creates conflict in his/her environment. The result shows 9(30%) of children create conflict sometimes. The rest 70% never create conflict with family members and neighbors.

Children who responded that they are shy with the opposite sex are 14(46.67%). Among these 14 children 13 (92.85%) of them are female respondents. Hence, the effect of the family breakdown in children communication with the opposite sex had more negative impact on female children than male children.

4.6 Child-parent Relationship

From the focused group discussions and the interview analysis, most parents/guardians do not have enough time with their children. 20(66.67%) parents do not have enough time with their children. Most these parents/guardians claimed they are very busy trying to fulfill the needs of family members. Therefore, family breakdown distress the relationship between children and their parents.

4.7 The Organization's response for children's Psycho-social outcome

The NGO – I care for the Nation (ICN) was selected purposively as its main program focuses on empowering families. ICN works with divorced, widowed and abused women and their children. The key informants that are staffs of the agency expressed that the Organization provides different services to children and their mothers like educational related support, medication service and psycho-social support. The social workers revealed that there is significant change on the children's psychological and social well-being after they joined the program.

According to the key-informants, the children and their parents were given different trainings and counseling that help them to overcome their situation, develop life skills and subdue the traumatic incident. Therefore, the organization's support had alleviated the sampled children as they are getting different assistance.

Chapter Five

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

In this chapter I will try to make some conclusions from my findings. Based on the study conducted, I have also included some suggestions in the effort of preventing and reducing family breakdown which helps children who are the most exposed victims of such breakdowns.

5.1 Conclusions

The study tries to assess the consequence of family breakdown on children's educational, social, psychological and economical well-being. In addition the study tries to investigate the impact of family breakdown on child-parent relationship.

The study was conducted on children under a local NGO called I Care for the Nation. The subjects of the study are children under family breakdown and their parents/guardians. Their age range is between 3-14 years old. The sample selection was purposive sampling based on children whose fathers left them away. The study tried to assess using structured and semi-structured instruments for interview, focused group discussions, observations and documentation analysis.

The study showed that the consequence of family breakdown on children's psychological and social connection was free from problems. According to the findings of the study, the agency's continued effort through one to one counseling, rehabilitation and training help the children to develop self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence and avoid depression and anxiety.

The study also shows that family breakdown reduce the children's ability to participate in school clubs and also impacted their communication with strangers.

In assessing the impact of family breakdown on child-parent relationship, the finding of the study shows the break-up of families significantly affects the parent-child relationship, because parents become very busy in trying to fulfill the basic needs of the family.

To assess the educational impact of family breakdown, the study analyzed both children's self-report of their school results and also children's school grade report card. The result revealed that family breakdown has significantly affected the children's school performance.

The study also showed that parents/guardians have lower educational attainment, and also, most of them stayed single after the break-up and also most children live with their mothers after breakup.

The study also tried to identify factors that lead families to breakup are economic problem, pressure from friends and families, difference in religion and ethnic background and unfaithfulness to one's spouse are identified as the causes of family breakdown.

In assessing the economic impact of family breakdown, difference of average monthly income before and after breakdown was analyzed. The result shows that there is significant reduced average monthly income before and after breakup. The reason for this was said to be discontinued economical support from fathers', mothers' change of place of living, and discontinued financial support from different relatives. Due to these reasons children lack adequate balanced diet, clothing and shoe.

5.2 Suggestions

To prevent and reduce family breakdown and to help children as the first victims of the breakdown after breakup, the attention and efforts of the state, religious institutions and helping professions is crucial.

The role of social workers in crisis intervention, counseling, reconciliation, mediation, awareness raising and advocacy are needed in many ways to reduce family breakdown and its negative consequence on the lives of the children.

The prevention work should start before the formation of family. The promotion of family education and information will enable the community to correct maladjustments and enhance healthy function of individuals, family and the society. Pre-marital counseling services are also important for the prevention work. In addition, promoting value systems of the legal, traditional, cultural and religious will strengthen family roles.

Rehabilitative process should also be given attention in post breakup to alleviate the psycho-social and educational impact of family breakdown on children's life. The rehabilitative work by social workers includes counseling service to children under family breakdown and mediation among parents.

To improve the educational, social and psychological well-being of children, social workers also need to know community resources so that they could connect them with helping organizations like "I Care for the Nation".

Finally further in depth studies need to be undertaken to identify detail impacts of family breakdown in the lives of children and their parents.

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Interview Schedule for Children under Family Breakdown

I. Background Information		
No.	Item	Response
1	Age	A. 3-5 B. 6-8 C. 9-11 D. 12-14
2	Sex	
3	Educational level	
4	How old were you at the time of your parents break up?	
5	Who do you live with?	
6	How is your school result?	A. Good B. Very Good C. Excellent D. Not Good
II. Child Social Relationship		
1	Do you participate in school and out of school clubs?	A. Yes B. No
2	How often do you play with your peers at school or in the village?	A. Daily B. Once in a week C. Once in a month
3	Do you have someone you can depend on for advice, guidance, to go with you for social Service?	A. Yes B. No
4	I feel tense when I am with people I don't know well.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
5	I find it hard to talk to strangers.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly

		Disagree
6	I am shy with members of the opposite sex.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
9	I prefer most of the time to be alone.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
10	I have no body to talk to.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
III. Child Psychological Condition		
A. Depression and Anxiety		
1	In the last two weeks have you been very sad?	A. Yes B. No
2	Have you had more trouble sleeping than usual?	A.Never B. sometimes C. Often D. Daily
3	Do you feel life is hopeless and there is nothing good for you in the future?	A.Never B. sometimes C. Often D. Daily
4	In the last six months, have you felt emotionally troubled that you felt you needed counselor?	A. Yes B. No
5	In the last six months have you felt like not eating or lose of appetite?	A.Never B. sometimes C. Often D. Daily
B. Self Confidence		
1	If a person is not successful in life, it is	A.Strongly agree B. Agree

	his/her own fault.	C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
2	Even with a good education, I will have a hard time getting the right kind of job.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
C. Self esteem		
1	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
2	I am able to do things as well as most of other children.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
3	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least equal with others.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
D. Hope		
1	All I can see ahead of me are bad things not good things.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
2	I can imagine what my life will be like when I am grown up.	A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

E. Self efficacy		
1	I will graduate from high school.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
2	I will graduate from collage/university.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
3	I am confident in my ability to stay out of fight.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree
4	I am able to do things as well as most of other children.	A.Strongly agree B. Agree C. Undecided D. Disagree E. Strongly Disagree

Interview Schedule for Parents of Children with Family Breakdown

Background Information		
No.	Item	Response
1	Age	
2	Sex	
3	Family Size	
4	Educational status	A. Can't read and write B. Basic education C. Primary education D. Secondary education E. Tertiary education
6	Did you expect to face social and economic problem after the family break up? Why?	
7	What was your main reason for the break up of the family?	
Conditions for children		
1	Do you have enough time to spare with your children?	A. Yes B. No C. If any specify
2	Are your children attending school after the	A. Yes B. No C. If no why

	break up?	
3	Have you faced economical problem after the break up? How does this affect your children?	
4	Is there any change in the family's Average Monthly income after the break up? Why?	
5	Does the father of your child support your family economically?	
6	Do your children have adequate clothing, shoe, and schooling material?	
7	Have you observed any psychological impact of the break up on your children?	A. Yes B. No
8	How often your children did have night mare?	A.very often B. Always C. sometimes D. Seldom E. Never
9	Did your children encounter a problem of anxiety and needed health professional?	A. Yes B. No
10	Have you observed any social impact of the break up on your children?	A. Yes B. No
11	How Often did your children create conflict with family members or with neighbors?	A.very often B. Always C. sometimes D. Seldom E. Never

Focused Group Discussion Questions

1. How did you accept the family break breakdown?
2. Do you think your Children are affected by the situation?
3. In your Opinion, do you think the family break up have relation with the time you spend with your children?
4. Do you think your Children are psychologically stable?

Observation Guide

- The children's ability to socialize with other children under the project of ICN
- Children's communication with the staffs of the organization
- Parents/ guardian's emotion regarding their relationship with their children
- Parent's/ guardian's/ Children's excitement to be included in the project

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF MSW PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR APPROVAL FROM ACCADAMIC COUNSELLOR AT STUDY CENTER

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Name of the study center: St. Mary's University.

Name of the Guide: Mosisa Kejela (MR).

Title of the Project: An Assessment on the Consequences of Family Breakdown on Children's Well-Being: the case of I Care for the Nation a Local NGO

Signature of the student: _____.

Approved/Not approved

Signature.....

Name and address of Guide:

Mosisa Kejela(MR)

St. Mary's University

Tel. +251933707782

Name and address of the student:

Tenbit Zeleke Tesfaye

e-mail: tenbitzeleke@gmail.com

Tel. +251911881503

Date: July 16, 2015

Indira Gandhi National Open University

School of Social Work

MSW Project Proposal

An Assessment on Consequence of Family Breakdown on Children's Well-Being: The case of I Care for the Nation a Local NGO

By: Tenbit Zeleke

ID1114820

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Introduction

1. Background

The family is the most fundamental of society's institutions, for it is within the family setting that character, morality, responsibility, ability, and wisdom are nurtured. Stable families are at the core of a strong society. It is within the family environment that an individual's physical, emotional, and mental development occurs, where individuals learn to love, understand right from wrong, and we acquire fundamental social skills such as sharing, empathizing, self-control and communication. The qualities individuals learn as children enable them to develop and flourish at school, engage positively in work, fulfill our potential and grow into adults who are fully integrated into society. A secure, nurturing, loving, stable family environment is therefore crucial and its absence has a profoundly damaging effect on children, families and wider society.

Demographic and social changes in the last thirty years have brought about a transformation in family formations and structures. Each year, over a million American children suffer the divorce of their parents. (Douglas, 2005). Family breakdown causes irreparable harm to all involved, but most especially to the children. Though it might be shown to benefit some individuals in some individual cases, over all it causes a temporary decrease in an individual's quality of life and some might never fully recover.

Breakdown of families damages society. It consumes social and human capital. It substantially increases cost to individuals with pathways to poverty. Family breakdown is also very closely associated with poor outcomes for children. It diminishes children's future competence in all five of society's major tasks or institutions: family, school, religion, marketplace and government. Children who experience family breakdown are more likely to experience behavioural problems;

perform less well in school; need more medical treatment; leave school and home earlier; become sexually active, pregnant or a parent at an early age; and report more depressive symptoms and higher levels of smoking, drinking and other drug use during adolescence and adulthood.

Adults, likewise, can suffer greatly. Family breakdown can lead to worse mental health especially depression and lack of self-esteem, which can then hinder effective parenting and lead to multiple relationship transitions and poverty.

Family breakdown in Ethiopia has shown a significant jump over the past few years. Forty five percent of first marriages in Ethiopia end in divorce within 30 years, and two-thirds of women who divorce do so within the first 5 years of marriage. (Tilson & Larsen, 2000). A data from Addis Ababa City Administration for the year 2011 also revealed a staggering number of divorce rate, way beyond what the Administration expected to perform, which is 128% of its plan. (Addis Standard, 2012). In Ethiopia, Children are facing many end result of the problem. They are sacred by the divorce of their parents and contrary to societies view, they do not completely recover, ever, even in the best situations. The divorce of their parents is the most traumatic event of their lives and it continues to affect them for life. They also are forced to live with other relatives and go to the street which intern brings different abuses in their life.

In Ethiopia there are a number of humanitarian organizations that are implementing different Community development programs in response to the basic needs of children and women who suffer from lots of abuse. Among them I care for the nation is a local NGO that works on bringing community transformation through empowering families. I Care for the Nation (ICN)

focuses on revitalize family institutions to create safe environment for children growth. ICN works with Orphan and Vulnerable children and their mothers who are widows, divorced and abused. In this research the impact of family breakdown will be analyzed under the project of ICN children.

2. Statement of the problem

Family breakdown is not a single event, but a process that involves a number of risk and protective factors that interact in complex ways both before and after parental separation or divorce to increase or limit the risk of the adverse outcomes associated with family breakdown. These inter-related factors include parental conflict, the quality of parenting and of parent-child relationships, maternal mental health, financial hardship, and repeated changes in living arrangements, including family structure.

Family breakdown hinders society by dissolving families and weakening belief in the family as an essential social unit. To sociologists, the family does more than unite people by marriage and blood or adoption; it provides the educational, financial and emotional support its members need to thrive socially. Without this support, children in family break ups are mentally and physically weakened, becoming less productive social participants. More broadly, family breakdown leads people to question whether having a family is worthwhile. Different researches also show that children of divorced households tend to enter high-risk marriages. Even worse, these children often do not marry and start families of their own, a phenomenon that can disturb social harmony. The purpose of this paper is to provide research that illuminates that various facets of impact upon adults and children with the demise of a marriage.

3. Research questions:

1. What explanatory mechanisms have been identified concerning the impact of family breakdown on children's well-being?
2. What factors lead families to break up?
3. Who are the first victims of family breakdown?

4. Objectives

General objective

The overall aim of the research is to highlight key findings concerning family breakdown and its impact on children's well-being.

Specific objectives

- To find out consequences of family breakdown and its effect on children's well-being,
- To assess social, economic, educational and health care impact of family breakdown on children,
- To show the long lasting impact of family breakdown.

5. Universe of the study

The study is expected to focus on children under the project I Care for the Nation. The total number of children under the program is 250. Among them the total subject of the study will be 30 children at the age range of 3-14.

6. Sampling

The sample size would comprise 30 Children. The study will use purposive sampling technique to select children under the program due to the reason that their fathers left them away.

7. Data collection

In this study interview, focus group discussion, questionnaires, direct observations of the researcher and secondary data resources will be used to gather relevant data from various resources. The interview schedule will contain both closed ended and open ended questions. The interview guide will also be developed to find out the real contacts of family breakdown.

Qualitative data and quantitative data will be collected from primary and secondary source. The primary data will be collected using the researcher's observation guide and FGD guide will be developed. Semi structured interview and questionnaire from the agency will also be resources for the research. Instrument for the collection of relevant data will be prepared by the researcher.

8. Data analysis

The data collected through qualitative and quantitative methods will be systematically organized, interpreted and analyzed. The results of the questionnaire survey will be presented with the help of qualitative and quantitative method of data analysis specific method such as table percentage and frequency will be employed.

9. Chapter Plan

The research is proposed to have five chapters. The first chapter shall include an introduction about family breakdown, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, limitations and some operational definitions. The second chapter shall deal with related review of literatures. The third chapter shall explain study area, research design and methodology of the study. The fourth chapter shall focus on discussion and analysis of the data. The last chapter shall give suggestions and conclusions.

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