The Impact of Single Parenting on Adolescents' Social Development- Findings from Wise Owl High School in Marondera- Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Nowadays the rate of single parenting in spreading like wildfire worldwide and Zimbabwe is not spared by this phenomenon. The study sought to explore the impact of single parenting on adolescents' social development, a case of Wise Owl High School. The study also sought to investigate how single parenting affects how the child relates with peers and his/her environments, how well they handle conflict and start friendships / relationships. The ability to interact with other peers is considered as a vital skill in social development. The research was prompted by the realization that a lot of adolescents who come from single parenting homes have challenges of relating well with peers and handling conflict. Most of the times they fail to have a positive argument when they have a disagreement with others and they end up fighting. So the researcher saw the need to research on this topic. The study assumed that single parenting impacts negatively on the social development of adolescents. Quantitative methodologies were used. A descriptive design was used since it enabled the researcher to explore the experiences of the adolescents. Purposive sampling was used to come out with the eighty adolescents, ten parents and ten teachers who participated in the study and the adolescents were chosen on the basis that they come from single parenting homes. Questionnaires were used to allow the participants to share their own stories in their own words. The data that which was gathered from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics analysis. The study confirmed findings by other scholars in their countries and revealed that single parenting has a negative impact on the social development wellbeing of adolescents. Recommendations were made to schools, parents and for further study

Keywords: Single Parenting; Adolescents; Social Development

Introduction

Parenting has a great impact on the child's development. According to Stantrock (2004) child development refers to the holistically different changes which occur to an individual's body. These changes include mentally, physically, emotionally and behavioral. During this period of development the child will rely on his/her parents or guardians. According to Kail RV, et al. [1] all traits of individual is passed from generation to generation by genes. On the other hand Stantrock (2004) brought the point of nature, nurture perspective. According to him children learn from their parents accepted behaviors on the other hand the world around him has also a crucial influence to the development. Therefore the researcher can argue that social development is influenced by combination of genetic and environmental factors.

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According to Diane EP, et al. [2], social development entails the ability how people develop social and emotional skills across the lifespan, it stretches from childhood to adulthood. Balanced social development enables people to establish positive relationships with the significant others. As we grow, it is expected that we acquire the knowledge of managing our emotions and needs so that we fit in to the society. Bronfenbrenner U, et al. [3] proclaimed that, social development refers to a process where a child acquires interactive skills. The ability to understand their uniqueness in the society helps them to develop communication skills which will help them to interact with peers and be able to effective process their actions. In short social development refers to the ones ability to starts friendships and conflict management skills.

There are many factors that can affect the child's social development; these include the child's trait, environment and parent's behavior, Diane EP, et al. [2]. Home environment plays a crucial role on how a child interacts with others. For example a child, who is exposed to violence at home, can find it difficult for him to play with others in peace but s/he can be aggressive to peers. The exposure to violence, can affect him to know how to play with others appropriately because to him violence has become the norm of the day. Social development is also linked to other different developments, for example the child's ability to socialize with peers can positively help him. For instance it helps him to learn to speak at a quicker speed because he will be speaking to many people and learn language. During adolescent this will help him to manage peer pressure which helps to explore adulthood in a positive way and conquer all the challenges. This notion is supported by Kail RV, et al. [1] who argued that, good social development facilitate the development of language skills, improve learning skills, conflict management skills, high self-esteem and positive attitude.

Social development plays a pivotal role on the development of high self-esteem; someone with a healthy social development can easily attain high self-esteem. A combination of high self-esteem and good language skills can influence positive attitude and the power to manage individual differences among peers, Kail RV, et al. [1]; Schriver JM, et al. [4] purported that, positive attitude helps in the betterment of relationships with peers and at the same time improves one's self-confidence

Child's development is influenced by various factors, ranges from nature to nurture factors. Parent and child relationship is very important and plays an influential role in the child's development. According to Kail RV, et al. [1] parental skills and parent's behavior has an impact on child's social development. Positive parental skills have positive impact on the social development of a child.

Schriver JM, et al. [4] postulated that, through nurturing, the family influence the child's mental and social growth. He argued that parents' way of treatment have a direct impact to the child's development. For example if the parents show love and care to the child, the child will reflect the same to the people around him ability to show love and care to the child. This reflect the influence of the environment to the child's social development This notion is supported Santrock (2004) who postulated that, the most positive growth is seen when families invest time, energy and love in the development of the child through activities, such as reading to them, playing with them and having deep meaningful conversations. The environment where a child grows has a great influence to his social development. According to Schriver JM, et al. [4], children who grow up in an abusive environment may end up exhibiting poor social skills and difficulty bonding with other people as adults. Therefore, family relationship plays a pivotal role in the social development of an individual, for example, families that abuse or neglect their children would affect their positive development.

Parental styles of caregiving have a direct impact on children's social functioning in areas of moral development. It is the role of parents to guide their children from infant up to the beginning of autonomy. According to Bronfenbrenner U, et al. [5] for one to attain a balance outcome, parents should balance the maturity and disciplinary demands. This is achieved by integrating children into the family and social system with maintaining an atmosphere of warmth, responsiveness and support. If parents, conduct and attitude fail to reflect an appropriate balance, children may face a multitude of adjustment issues.

In today's society it is very common for a child to grow up in a home where one of the parents is absent. Rathus SA, et al. [6] proclaimed that, single parent homes affect children mind-set producing negative effects on the child's esteem. This implies that, growing up in a single parent home affects children's self-esteem. Children might develop negative feelings about themselves. Children who grow up in single parent home tend to compare themselves with others who grow up with both parents. They might think of themselves as lesser, or not as good as those who have both parents. McLanahan S, et al. [7] asserted that, children who grew up in a single parent home exhibits with a feeling of being unwanted due to the absent of another parent who is actively present in their lives. This causes repressed anger and resentment towards their missing parent. Children might not always show signs, but it affects them in the inside. It also causes a feeling of sadness and loneliness.

Bronfenbrenner U, et al. [8] asserted that, everyday experiences with parents are fundamental to a child's developing social skill-set. It is the role of parents to provide

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the initial opportunity to develop relationship, communicate and interact. Parents, also act as role models to their children every day on how to interact with people around them. Social development is a complex issue that is constantly changing, but the good news is that parents can have a big impact on how it progresses. According to Vygotsky LS, et al. [9] parents' impact is seen when they model healthy relationships and staying connected with their child, they can help them relate positively with people around them. Parents set social health benefitting when they encourage their children to engage with other children and adults. The benefits include good self-esteem, communication skills, and ability to trust and connect with those around them.

According to Dornbusch SM, et al. [10] Single parenting or single parenthood refers to a parent bringing up a child or children alone without a partner. According to Dowd NE, et al. [11] a single parent refers to a parent who is raising a child or children alone without a partner. Therefore the author can define single parenting as a state where one parent either father or mother raise or stays with the child in the absence of another partner.

When we refer back to years ago, the parenting approach was completely different. There is a phrase in Africa which says "it takes a village to raise a child," which is quite accurate. By then, the child used to be nurtured by parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and close families. According to Salami and Salami SO, et al. [12] with the time and modernization, the 'village' shrank, and it still continues to disappear. Schriver JM, et al. [4] argued that human beings have evolved so that the community raises them, but when it is not present, and then the dysfunction will potentially develop.

Although often viewed as a homogenous group, single-parent families are formed in a number of ways, each with different implications for children. Emery RE, et al. [13] argued that, parental divorce or separation is the most common reason which lead to single parenthood. The main research inquiry that guided the study will be thus: what are the effects of single parenting on the psychosocial development of children in Zimbabwe?

Amato P, et al. [14] argued that, there is high possibility that individual from single parenting homes can suffer from less effective guardianship and a higher likelihood of family distress and conflicts. According to Azuka-Obieke U, et al. [15] growing up in a family with both parents generally provide more emotional resources to children than single-parent families. In a related vein, children, whose parents' divorce, exhibit slightly lower psychological well-being and social adjustment than children from stable two-parent families Amato P, et al. [14]. According Amato P, et al. [14],

the experience of parental divorce may cause further emotional distress to the child and may eventually lead to an insecure attachment representation. In turn, prolonged family distress and insecure attachment representation may complicate the development of social skills and make it more difficult to engage in satisfying intimate relationships which may eventually also hamper life-satisfaction during adulthood.

In popular science, it has been discussed that children need both a mother and a father, presuming that fathering involves distinct and necessary qualities which are particularly important for gender identity formation in boys Kumar R, et al. [16]. Amato P, et al. [14] argued that, there is also evidence that the absence of a father is associated with an increase in antisocial behaviors in boys, including violence, criminality, and substance abuse and a decrease in social adjustment in general.

In society family is an important unit and it's the first agent that a child interacts with. Children are trained to uphold the values and norms of society. According to Wertsch JV, et al. [17] the initial stages of life sets a pace of what a person will become in life. Families are challenged with many social, economic and environmental pressures which may lead to family break up. Children raised by single parents develop normally but future relations are affected due to lack of a healthy model of long term relationships Amato P, et al. [14].

Divorce affects children in a different ways depending with the situations and the age of the child. According to Amato P, et al. [14], young children between the age of two and six are generally the most fearful of parental separation, and often feel abandoned or confused. They added that both boys and girls have the same amount of trouble coping, but often show this in different ways. Nonetheless this age group adapts best to their situations, as they are often too young to remember their non-custodial parent vividly. Children between the age of seven and twelve are much better at expressing emotions and accepting parentage breakage, but often distrust their parents, rely on outside help and support for encouragement, and may manifest social and problems Price SJ, et al. [18].

According to Emery RE, et al. [13] adolescents are the worst affected by divorce of their parents, most of them find it difficult to adjust to the change. She added that some adolescent due to failure to accept the change they abandon the home and opt to deal with the situation individually. Adolescents from single parenting homes have challenges in expressing their emotions, however she younger children are the most affected ones Amato P, et al. [14]. Later in life this leads to failure of handling relationship issues, Emery

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RE, et al. [13]. Having both parents as a child has a good effect because it promotes good social development [13]. Amato P, et al. [14] argued that, it takes time for children to adjust to normalcy after parents' divorce.

Anyebe et al. asserted that, most of the times, people focus on the negative effects such as related trust issues, abandonment and economic troubles, however, there are many positive effects of raising children as a single parent. Dowd NE, et al. [11] asserted that, the positive aspect of single parenting is the strong bond among the child and parent. The bond between a child and the mother is stronger than the bond between children and parents in nuclear families. This is because the mother spends more time with her children and since it is natural for females to take care of their young ones, the bond automatically increases when the female is all alone in the life of the child. The strong bond is likely to evolve and grow beyond the age of 18 years.

Secondly, children who are raised by single parents develop a strong sense of community Dowd NE, et al. [11]. Children from single parents' households tend to be supported more by community members than those from nuclear families. Most single parents join community support groups, churches, and synagogues where the larger community influences the development of a child positively.

Children from single parents' households are more responsible than those from a nuclear family. Their responsibility is cultivated by the fact that they spent the most of their time helping their parent with household chores and other duties at home. By so doing they end up learning to be more responsible and mature manner than their counterparts [10]. According to Dornbusch SM, et al. [10], children from single parenthood feel obliged to assist their parents because the parent spends much time with them and takes time to recognize their efforts and praises them for assisting in household chores. This makes them mature since they appreciate the efforts that their single parents make to meet their daily needs. Dornbusch SM, et al. [14] argued that, they learn how to manage their disappointments and frustrations in life since they learn from an early age that not everything they would want can be provided. Instead of whining and complaining, they work and collaborate along with their single parents who respond encouraging them to work hard in life and live a better life than the one he/she can afford.

According to Dowd NE, et al. [11] children who are brought up by single parents appreciate the value of parenthood and are therefore likely to be successful parents themselves in future. They further argued that, they are also likely to be successful in their careers since they might have learned the virtue of resilience while growing up. This is accomplished by this experience which teaches them that to be successful, one should work hard, unlike their counterparts in the nuclear family who could be provided for by their parents even when they are grown-ups.

Most single parents teach their children how to balance between their needs and the need of others as well as considering other people's welfare. According to Dowd NE, et al. [11], children from single parents' households develop confidence and high self-esteem since they are not subjected to parental conflicts and domestic violence. He argued that, the fights and conflicts among parents' in the presence of their children affect children's social development.

The fact that single-parenting affects a child is undeniable. While many social scientists focuses on negative effects, there are certain research that prove that there are many positive effects on a child who is raised by a single parent, such as high level of responsibility and developing a strong sense of community.

According to Stantrock (2004) a child is a person between birth and puberty, or between the developmental period of infancy and puberty. Legally, the term child may refer to anyone below the age of majority or some other age limit. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". In Zimbabwe, for example, a child is legally defined as someone under the age of 16 under the "Zimbabwe Children Act". In U.S. Immigration Law, a child refers to anyone who is under the age of 21. In general the term child refers to someone below another legally defined age limit unconnected to the age of majority.

It is against this background that the researcher seeks to find the implications single parenting on adolescents' social development.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were;
- To identify the influence of single parenting on the development of self-concept.
- To examine the impact of single-parenting on an adolescent's social development.
- To evaluate the social development of adolescents who are raised by single parents.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research approaches and quantitative data collection methods were used in this study. Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical

data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. The main goal in conducting quantitative research study is to determine the relationship between one thing that is, an independent variable and another (dependent variable) within a population. In this case the researcher studied the relationship between single parenting and social development in adolescents.

A research design is defined by Leedy P, et al. [19] as the structure of any scientific work that gives direction and systemizes the research. Baron et al. asserted that research design is a framework which directs how data should be collected and analyzed. The researcher used the descriptive research design to examine how single parenting influences the social development of adolescents. In simple terms research design is a plan of investigation that is designed to gather or obtain answers to research questions.

Brink, Wood, et al. stated that the purpose of a research design is to provide a plan for answering the research question and "is a blueprint for action". It is the overall plan that spells out the strategies that the researcher uses to develop accurate, objective and interpretative information. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables you to effectively address the research problem as unambiguously as possible.

This study adopted a descriptive research design; descriptive research is a type of research that describes a population, situation, or phenomenon that is being studied. It focuses on answering the how, what, when, and where questions If a research problem, rather than the why. In this case the researcher what to how single parents affect the social development of adolescents. A quantitative, descriptive research design is chosen for this study in order to give a detailed description of the impact of single parenting on adolescent's social development.

Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

According to Creswell JW, et al. [20], research population refers to the whole group of people where the participants of the research will selected from. A population is a set of persons or objects that possess at least one common characteristic. O'Leary Z, et al. [21] defines a target population as the entire group that a researcher is interested in and wishes to study. In short, target population is the group that one intends to research on. In this study, the researcher's target population comprised of children who learn at Wise Owl high school who living with one parent either, father or mother, (single parents) boarding staff, teachers and school nurse.

In research, sample size and representativeness are important consideration. According to Babbie E, et al. [21],

thirty is considered widely as the minimum size for a sample; however others consider 100 units as a minimum sample. According to Baron (1996) a sample is refers to the small representation of the larger group which participants will be selected by the researcher to focus at and this small group of people should be a true reflection of the larger population. This study considered 100 participants that were, 80 students, senior masters x3, seniors ladies x3, boarding master x2, boarding matron, school nurse) and10 parents.

The study adopted the non-probability sampling procedure specifically purposive sampling. The researcher will use purposive sampling to choose research subjects. This enabled to ensure that all learners from single parenting background and across all the forms will be included.

The researcher chose to use purposive sampling because of its advantages. According Creswell JW, et al. [20] this type of sampling is also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling. Purposive sampling relies on the judgments of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (participants) that are to be studied. Silverman D, et al. [23] argued that usually, the sample being investigated is quite small, especially when compared with probability sampling techniques.

Unlike the various sampling techniques that can be used under probability sampling for example, simple random sampling and stratified random sampling, the goal of purposive sampling is not to random select units from a population to create a sample with the intention of making generalization (that is statistical inference) from the sample to the population of interest Silverman D, et al. [23]. It an advantage to use purposive sampling because the researcher will work with peoples who are willing to participate and who know the subject under study [24]. In this case it will be easy for the researcher to get the information and there is high possibility to get correct information unlike when someone is chosen or forced to participate. The researcher will work with class teacher and hostel staff so as to know children who come from single parenting homes. The use of child study by teacher will provide the information about the background of each child.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires as a method of data collection instrument. According to Santrock JW, et al. [25] a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. From above definition, the researcher can define a questionnaire as an instrument which consists of questions which is used to collect information from participant, participants are given to respond and then return it back.

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The questionnaire was chosen because it the best tool to use since it can be sent either via email or Whatsapp and it suited this period of restricted movement (lockdown).

One of the greatest benefits of questionnaires lies in their uniformity; all respondents see exactly the same questions. In addition to that questionnaire is free from the bias of the interviewer, as the respondents answer the questions in his own words. Moreover, respondents have enough time to think and answer which lead to getting correct and reliable information.

Furthermore questionnaire was chosen because of its strength of measuring behavior, attitudes, preferences, opinions and, intentions of relatively large numbers of subjects more cheaply and quickly than other methods Nicholas W, et al. [26].

Data Analysis

Information gather from the study was presented guided by the research questions ant d the instrument used. In this case the researcher used questionnaire for checking social skills on adolescents and questionnaire for staff members and parents were also used. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the data gather from the study.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. They provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Together with simple graphics analysis, they form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data, Burns BR, et al. [27]. Descriptive statistics therefore enables us to present the data in a more meaningful way, which allows simpler interpretation of the data.

A descriptive statistic is a summary statistic that quantitatively describes or summarizes features from a collection of information, while descriptive statistics is the process of using and analyzing those statistics, Nicholas W, et al. [26]. According to Burns BR, et al. [27], descriptive statistics is distinguished from inferential statistics by its aim to summarize a sample, rather than use the data to learn about the population that the sample of data is thought to represent. This generally means that descriptive statistics, unlike inferential statistics, is not developed on the basis of probability theory, and are frequently non-parametric statistics.

Procedure

First the researcher obtained permission to carry out the study from Midlands State University through the department of Psychology. Permission was granted by Headmaster and communication to parents was sent through the headmaster's office. The researcher observed the psychological ethical guidelines throughout the study. For instance, the issue of confidentiality and privacy will be taken into account, for example non-inclusion of participants' names.

First parental consent for their children to participate in the study since they were under the age of consent was also obtained. Debriefing was done to parents and students about the study including the time frame and activities.

Discussion of the Results

The aim of the research was to identify and examine the effects of single parenting on adolescents' social development. The findings were based on the information collected from parents, adolescents and teachers from Wise Owl through the use of questionnaire. The question which guided the research was; *how does single parenting influence adolescents' social development?* Social development refers to the process by which a child learns to interact with others around them. As they develop and perceive their own individuality within their community, they also gain skills to communicate with other people and process their actions. Social development most often refers to how a child develops friendships and other relationships, as well as how a child handles conflict with peers.

What is the Impact of Single Parenting on the Social Development of Adolescents?

From the findings gathered it was concluded that, single parenting has a negative impact on the adolescent's social development. A study by Salami SO, et al. [12] found that a child from a home where the father and the mother are present will be taken care of and socialized in the best way possible. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in bringing up the child. According to Santrock, (2006), children with both parents are able to achieve self-actualization later in their life. On the other side, Lundberg S, et al. [28] argued that children from single parenting may not get all the opportunity and this can prevent them from achieving self-actualization.

McLanahan S, et al. [29] study revealed that failure of teachers and parents to meet the psychological needs of the child at a certain stage in his/her development may result in personality disorders, which can become a potential danger and a source of unhappiness to the individual. In order for children to develop psychosocially they need a good and solid background environment. In turn it will help them develop a positive self-image and self-identity.

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One mother reported that, these children need father figure in their life. She also added that, there is over protection of the child by the parent which at times affects the child's social skills development. This notion is supported by Hilton et al. who argued that the problem of single parenting is that children will miss the other parent's role who is not involved in their life. Adolescent found it difficult if the absent parent is of same sex because they will be no role model. In search of guidance they end up seek for help from unapproved sources by parents such as social media and peers [30-33]. Hilton et al. argued that, children from single-parent-homes depend more upon friends and friend's opinions than children growing up in dual parent- homes. From the studies it can be clearly concluded that single parenting has negative impact on the social development of adolescents.

However to a lesser extent, single parenting has a positive impact. According to the study by Anyebe, et al. most single parents teach their children how to balance between their needs and the need of others as well as considering other people's welfare. These adolescents from single parents' households develop confidence and high self-esteem since they are not subjected to parental conflicts and domestic violence [34]. She argued that, many nuclear families usually fight in the presence of their children which affect their psychological development.

The ability to interact with Peers and Making Friendship

The current research revealed that adolescents from single parenting homes have compromised interactive skills [35]. It was revealed that most of them find it difficult to relate or start a conversation with a new parson. They are selective when it comes to whom they interact with. Lack of parenting by parent can lead to wrong choice of friends which will latter affect their social development. According to Anyebe, et al. the upcoming of social media (internet) had influenced bad social skills. Some children are entangled with cyber bullying while other learn bad behavior on social media. There is less physical interaction with peers because most of them spent their most time on social media. According to the study by Kail RV, et al. [1] the environment affects the way someone interacts with peers. Safe environment foster good interactive skill while unsafe foster poor or bad skill like being aggressive and bully to peers. This shows how environment plays a role in developing interaction skills [36].

In addition, it was revealed that most of the adolescents from single parenting homes have low self-esteem. This finding is supported by Leedy P, et al. [19] who claimed that single parenting background can negatively affect the child's self-esteem, and thus affecting their social development.

Ability to Control Emotional States

The ability to handle conflict and solving misunderstanding in an amicable ways is another component of good social development. From the research it was concluded that, adolescents from single parenting have challenges of handling conflict, most of them they cannot take positive way of solving misunderstanding. They resort to heated arguments which will lead to fights [37-39].

In addition it was noted that, these adolescent lack role models thereby affecting their social development. Kail RV, et al. [1] argued both parents play a role in emotional support on their child; the absence of another can affect the child's emotional development.

A study published on New York Times (2004) stated that those from big and disadvantaged homes are exhibited negative feeling such insecurity feeling and have poor social skills. However the current research noted that these adolescents come from small size families but still exhibit the same emotional feeling such as withdrawal, loneliness, distress and fear.

Conclusions

This study was guided by the assumption that single parenting impacts negatively on the social development of adolescents at Wise Owl high School. Its main aim was to investigate the impact of single parenting on social development of adolescents aged 13-16 years at Wise Owl. According to the research, single parenting has negative impact on social development [40,41].

Adolescents under study were found to have low self-esteem and confidence, challenges of controlling emotions, difficulty in starting new friendship and poor communication skills.

The unavailability of another parent in the life a child affected the child's social skills development because one parent cannot fill in the gap in terms of role modeling. Adolescence is a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood and it is in the stage where there is need both parents involvement in nurturing the child to independent being who can fit in well to the society. This can be supported by Bronfenbrenner Ecological systems theory's where he emphasized on the role of a family in child's social development [41]. According to the ecological theory, family plays a pivotal role in the social development of a child from the time his is born to the time he becomes an adult, Bronfenbrenner U, et al. [8]. For instance, single parent homes affect children psychology producing negative effects on the child's esteem. They start to feel unwanted because

they do not have another parent that is actively present in their lives, as they compare themselves with other families who have both parents in the home. This will later affect their self-concept and identity.

Recommendations

From the finding, discussion and conclusion presented above, the researcher therefore recommends the following interventions to so as to promote the social development of adolescents who come from single parenting homes so that we minimize the negative effects of single parenting on adolescents social development.

Parents

Single parents should be educated on how best they support the social development of their children. The following is recommended;

- To develop social relationships and through conversing with their children and friends
- To give children the opportunity to discuss social conflicts and let them solve their problems on their own so that they gain the skill
- Discuss the subject of bullying and harassment, both in person and on the Internet
- Allow older children to work out everyday problems on their own
- To keep the lines of communication open; as a parent, make yourself available to listen and support your child in non-judgmental ways
- Set an examples of healthy relationships as a parent i.e. treat each other with respect, give each other space, talk through problems, and communicate honestly. Modeling positive friendships and relationships with co-workers and neighbors and manage your anger
- To get to know adolescents' friends, ask about how the adolescent picks their friends and what they enjoy about the people with whom they spend their time.
- Help adolescents make friends by getting them involved in activities that match their interests
- Take the time to learn about your adolescent's hobbies and interests and expose them to new activities to help you find mutual interests and have more meaningful interactions.
- Help adolescents understand which risks will enable them to test their skills and which risks may have harmful consequences, even if their peers encourage those behaviors.
- To teach children the positive ways of resolving conflicts (resolve with respect for others.)

Schools

- Learning institutions should become ambassadors of promoting social development to students by coming up programs which foster social development like debate and public speaking. This cultivates confidence and high self-esteem on adolescents.
- Schools to have guidance and Counselling team which comprises of both male and females, this team should serve as identify which poor social skills and help them to fully develop those skills. For those with emotional and relationship programs, the team should offer Counselling
- Provision life-skills training/ programs in terms of empowerment program for anger management, conflict resolution and decision making

Further Research

There appears to be a lack of research in Zimbabwe especially at private schools. This group is usually left out. Most research dealing with children/adolescent focus much on behavior and academics performance, less if not any is done on social development. Statistics are either inaccessible or unreliable and the researcher could not find any studies precisely relating to adolescents social development of children from single parenting setting. Research in this area would allow for a greater understanding of the experiences of adolescents. The researcher recommends further research using various other forms of qualitative methods that have not been explored in this study. This will add value to existing body of knowledge and aid the aid in the development of interventions aimed at the adolescents from single parenting homes.

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