

ATTACHMENT & LONELINESS: STUDY OF FIRST-TIME ADULT WOMEN EXPERIENCING PARENTAL DIVORCE

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Abstract

This study is aimed at investigate the role of attachment to loneliness for early adult children in experiencing parental divorce. Qualitative research was used. The population in this study were all girls whose parents experienced divorce. The sampling technique uses incidental sampling. The sample for this study consisted of 104 children aged 18-25 years. The primary data in this study were teenage children who had experience of their parents' divorce. Research data was obtained from teenagers and adults through interviews. The data analysis technique used in this research is quantitative-descriptive analysis. The results of this finding found that there was an effect of attachment to loneliness of early adult female experiencing parental divorce. Additional analysis of the type of attachment was carried out in this study using Relationship Quistionnaire (RQ), discovered that fearful subject's has the high correlation. There was a difference between the father-attachment and the mother-attachment. Furthermore, age at the time of the divorce it is found to be associated with loneliness as an adult.

Keywords

Attachment, Early Adult, Loneliness, Parental Divorce



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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the number of divorce cases increased from 291,667 in 2020 to 447,743 in 2021 (Defianti, 2022). According to (Guyette et al., 2023), almost one million children were affected by the divorce. The high occurrence of divorce necessitates researchers to explore its impact and find ways to prevent damage to future generations inside families (Kamal, 2023). (Gosselin et al., 2024) They conducted a meta-analysis showing that children of divorced parents exhibit risk factors in academic performance, behavior, emotions, and other social issues compared to children from intact families (Kim et al., 2023). (Xie, 2024) showing that the child is undergoing an invention. Children of divorced parents have a higher risk of developing serious mental problems such as depression, loneliness, childhood trauma, avoidance of relationships, attachment anxiety, chronic stress, and absence of father figures compared to children from intact families. Loneliness or emotional distress may arise as a result of divorce, leaving one or both parents feeling isolated (Syarif & Zulhamdi, 2023). Loneliness is the feeling of distress that occurs when individuals perceive a lack of satisfactory social interactions or connections (Keum et al., 2023). (Malimon, 2023) Define loneliness as a lack of interpersonal interaction within a social organization, such as the family. Research indicates that divorce can alter the family system, impacting the quality of the parent-child relationship and potentially leading to increased emotional strain. The emotional gap between a parent and oneself might lead to emotions of rejection and loneliness (Marici et al., 2023). The scenario can be explained by (Edery, 2023) the theory of attachment, which states that the emotional bond between children and parents creates a sense of security that impacts an individual's social environment even into adulthood (Edery, 2023). This theory posits that individuals of all ages possess a system of behavior that can adapt to situations, turning bad circumstances into positive ones and vice versa (Hwang et al., 2023). System behavior refers to how individuals respond to challenges and manage their sense of security, influenced by past interactions with a caregiver or parent (Hwang et al., 2023).

(Janghu & Bhau, 2023) Established four categories of attachment models in adults, focusing on positive and negative prototypes related to self and others (Farahani et al., 2023). The category first secure subject pertains to situations where individuals have a positive self-image and feel comfortable and safe in relationships characterized by closeness and autonomy. Both are concerned with the concept of self-image, namely the contrast between a bad self-perception and a positive perception of others. This prototype pertains to the classification "ambivalent," which refers to situations characterized by a tendency for individuals to display dependency in their affective

relationships (Sagone et al., 2023). The third kind is the dismissive subject, who creates a favorable self-image and a negative picture of others. This person category typically shies away from intimate connections and suppresses the attachment to goals in order to uphold their image of invulnerability and independence. The fourth subject of concern is the individual's self-image, whether it is positive or bad, in relation to oneself or others. These persons tend to restrict their interpersonal ties due to fear of rejection and the resulting sorrow in the future. An individual lacks self-confidence and trust in themselves, leading to difficulties in forming interpersonal connections, making them more susceptible to feelings of depression and loneliness (Raymond & Poulin, 2023). Refers to fundamental theory according to (Beaujouan & Solaz, 2023), Bowlby suggested that children may lose stable ties with their parents and develop a picture of themselves, perceiving the social world as a risky place for relationships (Gjini, 2023). Even as adults, individuals are at risk for loneliness and may continue to blame themselves for social problems (Donagh et al., 2023).

(Seslii & Çekiç, 2024) Suggested that children who have had positive experiences with parental figures may internalize the perception of being "responsive and available" as well as "desirable and useful to others." I adhere to the idea that early loss of attachment might lead to feelings of loneliness, as suggested by (Mustonen et al., 2011) and discussed in (Büyükkeçeci & Leopold, 2024).

(Putra, 2023) Proposed that humans are inherently social beings who rely on each other for growth and development. The process of forming an identity and developing the ability for intimacy is a psychosocial challenge that teenagers and adults face (Demir Kaya & Çok, 2023). According to experts in the field, adolescence is a critical period in life where issues about identity arise, and significant progress is made in forming one's identity (Zhang & Qin, 2023). (Tarzian et al., 2023) define the mature age as the period when individuals address issues related to professions, education, transitioning from home, and romantic relationships (Di Napoli et al., 2023). The prefrontal cortex was becoming more fully developed, leading to the need to make numerous decisions (Xue et al., 2023). Individuals who go through divorce often find it challenging to adapt to parenting post-divorce (Ngambi et al., 2023).

Common consequences of divorce can have negative effects (Miralles et al., 2023), but some researchers have found that it can also have good effects, especially when the marriage is experiencing high levels of conflict. The impact of divorce is more pronounced on girls than boys (Edwards et al., 2023). This effect is linked to complex interpersonal relationships and can directly

influence several aspects of personal and social development. If a person experiences this impact during their adolescent years (Wolf & Schmitz, 2023), it might lead to loneliness as they may constantly try to lessen the strength of their connections and attachments with others (Adlington et al., 2023).

There some previous researches that have been conducted related to the researcher's study. First, the research was conducted entitled "Life History Study of Adult Women Who Experienced Parental Divorce Due to Infidelity." The second was conducted entitled "Description of the Self-Esteem of Early Adult Women Who Experience Fatherlessness Due to their Parents' Divorce." Third, research was arranged entitled "First Love Lost: Revealing the Dynamics of Adult Women's Forgiveness Without a Father After Divorce." Fourth, it was entitled "Description of the Perception of Marriage among Young Adult Women with a Background of Divorced and Fatherless Parents." Lastly, it compiled entitled "The Influence of Parental Divorce on Child Psychology." A few types of research focused on what are the implications of attachment and loneliness to some parents when they take to divorce. So, in this study, the researcher focused on the implications for young people who have experienced the divorce of their parents for the first time.

(Mufidah & Dewi, 2022) Tends to examine the childhood experiences of two girls aged ten years and 16 years, where they experienced the traumatic past of their parents who divorced as a result of infidelity. (Wendi & Kusmiati, 2022) Studied early adult women who experienced fatherlessness from an early age and lived with their mothers. (Diana & Agustina, 2023) Researching the perceptions of young adult girls who have divorced and fatherless parents. Lastly, hanah, 2020) they are more likely to see from the perspective of the psychological impact on children as a result of their parent's divorce. From the previous studies above, very few of those who studied girls had experienced their parents' divorce between the ages of 18-25 years; where these children had never experienced complete love from both parents and felt that their lives were empty as a result of their parent's divorce. Therefore, the researcher aims to examine further the experiences of adult girls whose parents divorced, which resulted in them not receiving perfect love and instead feeling alone.

METHOD

The study utilized quantitative research methods with non-probability sampling approaches, namely non-random and subjective sampling procedures, due to specific criteria. The population of this study was all adult girls aged 18-25 years whose parents were divorced. The study

included 104 adult women aged 18-25 who had experienced parental divorce for a minimum of 1 year. A questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms, shared across many channels such as Instagram, and delivered through broadcast messages in WhatsApp groups. Complete the questionnaire form using a self-report instrument that has already been translated. Subsequent instruments were utilized in the research.

This research used a three-scale assessment. Measuring instruments are used to assess attachment using a questionnaire. The ECR-RS is a self-report tool created to assess attachment patterns in different relationships (Chris Fraley et al., 2006). In the nine items are used to examine the pattern of close relationships with two targets (mom and dad). This study aimed to assess attachment style using the Relationships Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Participants will select one of four attachment styles (confident, preoccupied, dismissive, and scared) using a scale ranging from 1 to 7 (extremely disagree - strongly agree). Additionally, it will assess the variable of loneliness. Employing the UCLA Loneliness Scale (version 3) to assess participants' feelings of loneliness, as developed consisting of a total of 20 items. UCLA used a 4-point scale (ranging from never to often). Choosing a higher score resulted in feeling greater loneliness. Prior to conducting the analysis, perform a linear regression test. Test two groups In addition to conducting a validity test, the research also involved discussing the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) with a lecturer mentor. Utilizing SPSS Version 22 for data analysis. The primary data in this study were teenage children who had experienced their parents' divorce. Research data was obtained from interviews with teenagers and adults. The data analysis technique used in this research is quantitative-descriptive analysis. The hypothesis of this research is that every child whose parents divorce from the age of 18-25 years will lose their parents' complete love and feel like they live alone and empty.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of a simple linear regression test indicate that the regression coefficient (R) is 0.368, and the coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.136. This suggests that variable attachments contribute effectively by 13.6% to reducing loneliness. Although the contribution is tiny, it holds significant importance for the 104 women in early adulthood with a p-value of <0.001. You may have inferred that the regression model can be utilized to predict loneliness or determine the

impact of attachment variables in loneliness among adult women who have experienced parental divorce.

Table 1. Test Regression Attachments Against Loneliness

Variable	R	R Square	Sig
Attachment-Loneliness	0.368	0.136	<0.001

Long Divorce Parent to Loneliness

(Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989) interviewed participants whose parents had divorced ten years prior and discovered that many of them struggled to form close relationships. Wallerstein (1989) suggests that there is a significant impact of loneliness in the adjustment of children post-divorce. The researcher categorized divorced parents as lonely by conducting a cross-tabulation analysis using SPSS. The classification includes five age categories for divorce: 0-3 years, 3-7 years, 7-10 years, over ten years, and over 20 years, each with levels ranging from very low to extremely high.

Table 2. Divorce Duration Category Parent Against Loneliness

Length of Divorce	Loneliness										Total	
	Very low		Low		Currently		Tall		Very Tall			
0-3 year		.0		5		1.1		0.5		.7	2	1.5
3-7 year		.0		6.7		1.1		3.2		.8	1	0.6
7-10 year		.00		.3		4.8		0.5		3.1	6	5.4
>10 year		.0		3.3	2	4.4	7	4.7	2	6.2	5	3.3
>20 year		.0		6.7		8.5		1.1		9.2	0	9.2
Total		.0	2	1.5	7	6	8	6.5	6	5	04	00
Length of Divorce	Loneliness										Total	
	Very low		Low		Currently		Tall		Very Tall			
0-3 year		.0		5		1.1		0.5		.7	2	1.5

3-7 year		.0		6.7		1.1		3.2		.8	1	0.6
7-10 year		00		.3		4.8		0.5		3.1	6	5.4
>10 year		.0		3.3	2	4.4	7	4.7	2	6.2	5	3.3
>20 year		.0		6.7		8.5		1.1		9.2	0	9.2
Total		.0	2	1.5	7	6	8	6.5	6	5	04	00

According to the data in Table 2, it is evident that the topic category with participants who have experienced parental divorce for over ten years is the most frequent. This category also exhibits the highest levels of loneliness among the five levels measured. Table II demonstrates that every category is dominated by loneliness at high levels.

Research indicates that children who experience parental divorce at any age may suppress their emotions during the mourning period, leading to consequences such as loneliness in adulthood (Murphy, 1991). Similar to previous studies, the period of transitioning from adolescence to adulthood is challenging due to essential features such as establishing social connections. Therefore, during this transitional period, feelings of loneliness are most pronounced and pose a significant risk.

Table 3. Analysis Descriptive Stage Development Moment Happen Divorce

Stages Development	N	%
Prenatal	7	6.7%
Infancy	7	6.7%
Early childhood	15	14.4%
Middle & late childhood	33	31.%
Aadolescence	27	26.0%
Early adulthood	15	14.4%

Table 3 above shows that there are some children who experience happy conditions when their parents are divorced. The times of parents' divorce they've been through are quite different. It turns out that 6.7% of children were happy before birth, and the same thing happened: 6.7% were happy when they were infants, 14.4% were happy at an early age, 31% were happy in adolescence, 26% were happy in middle and late adolescence, and 14.4% had become happy in adulthood. More happiness is achieved by those who enter middle childhood. It's a sign that they're not thinking about anything that could stop her childhood feeling happy even though their parents were divorced. They do not deserve to be given an understanding of what a divorce is and why bias

occurs. It is a clear question that they are not able to understand fully and are mentally ready to accept.

Difference Attachments Father and Mother

Furthermore, the researcher wants to see the difference between the father and the Father and the Mother process using parametric difference tests and independent t-tests.

Table 4. Difference Test between Father and Mother

Variable	Sig	Information
<i>attachments</i>	<0.001	There is difference

Table 4 shows a significant difference in attachment between fathers and mothers, with a mean value of 41.09 for fathers and 33.82 for mothers. Additionally, researchers want to examine the relationship between attachment size and loneliness by conducting simple regression tests for both father and mother attachments (Table 5).

Table 5. Regression Test of Attachment for Fathers and Mothers Against Loneliness

Attachments	R	R Square	Sig
Father	0.251	0.063	<0.001
Mother	0.285	0.081	<0.001

The results indicate that the influence of the father's attachment on loneliness has a coefficient determination of 6.3%, whereas the mother's attachment has a coefficient determination of 8.1%. Table IV data indicated a substantial difference and an influence on loneliness in adults at the beginning. These findings suggest that both parents play a crucial role in helping children adjust throughout the post-divorce phase. (Healy Jr et al., 1990) Found that children who maintain frequent contact with a parent after divorce tend to have high self-esteem and fewer behavior problems. Several studies have demonstrated that the quality of the parent-child connection after divorce is crucial. The quality of the parent-child interaction has a significant influence on reducing loneliness and enhancing life satisfaction (Civitci et al., 2009).

Type Attachments Which Most Influence Loneliness

Study the attachment style that has the most significant impact on older women who are beginning to suffer loneliness after going through a divorce in old age.

Table 6. Types of Attachment to Loneliness

Attachment Type	R	R Square	Sig
Secure	0.340	-0.115	<0.001
Fearful	0.580	0.337	<0.001
Preoccupied	0.450	0.203	<0.001
Dismissing	0.106	0.011	<0.001

The data indicate that the type of connection that most influences loneliness is the scared type, with a value of 0.337. The figure indicates that the impact of the subject's worry on loneliness is 33.7%. In addition, a negative number was detected in the Secure Attachments category. Negative influence Higher secure attachments lead to fewer feelings of loneliness experienced by the person. Subjects displaying fearful attachments are described as individuals who develop unfavorable perceptions of themselves and others.

Discussion

Results are consistent with the study, indicating that children who suffer parental divorce are at a higher risk of developing insecure attachment styles characterized by increased vulnerability to rejection during adulthood. Rejection can impede the development of a stable social network, which in turn can exacerbate feelings of loneliness (Watson & Nesdale, 2012). A study (Civitci et al., 2009) discovered that teenagers whose parents are divorced tend to feel lonelier compared to those with parents who are not divorced. The relationship between family effectiveness and communication between mothers and teenagers with loneliness was found to have a negative correlation in the study (Keith, 1991), as cited in (Civitci et al., 2009). Experiencing divorce can lead to significant changes in the structure of a family and the communication patterns among its members. This can potentially diminish the effectiveness of family connections (Chris Fraley et al., 2006). The study's hypotheses align with earlier findings that suggest divorce leads to changes in the family structure, resulting in an increased likelihood of tension in the emotional tie between parents and children (Guttmann & Rosenberg, 2003). Children of divorced parents may feel rejected because of the emotional gap between themselves and their parents. This is what can exacerbate feelings of loneliness in adulthood.

According to (Schaan & Vögele, 2016), adults who experienced their parents' divorce at a young age tend to exhibit higher levels of chronic stress, social isolation, work dissatisfaction, excessive worries, loneliness, and anxiety about relationships. Many young adults are more likely to avoid marriage compared to previous generations while their parents are still married. Parental divorce may increase the risk. Attachment style construction that is not secure and is associated with sensitivity to rejection suggests that individuals have sensitivities to rejection. This reflects the impact of parental divorce on their interaction. Where interaction is portrayed as an unpleasant experience due to the absence of the primary parenting system, which is the parent, individuals who

have experienced parental divorce during their formative years may perceive it as a disruption in their social interactions, which can impact their intimate relationships with spouses, friends, and peers (Schaan & Vögele, 2016).

CONCLUSION

One basic research finding is the significant significance of attachment to loneliness in mature women's early experience of parental divorce. Outcomes The bond created by a child of divorced parents may lead to social withdrawal due to anxiety and fear of rejection, causing them to avoid forming intimate relationships with others. The approach discussed here is how children of divorced parents develop a form of protection to shield themselves from events that may cause feelings of rejection.

Researchers recommend focusing on prevention programs to build resilience in children who have experienced parental divorce due to the various implications it can have. Thus, matter can overcome disturbances and promote long-term mental well-being. Assisting youngsters in comprehending their parents' circumstances can perhaps reduce the trauma experienced by the child over an extended period.

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