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Scientific articles

Como afecta la separación de los padres en un divorcio a los hijos

How the separation of parents in a divorce affects the children

Como a separação dos pais no divórcio afeta os filhos

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Resumen

La presente investigación tiene por objetivo analizar cómo les afecta a los menores la separación de los padres en un divorcio en el municipio de Juchitlán, Jalisco. Ya que el divorcio en una familia implica duelo, dolor, tristeza y enojo. Se elaboraron 14 preguntas para determinar una encuesta que después se aplicó en los habitantes de las familias afectadas dando a conocer que algunos de los niños encuestados se sienten un poco mejor cuando sus padres están separados, ya que no presencian peleas constantes. Sin embargo, desearían que sus padres no tuvieran problemas para poder estar juntos, y muchos de ellos temen que, si se casan, les espera una situación similar, algo que no desean vivir ni que experimenten sus propios hijos.

Palabras claves: separación, divorcio, depresión, angustia.

Abstract

The objective of this research is to analyze how minors are affected by separation of parents in a divorce in the municipality of Juchitlán, Jalisco. Since the Divorce in a family implies grief, pain, sadness and anger. 14 questions were developed to determine a survey that was later applied to the inhabitants of the affected families revealing that some of the children surveyed feel a little better when their parents are separated, since they do not witness constant fights. However, they would like their parents had no problems being together, and many of them fear that, if they get married, a similar situation awaits them, something they do not want to experience or experience own children.

Keywords: separation, divorce, depression, anguish.

Resumo

O objetivo desta pesquisa é analisar como a separação dos pais em caso de divórcio afeta os menores no município de Juchitlán, Jalisco. Já o divórcio na família envolve luto, dor, tristeza e raiva. Foram desenvolvidas 14 questões para determinar um inquérito que posteriormente foi aplicado aos habitantes das famílias afetadas, revelando que algumas das crianças inquiridas sentem-se um pouco melhor quando os pais estão separados, uma vez que não presenciam brigas constantes. No entanto, desejam que os seus pais não tenham problemas para poderem estar juntos e muitos deles temem que, caso se casem, uma situação semelhante os aguarde, algo que não querem vivenciar ou que os seus próprios filhos vivenciem.

Palavras-chave: separação, divórcio, depressão, angústia.

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Introduction

Divorce in a family involves grief, pain, sadness and anger. Each member of the family faces the separation according to their psychological resources and resilience, but what happens to the children when the couple decides to take different paths? How does a child cope with separation from his parents? How does it affect the infant to see the two people he loves, who are his life teachers, suffering, angry, fighting? A determining factor in answering these questions is the stage

of development in which the minor is, since, according to their cognition, they give meaning to what happens around them. (Rojas, 2020).

Children who have witnessed intense parental conflict experience a wide range of emotional and behavioral difficulties. The constant conflict between parents after divorce can be harmful to the psychological development of the child, along with the aggravations derived from many other changes (school, residence, state, schedules, economic situation, losing their friends, among others) in their life that can amplify the feeling of loss and helplessness according to their age (Leal, 2019).

The separation of parents implies a radical change that shakes each member of the family, generating uncertainty. Parents and children need to adapt to the situation. It is common to hear in the parties of a custody trial that one parent blames the other for the emotional problems they observe in their children, and the task is not to find culprits but to look for areas of opportunity in the situation as immediately as possible. With the help of psychological health professionals, this process is gone through assertively (Chávez, 2020).

In the aforementioned, an investigation was carried out in the municipality of “ Juchitlán , Jalisco” with the objective of collecting information to know how the separation of parents in a divorce affects minors.

Materials and methods

The present investigation was carried out in Juchitlán , a town and municipality in the Sierra de Amula Region of the state of Jalisco , Mexico . It is located 120 km from Guadalajara and 180 km from Barra de Navidad . T o collect the information, the survey was used, a data collection technique that is part of non-experimental designs. The survey technique is widely used as a research procedure, since it allows obtaining and processing data quickly and efficiently (Kuznik , Hurtado Albir and Espinal Berenguer, 2017).

The questionnaires were self-administered, since they have the advantage of guaranteeing the anonymity of the study subjects; Furthermore, they are easier to apply than a personal interview, which is why they are used especially in naturally constituted groups (schools, companies, etc.). (Casas-Anguita *et al.*, 2002).

However, it is also worth commenting that one of their greatest limitations is that they provide a simplified and superficial image of reality, based on atomized and decontextualized data that does not allow for a comprehensive vision of the phenomena studied. In addition to this, and

from a practical point of view, it is the most fragile data collection technique , since it can fail at many stages of the process. This disadvantage is aggravated because once it has started to be applied it does not allow any rectification during the process (Kuznik *et al.*, 2010).

Since this descriptive study was applied to families identified as having minors, it is possible to analyze how the separation of parents affects children in a divorce. Therefore, it was decided to use the probability formula for defined populations, since it allows it to be applied once the universe of individuals with which one wishes to work is known. In this case, 72 families from Juchitlán , Jalisco, were selected and the following finite sample analysis equation was used (Aguilar-Barojas, 2005).

$$n = \frac{Z^2 N p q}{e^2(N - 1) + Z^2 p q}$$

Where

n = Sample size

Z = Confidence level

N = Universe

p = Probability

q = Probability found

e = Estimation error

This equation has a reliability of 95% and a precision of 87%, with which the surveys were applied and the sample size was determined. Regarding the statistical analysis, this was carried out using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Zumbo and Rupp, 2004, cited by Elosua and Zumbo, 2008). In this regard, Campo-Arias and Oviedo (2008) indicate that internal consistency is considered acceptable when it is between the values 0.70 and 0.90. Based on this premise, —González and Pazmiño (2015) interpret the following formula for Cronbach's alpha test:

$$\alpha = \left(\frac{k}{k - 1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{\sum v_i}{v_T} \right)$$

Where

K = Number of items

V_i = Independent variance

V_T = Variance of the total items

ΣV_i = Sum of the variance of the items.

Results

The results indicate that lack of love and constant problems are the main reasons why two people decide to divorce. Furthermore, the children of these parents believe that there is no possibility of them getting back together. Regarding the reasons for the separation, the majority of respondents responded that they would not feel guilty about the separation, since the reasons for the problems were diverse.

Among the consequences of parents not being together are the impact on the family image and the lack of love that the children want. However, a positive consequence is that some children prefer separation from their parents, as this reduces problems at home. However, they do not feel safe sharing this situation with their friends due to a lack of trust and the perception that their friends do not care.

Generally, the children reported that, although they live with both parents, these interactions are not always positive and, sometimes, those with whom they live are somewhat strict. Common activities when reunited with the parent they do not live with include going out to eat and going for walks.

Children express feeling a little better about separating from their parents, since they prefer not to witness fights. However, they also wish their parents could resolve their issues to stay together. As a result, many think that they will not get married in the future, as they are afraid of experiencing the same situation and do not want their children to experience a similar situation.

Table 1 shows the percentages of both positive (yes) and negative (no) responses regarding certain perceptions of the participants about how the separation of parents in a divorce affects minor children.

Table 1. Percentage of positive and negative responses to the questions asked

| QUESTIONS | Positive responses (%). | Negative responses (%). |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| What does it mean when two people get divorced? | 9 | 91 |
| Do you think they will live together again? | 54.5 | 45.5 |
| Do you think that someone could blame you (blame you) for your father and mother living apart (or separating)? | 54.5 | 45.5 |
| Does it have any positive consequences? | 82 | 18 |
| Have you told your friends? | 54.5 | 45.5 |
| Do your friends care about your parents? | 54.5 | 45.5 |
| Do you consider yourself different? | 64 | 36 |
| What is your father/mother like that you live with? | 100 | 0 |
| What is the other person like, the one you don't live with? | 45.5 | 54.5 |
| What do you do with him/her when you see him/her? | 82 | 18 |
| Do you think you will get married? | 45.5 | 54.5 |

Source: self made.

Statistic analysis

Cronbach's alpha test

Next, the results obtained through the Cronbach's alpha test are presented and analyzed, expressed in numerical values derived from the survey applied to families in Juchitlán, Jalisco, on the impact of parental separation on minor children.

The minimum acceptable value for Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.70. A value lower than this would indicate low internal consistency of the instrument, which suggests that the test questions are not adequately measuring what they are intended to evaluate. On the other hand, the maximum expected value for Cronbach's alpha is 0.90. A score higher than this value does not necessarily indicate high internal consistency, but may reflect redundancy or duplication of elements in the test (Oviedo and Arias, 2005) (Campo Arias and Oviedo, 2008; Frías-Navarro, 2019) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha coefficient value index

| RANGE | RELIABILITY |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 0.53 to less | Zero reliability |
| 0.54 to 0.59 | Low reliability |
| 0.60 to 0.65 | Reliable |
| 0.66 to 0.71 | Very trustful |
| 0.72 to 0.99 | Excellent reliability |
| 1 | Perfect reliability |

Source: Frías-Navarro (2019)

Knowing that the items applied in the survey were fourteen, the sum of the variances of both men and women was determined, as well as the total variances, and then the absolute values to obtain the final value of Cronbach's alpha, which In the survey applied it was 0.83 for both men and women. See table 3.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha test

| | SURVEYED |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| K | 14 |
| Sum of variance of the items | 22.41322 |
| Variance of the sum of the items | 101.4711 |
| Cronbach's alpha coefficient | 0.839049 |

Source: self made

The statistical analysis of the previous table shows that the values obtained from Cronbach's alpha are acceptable and reliable.

Discussion

The study mentioned by Cantón and Justicia (2002b) specifies the difference in the consequences of parental separation between boys and girls; this is an important topic in research on the impact of divorce on childhood. The aforementioned study highlights that worse consequences have been found in boys, especially during the two years following separation, while girls seem to adapt more quickly and present fewer visible problems. In this research, in question one of the survey applied (*What does it mean when two people get divorced?*) It can be seen that 100% of the families surveyed responded negatively, saying that the reason for the separation was due to problems caused by lack of love, disloyalty, trust and low economic stabilization. Consequently, these problems cause emotional distress in minors, changes in behavior, feelings of guilt, alterations in relationships, insecurity, lack of stability and other long-term problems. While Elder and Russell (1996) reported that adolescent girls had better academic performance and Morrison and Cherlin (1995) found that girls did not have significant behavioral or reading achievement problems.

Galatzer -Levy and Kraus (1999) and Johnston and Campbell (1988) mention , among the most difficult conflicts to resolve in family breakdown processes and those that generate the greatest anxiety for all family members, especially children, There are conflicts over the pattern of contact and relationship to be established between parents and their children after separation or divorce. In this investigation, in question ten (What do you do with him/her when you see him/her?) the majority of respondents responded negatively, stating that they did not have a good relationship with their father or mother with whom they were not, this Most of it was caused by the other parent with whom they live since they created an environment where the other one who was not with them was the bad one or the one who was to blame for the separation, while the minority responded positively by giving as a result a good relationship with both parents. While Lebow (2003) mentions that these types of conflicts currently represent an important public health problem.

Allison and Furstenberg (1989) and Mazur *et al.*, (1992) mention that in some studies a different reaction of boys and girls has also been reported. Boys tend to present more behavioral problems and girls psychological distress, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem, and in this research in question 8 (do you consider yourself different?) the majority responded positively that they felt more distressed, with depression, behavioral problems, low self-esteem, and problems when socializing.

According to McLanahan and Sandefur (1994), adolescent girls are more likely to drop out of high school or university. Although both male and female adolescents are equally likely to become parents, girls are more negatively affected, experiencing a greater decline in their socioeconomic status. In this study, it was found that the majority of adolescents did not have a clear idea about their future; only a few were studying. Furthermore, both men and women generally stopped studying after finishing high school.

A portion of those surveyed responded negatively regarding feeling different from others; However, this group had clear goals and the majority continued with their studies. Like the other group, they did not have problems with depression, anxiety, low self-esteem or difficulties socializing.

Conclusion

This document represents an effort to acquire greater knowledge about how the separation of parents in a divorce affects minor children in Juchitlán, Jalisco. Parental separation or divorce

can have a significant impact on these children. Although the effects vary between individuals and depend on numerous factors such as age, gender, family environment and available support, some general conclusions can be drawn about how it affects children:

Emotional reactions: Children often experience a variety of emotions, including sadness, anxiety, confusion, anger, and fear. The intensity and duration of these emotions can vary, but it is common for children to feel emotionally affected by the separation of their parents.

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Future lines of research

- Investigate how experiences of separation and divorce during childhood affect emotional, social and economic well-being in adulthood.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of different psychological interventions and support programs designed to mitigate the negative effects of divorce on children.
- Analyze how parental separation influences the academic performance and educational trajectory of children.
- Examine the role of family and social support in mitigating the negative effects of divorce on children, identifying factors that may enhance resilience.
- Investigate the relationship between parental divorce and children's physical health, including psychosomatic problems and chronic conditions.
- To explore children's perceptions and attitudes toward marriage and family relationships after experiencing their parents' divorce.

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