

## **Psychosocial Implications of Early Father Separation for Adolescents and their Mothers**

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The present research investigated psychosocial implication of early father separation for adolescents and their mothers. Sample comprised of 80 cohort adolescents of 80 women (n=40 divorced women; n=40 married women). Assessment measures for adolescents were depression, anxiety and stress scale, attachment style questionnaire, self-image profile, social competence questionnaire, brief fear of negative evaluation, aggression questionnaire, and brief self-control scale and assessment measures for mothers were depression, anxiety and stress scale, parental authority questionnaire, conflict tactics scale; UCLA Loneliness Scale, social interaction anxiety scale, state-trait anger expression inventory and multi-dimensional scale of perceived social support. Findings showed that mother's depression, anxiety, stress, feelings of loneliness, state anger; social interaction anxiety, social support and authoritative parenting style predict psychosocial problems in adolescents. Divorced mothers experienced more depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, social interaction anxiety and high level of state anger, anger out and total anger as compare to married mother. Suggestions along with implications are being discussed in Pakistani context.

**Keywords:** Psychosocial Problems, Divorce, Mothers, Adolescents

Mothers and fathers are both important for the healthy upbringing of adolescents (Meadows, McLanahan, & Gunn, 2008). Divorce creates distance from one parent from home, usually the father figure. As time passes, frequency of contact between children and non-custodial parents often decreases, and lower level of contact create emotional and social problems in adolescents (Fursterberg & Cherlin, 2001). Parents play a vital role in easing the outcomes of divorce (Sturge, Davis, & Cummings, 2006). According to Dykeman (2003) parents can help make a smooth transition for their children during a divorce. After divorce if mother adjusts well in environment than children experience fewer emotional, social and behavioral problems (Averdijk, Malti, Ribeaud, & Eisner, 2012). Father's role is very important in child life (Elgar, McGrath, Waschbusch, Stewart, & Curtis, 2004). Father is perceived as a more powerful, as a more dominant and as a less nurturing (Crow & Crow, 2003). The separation of father and child often begins at the fall of the gavel (Hilton & Frye,

2004). According to the context and situations, children's contact with their father and the level of contact differ greatly. Some children meet their father on weekly basis, few meet once a week and some children only see their fathers every other weekend (Faber & Wittenborn, 2010) and some children do not meet with their father (Chang, Schwartz, Dodge, & Chang, 2003). After divorce process, the positive involvement of father produces greater scores on self-esteem (Hilton & Desrochers, 2000; Gadalla, 2009), and positive father involvement also decreases behavioral problems (Acock & Demo, 2010; Peters & Ehrenberg, 2008).

According to Islamic perspective Children are a central theme in Islamic family law and their multitude necessities have been tried to compensate in the custody process. Islam has given more credit to mother in case of child custody and suggested mother as the first person to be awarded custody of the child. In Islam divorce is not forbidden but negative stigma is attached with divorce in our culture (Ahmed, 2001; Amin & Farooqi, 2009).