

The Effects of Broken Home Families on Grade VI Elementary School Students' Moral and Psychic Development

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ABSTRACT. This study was motivated by empirical findings of teachers at SDN 1 Sribitan, which indicated that students from broken homes often cause disturbances in the classroom during the learning process. This behavior is thought to be a form of seeking attention from the surrounding environment. Based on this phenomenon, the researcher was interested in conducting a case study to examine more deeply the impact of broken home family conditions on the moral and psychological development of elementary school students. This study used a qualitative approach with a case study method. Participants were selected purposively based on family background and prominent behavior at school so that two students from grade VI, namely A.C.P. and P.D.A., were selected from five students with similar backgrounds. The results of the study showed that broken home families have a significant influence on children's moral and psychological development. This impact is reflected in the behavior of participants, which is characterized by difficulty apologizing when making mistakes, often causing noise in class, and disobedience to school rules. This study emphasizes the importance of special attention and handling of students with an incomplete family background in order to support their character development and psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Broken Home, Moral Development, Psychology, Psychic, Child character*

INTRODUCTION

Divorce cases in Indonesia are increasing every year compared to previous years because this is caused by economic problems both internally and externally. Learning from the experience of someone who was born and raised as a child of a broken home. However, under such circumstances, it becomes a spirit and turning point to achieve success. However, there are also children of broken homes who fall into negative things caused by divorce from their parents (Firiani, 2018). Because generally, the ideal of a family is warmth, affection, respect, and mutual protection. Children who are raised and educated in a harmonious and happy family will be happy and have a comfortable and healthy life. This will look different when compared to children who have been raised in an incomplete family or broken home with an inharmonious family condition, and there is no peace in it. What is in a broken home family is chaos and disputes that cause quarrels and end in divorce.

Divorce is an agreement to end a sacred bond chosen by a husband and wife for the common good without considering the impact of the divorce. The impact of divorce will certainly be on a child who becomes a victim of parental divorce, and an incident like this has a fatal effect on the child's psychology and mentality (Mistiani, 2020). Broken home: Apart from affecting the child's psychology, the most obvious impact and occurrence due to divorce cases is the relationship between parents and children, both in terms of communication, psychology, and education of the child; in this case, the child in question is a small child, teenager, and adult (Muttaqin, 2019). If the relationship between a child and parent seems good, then the happiness desired by the child will

be obtained. It should be noted that a broken home is not only about separation or divorce between the two parents, which results in the end of a family, but a broken home can also be interpreted as imperfection and not complementing each other, where parents are unable to build and act as good parents (Sulistiyanto, 2017). In a family, parents should be able to provide good examples to their children, as positive influences will have a lasting impact on the child's future. However, now the fact is that many children from broken homes are actually trapped in free association, and juvenile delinquency is caused by a lack of attention from parents (Cholid, 2021).

A non-harmonious family environment, such as parental divorce or a broken home, significantly affects a child's psychological and social development, particularly during adolescence. Children who once lived with both parents tend to experience a deep sense of emotional loss when their parents separate, in contrast to children who are unaware of the divorce due to their parents' efforts to conceal the situation. The way parents communicate or hide the reality of divorce plays a crucial role in shaping the child's emotional response (Hetherington, 2002). Adolescence (approximately 15–19 years old) is a critical psychosocial developmental stage where individuals begin to form their identity, establish more complex social relationships, and process life experiences more deeply (Ayriza & Izzaty, 2023; Santrock, 2002). At this age, adolescents are more vulnerable to external influences, including the psychological effects of parental separation. If not properly addressed by parents or the social environment, these experiences may lead to psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, a decline in academic motivation, and even delinquent behavior as a form of attention-seeking at school. A decline in academic performance and the emergence of disruptive behavior are often manifestations of unresolved psychological stress caused by family conflicts (Hafiza & Mawarpury, 2018). Children from broken homes often lack a secure emotional environment, which may lead them to seek attention in negative ways, such as misbehavior or aggression in school settings.

Research on the impact of broken home families on the moral and psychological development of adolescents has been conducted by many researchers. From the many studies, several relevant ones are identified, including the first, a research article by Wiwin Mistiani entitled "The Impact of Broken Home Families on Child Psychology" (Mistiani, 2020). This study tries to explain that the psychological impact of broken homes is that children often experience excessive anxiety and uncertain fears when they hear and see their parents fighting. Usually children always have excessive guilt and feel trapped because they have to choose one of their parents. Second, research by M. Yusuf, as cited in a journal article entitled "The Impact of Parental Divorce on Children" (Yusuf, 2014). The study tries to explain that divorce has a enormous influence on the development of the child's soul and education, especially for children who are still in elementary school and children who are still teenagers. Third, research from Imron Muttaqin in a journal article entitled "Analysis of Causal Factors and Impacts of Broken Home Families" (Muttaqin, 2019). In this study, Imron tries to discuss the causes of broken homes and their impacts on children. Fourth, the subsequent research was conducted by Nurtia Massa et al. and is entitled "The Impact of Broken Home Families on Children's Social Behavior." This study explains that in broken-home children, there are several social behaviors of children that can cause children to experience mental disorders, hate their parents, be easily influenced by negative things from the environment, and have a sense of insecurity.

In this study, the author emphasizes that the phenomenon of a broken home is not always identical to the formal divorce of parents, but can also occur in families that are physically intact but lose harmony, healthy communication, and optimal parenting roles. Children in families like this often experience emotional and psychological stress that impacts their moral and psychological development, especially in the context of school life (Miftachurrozaq & Suyadi, 2023). This research is important as an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the broader impact of broken homes on children's moral and psychological conditions, especially in elementary school environments. The school environment is where children spend most of their time and is a space

where their behavior and psychological conditions can be observed clearly. By understanding how family background affects children in an educational environment, it is hoped that the results of this study can inform teachers, parents, and schools in creating a more empathetic and responsive approach to the needs of children from disharmonious families.

(Repetition from previous paragraph) The novelty of this study lies in the focus on elementary school students (grade VI), as well as the emphasis on the dynamics of disharmonious families which are not necessarily legally divorced but are still rarely the subject of research. In addition, the interpretive qualitative approach used provides space for a deeper exploration of children's subjective experiences, resulting in a more holistic understanding of the influence of family conditions on children's morals and psyches at elementary school age. Thus, this article is expected to be able to provide scientific contributions and practical insights in understanding and dealing with psychosocial problems experienced by children from broken homes, both within the school environment and the broader community.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with an interpretative type, aiming to understand and interpret student behavior based on their experiences and social conditions, especially students from broken homes. The subjects of the study were focused on sixth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Sribitan, Kasihan District, Bantul Regency, who were selected purposively based on certain characteristics, namely coming from broken homes. The selection of the research location was based on several considerations, including accessibility, geographical proximity, and the availability of subjects that met the research criteria. This study was conducted for approximately two weeks, a time span considered sufficient to cover the entire research process. Data collection techniques used included observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observations were conducted to directly observe student behavior in the school environment, while interviews aimed to explore students' experiences and feelings in more depth. Questionnaires were used as complementary data to obtain additional information that might not have been revealed through observation and interviews. Data sources in this study are divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data. The data obtained will be analyzed both descriptively and qualitatively to provide a detailed description of the behavior and psychosocial conditions of students from broken homes. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of family conditions on student behavior at school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study, conducted on sixth-grade students at SD N 1 Sribitan, employed a qualitative approach with purposive sampling to investigate the impact of broken home family backgrounds on the moral and psychological development of children. From the five students initially identified, two individuals referred to here as A.C.P. and P.D.A. were selected as primary participants due to the alignment of their familial circumstances with the focus of this research. The use of pseudonyms underscores the ethical responsibility of the researcher to protect the privacy and dignity of the participants and their families, a standard practice in educational and psychological research (Creswell, 2015; Subedi, 2025). A.C.P., a 12-year-old female student and an only child, was primarily raised by her grandmother following the separation of her parents during infancy. Although she currently lives with her biological father and maintains contact with her mother via telephone, the emotional connection appears limited. The participant herself notes that the relationship is materially sufficient, but lacks the emotional and nurturing dimension of parental affection. Observational data corroborate this emotional deficiency, as A.C.P. presents as a withdrawn, quiet student in the classroom environment.

This behavior aligns with findings by Syifa (2024), who assert that children in divorced or emotionally fragmented households often exhibit internalizing symptoms such as withdrawal, sadness, and reduced classroom participation. The psychological effects of early parental separation, especially without sustained emotional support, can result in a diminished sense of security, which is crucial for a child's socio-emotional growth (Hetherington, 2002). Furthermore, Santrock (2008), notes that the lack of consistent, affective parental involvement can impede a child's ability to develop social competence and trust in others, which may manifest as quiet or avoidant behavior in peer and academic contexts. In the case of A.C.P., the material support from the mother, while helpful, fails to substitute the emotional nurturing required for balanced moral and psychological development.

In contrast, P.D.A., a 13-year-old male student and the eldest of two siblings, demonstrates more externalized symptoms of distress. Following his parents' divorce during his early childhood, he was raised by his maternal grandmother while his father relocated and remarried. Although communication with the father was initially maintained, it deteriorated during his sixth-grade year due to unresolved personal conflict. As a result, P.D.A. began exhibiting emotionally volatile behavior and frequent classroom disruptions, which can be interpreted as mechanisms for gaining attention and expressing unresolved emotional pain. This behavioral pattern is consistent with the work of Rahmi (2024), who argues that children of divorced parents are more likely to display conduct problems, particularly when parental conflict remains unresolved or relationships with one parent are strained. Moreover, the absence of a father figure during critical developmental phases has been associated with increased behavioral maladjustment and aggression in boys (Bariyah, 2022; McLanahan et al., 2013).

According to Shihab (2023), in the Indonesian context, adolescents from broken homes may manifest their emotional struggles through school misconduct or rebellious acts, often as a response to a sense of abandonment or rejection. The behavior of P.D.A. can thus be understood as a coping strategy in response to emotional instability and the perceived absence of paternal affection, mirroring findings from both global and local research. The contrasting behaviors of A.C.P. and P.D.A. highlight the diverse psychological and moral responses children may develop in the aftermath of familial breakdown. While one internalizes distress through silence and emotional withdrawal, the other externalizes pain through disruptive actions. These findings reinforce the notion that emotional support and parental involvement, rather than the mere presence of biological parents, are critical to the child's development. This study supports existing literature while offering contextual novelty by focusing on primary school students in a rural Indonesian setting, a demographic often overlooked in studies of broken homes, which tend to focus on adolescents. The emotional expressions observed in both participants underscore the urgent need for school-based interventions, such as counseling and structured emotional support, to help students navigate familial disruptions.

Parenting in a Broken Home Family

The family serves as the primary educational environment for a child, often referred to as the first school or *madrasah utama*. Within this setting, children acquire foundational values, emotional regulation, social norms, and moral frameworks that shape their behavior and worldview. Consequently, the parenting style adopted within the family significantly influences the child's development across various domains. In families experiencing disruption or "broken home" conditions characterized by separation, divorce, or persistent conflict, the parenting dynamic often undergoes significant changes. Such alterations can lead to inconsistent or diminished parental involvement, adversely affecting the child's psychological and emotional well-being. Research indicates that children from broken homes may exhibit behavioral issues, such as seeking attention through disruptive acts, and experience challenges in moral development, including reluctance to apologize or adhere to established rules (Turner et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the absence of a cohesive family structure can impede the development of self-regulation skills in children. Studies have shown that adolescents from broken homes often struggle with managing negative emotions like loneliness, anxiety, and frustration, which can manifest as impulsive behaviors or social withdrawal (Anggraini et al., 2025). The parenting style adopted in the aftermath of family disruption plays a crucial role in either mitigating or exacerbating these challenges. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and consistent discipline, has been associated with positive outcomes, fostering resilience and emotional stability in children. Conversely, permissive or neglectful parenting may lead to increased behavioral problems and emotional distress.

1. Absence Of Parental Love And Attention

The phenomenon of broken homes, which generally occurs due to parental divorce, has a significant impact on the psychological and emotional development of children (Mahendra et al., 2022). In this context, two participants, A.C.P. and P.D.A., experienced parental separation at an early age, which caused changes in their parenting patterns and social environment. Children from broken homes often face emotional challenges, such as anxiety, feelings of loss, and behavioral changes (Syifa, 2024). Research shows that these conditions can cause children to become more withdrawn, less confident, and have difficulty socializing. In addition, they may exhibit aggressive or withdrawn behavior in response to the stress they experience.

When A.C.P.'s parents divorced when he was a baby, his grandmother reared him until he eventually moved in with his biological father. Even if he was able to communicate with his mother over the phone, her absence might have an impact on his emotional growth. P.D.A., meanwhile, was raised by his maternal grandmother when his parents divorced when he was six years old. P.D.A. struggled to control his emotions and felt the loss of a father figure after his father remarried and moved to a different city. The importance of support from the surrounding environment, such as extended family and school, cannot be ignored. Children from broken homes need special attention to help them overcome the psychological impacts they experience. Character education and counseling in schools can play an important role in helping these children develop healthy social and emotional skills (Simbolon, 2023).

Broken homes can have a profound impact on a child's psychological and emotional development. The cases of A.C.P. and P.D.A. show how early parental separation can affect a child's behavior and emotional well-being. Therefore, interventions from the surrounding environment, including support from the extended family and educational institutions, are essential to help these children overcome the challenges they face and support their optimal development.

2. Insufficient Interaction With Parents

The family unit serves as the foundational environment for a child's development, with parent-child interactions playing a pivotal role in shaping emotional well-being and psychological resilience. In cases where families experience disruption, such as divorce or separation, the dynamics of these interactions often change, potentially impacting the child's developmental trajectory.

In the context of this study, two participants, A.C.P. and P.D.A., provide insight into how variations in post-divorce living arrangements and parental communication influence child development. Both children, following their parents' separation, resided with their grandparents rather than their biological parents. A.C.P.'s mother relocated to Tangerang and formed a new family, while her father frequently traveled for work, resulting in limited direct communication. Similarly, P.D.A. experienced a cessation of communication with his biological father due to geographical distance and personal factors, despite residing with his mother, who had remarried. The absence of consistent and quality communication with biological parents in both cases underscores the significance of parental involvement in a child's life. Research indicates that effective parent-child communication fosters trust, emotional

security, and social competence in children (Soetjiningsih, 2015). Conversely, a lack of such interaction can lead to feelings of neglect and emotional distress.

Moreover, studies have shown that children from disrupted families are at an increased risk of experiencing mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, and behavioral issues. A qualitative study conducted at MAN 2 Model Medan revealed that students from broken homes exhibited changes in emotional, social, and behavioral aspects, highlighting the profound impact of family dynamics on mental health (Iswaratama & Sa, 2024). These findings align with the experiences of A.C.P. and P.D.A., who, despite differing circumstances, both faced challenges associated with limited parental communication.

In conclusion, the cases of A.C.P. and P.D.A. illustrate the critical role of sustained and meaningful parent-child communication in promoting psychological well-being, particularly in the aftermath of familial disruptions. Interventions aimed at facilitating such communication, even in non-traditional living arrangements, are essential in supporting the emotional and psychological development of children from broken homes.

How Children's Moral Development Is Affected by Broken Homes

The parenting style observed in broken home families characterized by a lack of parent-child communication, insufficient parental guidance, and weak psychological bonding can have significant repercussions on the moral behavior of children. The absence of open and nurturing interaction disrupts the emotional and cognitive development of the child, which often manifests in various forms of moral disorientation. In such familial contexts, children are deprived of consistent moral modeling, which is essential in forming a clear understanding of right and wrong. Without direct communication and emotional support from parents, children may struggle to internalize values such as empathy, responsibility, and honesty. This emotional vacuum can lead to behaviors that are reactive rather than reflective, often driven by unmet emotional needs or attempts to gain attention.

Research supports the notion that the absence of parental guidance contributes to the decline in moral behavior and emotional stability. For instance, Mahendra et al. (2022), in a study on broken home students, found that emotional neglect and lack of involvement from parents often lead to issues such as defiance, lack of discipline, and difficulty in managing interpersonal relationships. These patterns were evident in the participants of this study, whose moral behavior shaped in the absence of consistent guidance and emotional nurturing was often marked by disobedience, aggression, or withdrawal. Therefore, parenting in a broken home setting must be examined not only in terms of structural changes in the family but also through the lens of emotional availability and psychological attunement, both of which are critical to the moral development of children.

1. Making Mistakes And Causing Difficulty But Refusing To Say Sorry

Every individual inevitably makes mistakes throughout their life, and children whose moral reasoning is still in development are no exception. In this study, participants demonstrated a tendency to avoid apologizing after committing a wrongdoing. This was evident in the interview sessions conducted by the researcher, where two participants A.C.P. and P.D.A., admitted to feeling guilt after making a mistake but refrained from apologizing.

A.C.P. expressed that she realized her mistakes and felt guilty. She also acknowledged that she was aware of the need to apologize after doing something wrong, yet admitted that she had never actually done so. Similarly, P.D.A. mentioned that he often felt guilty after making a mistake, but he found it difficult to apologize due to feelings of embarrassment. These honest statements suggest a gap between moral awareness and moral action. Although both participants cognitively recognize their wrongdoing and experience emotional responses such as guilt, their behavior does not align with the expected moral response apologizing. This dissonance between moral cognition and moral behavior may reflect underdeveloped

emotional regulation or internalized behavioral norms that discourage vulnerability, such as embarrassment or pride.

The reluctance to apologize may also be linked to the lack of emotional modeling within their immediate family environments, particularly as both participants come from broken home situations with limited parental interaction. Emotional behaviors such as expressing remorse, taking responsibility, and making amends are typically learned through consistent and meaningful parent-child interaction. When these interactions are limited or disrupted, children may not fully internalize socially constructive behaviors.

According to Dweck (2006), children should be taught to acknowledge their mistakes, apologize, and take steps to correct their behavior. This process reinforces moral development and fosters empathy and accountability (Adams & Robert J. Butch, 2001). In light of these findings, it is essential for educators and caregivers—particularly in contexts where children may lack consistent parental presence—to intentionally model and reinforce prosocial behaviors such as apologizing and taking responsibility. This not only aids moral development but also contributes to healthier interpersonal relationships.

2. Frequently Breaking School Rules

Moral development in children is closely linked to their ability to adhere to established rules and norms. Obedience to rules is a fundamental indicator of moral maturity, reflecting a child's understanding of right and wrong, as well as their capacity for self-regulation. In the context of school environments, adherence to rules not only facilitates orderly conduct but also serves as a microcosm for societal expectations, preparing children for responsible citizenship. In the present study, observations revealed that the participant, P.D.A., consistently exhibited behaviors indicative of non-compliance with school regulations. These behaviors included creating disturbances during class, littering, disrupting peers during instructional time, neglecting assignments, and disregarding dress codes. Such actions suggest a deficiency in internalized moral standards and a lack of respect for communal norms.

Kurniawan (2018), emphasizes that school rules are not merely administrative tools but are integral to character formation. They instill discipline, responsibility, and awareness of one's duties within a community. By consistently enforcing these rules, schools play a pivotal role in shaping students' moral compasses and fostering environments conducive to ethical development. The participant's acknowledgement of their misconduct underscores the importance of consistent and meaningful engagement with moral education. It highlights the need for interventions that address not only behavioral infractions but also the underlying moral reasoning processes. Educators and parents must collaborate to reinforce positive behaviors, model ethical conduct, and provide clear explanations of the rationale behind rules to cultivate a deeper understanding and acceptance among students. The participant's behavior reflects a gap in moral development, as evidenced by repeated violations of school rules. Addressing this requires a holistic approach that combines consistent rule enforcement with moral education, fostering environments where children can internalize ethical values and understand the significance of their actions within a community.

3. Making Noise During Class Hours In An Attempt To Get Attention

In this study, observational findings reveal contrasting behavioral tendencies between two participants, P.D.A. and A.C.P., both from broken home backgrounds. P.D.A. exhibits overt attention-seeking behaviors, such as creating disturbances during class, intruding into other classrooms, and displaying emotional outbursts when prompted to apologize. These actions align with Susanto (2018), assertion that individuals who seek attention through disruptive behaviors are often grappling with personal and social issues, indicating underlying psychosocial challenges. Conversely, A.C.P. demonstrates a more introverted demeanor, remaining quiet and attentive during lessons but occasionally engaging in disruptive acts like shouting without clear provocation. This behavior may reflect internalized stress or unmet emotional needs, manifesting sporadically in the classroom setting.

Both behavioral patterns underscore the impact of disrupted family structures on children's psychosocial development. The absence of consistent parental communication and support can lead to feelings of neglect, prompting children to seek validation through various means. As noted in the literature, attention-seeking behaviors in children are often rooted in a desire for acceptance and response to feelings of insecurity stemming from familial instability (Dalili & Zohuri, 2025). Addressing these behaviors necessitates a comprehensive approach involving educators, counselors, and caregivers. Implementing consistent behavioral interventions, fostering open communication, and providing emotional support can mitigate the adverse effects of broken home environments on children's behavior and overall well-being.

The Effects of Broken Families on the Psychological Development of Children

The impact of a broken home extends beyond merely influencing a child's moral development; it significantly affects the psychological growth and emotional well-being of the child as well (Sarnoto et al., 2024). Research consistently shows that children from disrupted family environments often face multifaceted challenges that hinder their ability to cope with everyday stressors, regulate emotions, and form secure interpersonal relationships. In this study, emerging patterns from the participants reveal several pronounced psychological tendencies that warrant careful consideration.

Firstly, children from broken homes frequently experience heightened feelings of insecurity and abandonment, which manifest in anxiety, withdrawal, or oppositional behaviors. These internal struggles often stem from the inconsistency of parental presence and emotional support, which are critical during formative developmental stages (Costanzo et al., 2023). The lack of stable caregiving figures creates an environment where children may struggle to develop a coherent sense of self and emotional regulation. Secondly, the psychological impact is also observed in diminished self-esteem and increased vulnerability to mental health issues such as depression and behavioral disorders. The instability inherent in broken homes can disrupt the normal progression of psychosocial development, as theorized in Erikson's stages of psychosocial growth, where trust and autonomy are foundational to subsequent stages of identity formation.

Moreover, the study's participants exhibited symptoms such as emotional volatility, difficulties in social interactions, and a tendency toward attention-seeking behaviors common indicators of underlying psychological distress. These findings align with prior research highlighting the correlation between family fragmentation and adverse mental health outcomes in children (Brooks et al., 2020; Yusuf & Hamami, 2022). These psychological effects not only impede academic performance but also affect social integration, highlighting the critical need for supportive interventions. The psychological consequences of broken home environments underscore the necessity for holistic approaches encompassing family counseling, school-based psychological support, and community engagement. Addressing both the moral and psychological dimensions of children's development in such contexts is paramount to fostering resilience and promoting healthier developmental trajectories.

1. Lack Of Enthusiasm For Gaining New Experiences

The findings of this study highlight the significant impact of broken home environments on children's learning motivation and self-confidence. Specifically, participant P.D.A. exhibited a noticeable lack of enthusiasm for learning and a reluctance to engage with new material. Instead of focusing on academic tasks, P.D.A. frequently disrupted the classroom environment and distracted peers. Similarly, while A.C.P. demonstrated slightly better engagement, she still contributed to classroom disturbances by joking with seatmates during instructional time.

These behaviors can be attributed to the absence of parental motivation and emotional support. As Jahja (2011), emphasizes, children require more than just verbal encouragement; they need emotional warmth, affection, and consistent support to foster a strong desire to

learn. In cases where such support is lacking, children may struggle with self-confidence and exhibit disengagement from academic activities. Research supports the notion that children from broken homes often experience diminished academic motivation (Pinneo & Nolen, 2024). A study conducted in North Lombok, Indonesia, found that students from broken home families tended to be less motivated to learn, often displaying indifference towards the learning process and a lack of enthusiasm for school activities (Wulandari et al., 2023). This lack of motivation can lead to decreased academic performance and a general disinterest in educational pursuits.

Furthermore, the role of parental involvement is crucial in shaping a child's academic motivation and self-confidence. When parents are actively engaged in their child's education, it fosters a sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for learning. Conversely, the absence of such involvement, as seen in the cases of P.D.A. and A.C.P., can result in a lack of motivation and behavioral issues in the classroom. The study underscores the importance of parental support and involvement in children's education, particularly for those from broken home environments. Without adequate emotional and motivational support from parents, children may struggle with self-confidence and exhibit decreased motivation to learn, leading to academic and behavioral challenges.

2. Frequently Contrasts Himself With His Pals

Social comparison is a natural and frequent process in early childhood, particularly around the age of five. At this developmental stage, children begin to evaluate themselves by comparing their abilities, possessions, and social status with those of their peers. While such comparisons can serve as a mechanism for self-assessment and motivation, they can also lead to negative emotional outcomes if not properly managed. Research indicates that social comparison significantly influences children's self-evaluation and self-concept (Bosch & Wilbert, 2023). A study published in *Frontiers in Education* found that children's perceptions of their social standing within a group strongly affect their self-assessment of performance, which in turn impacts their self-concept and interest in tasks. Specifically, children who perceive themselves as lower in social rank may experience diminished self-evaluation, leading to decreased self-esteem and motivation.

Furthermore, social comparisons can elicit emotions such as envy and jealousy, which are prevalent even in young children. These emotions can negatively affect social interactions and contribute to feelings of inadequacy (Steinbeis & Singer, 2013). If children consistently perceive themselves as inferior to their peers, they may develop a negative self-image, leading to issues such as low self-confidence and social withdrawal. To mitigate the adverse effects of social comparison, it is crucial for parents and educators to foster environments that emphasize individual growth and self-improvement over competition (Lim et al., 2023). Encouraging children to set personal goals and recognize their unique strengths can help build resilience and a positive self-concept. Additionally, teaching children to appreciate diversity and practice empathy can reduce feelings of envy and promote healthier social interactions. While social comparison is an inherent aspect of child development, its impact on a child's psychological well-being depends on how it is navigated. By providing supportive environments and guidance, adults can help children harness social comparison as a tool for growth rather than a source of distress.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the condition of a broken home family has a significant negative impact on children's psychological and moral development, particularly among sixth-grade students at SD N 1 Sribitan. Children who grow up in disrupted family environments tend to experience emotional, social, and behavioral challenges. This is evident in various forms of misconduct observed at school, such as repeated disruptions during class, failure to follow school regulations, reluctance to apologize after making mistakes, and a general lack of responsibility. These behavioral indicators suggest delays in psychological development, which, if left unaddressed, may hinder the formation of healthy personality traits and moral awareness. A primary contributing factor is the lack of effective communication and emotional support from parents following divorce or separation. When children do not receive sufficient affection and attention particularly during the transitional period after parental separation they are more likely to struggle with identity issues, low self-esteem, and difficulty regulating emotions. Therefore, children from broken home families require a holistic and supportive approach that involves continuous psychosocial assistance from schools, caregivers, and extended family members such as grandparents. Consistent emotional encouragement, moral guidance, and character education are essential to help these children adapt to their new family structures, regain motivation, and build resilience, confidence, and a sense of moral responsibility. By fostering a deeper understanding of the psychological conditions experienced by children from broken home backgrounds, educators, caregivers, and policymakers can provide more empathetic support and implement targeted interventions to ensure these children receive the developmental support necessary for healthy emotional and moral growth.

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