Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if social support is a factor related to higher confidence levels for those affected by parental divorce. Social support can be defined as financial support, service support, or guidance counseling (Kitson, Moir, & Mason, 1982). Past research indicates that both sibling and parental support, by way of financial, service, and guidance counseling, promote post-divorce adjustment (Jacobs & Sillars, 2012).

Methods

Sample

- N = 312 Young Adults (18-25 yrs. Old) who experience parental divorce between 2-17 yrs. old (78% female).
- Age: Average age of participants was 22 (SD=2.2) 54% of participants 21-24 (N=166)
- Race: (35%) Caucasian; (33%) African American; (16%) Hispanic American; (11%) multiracial; (4%) Asian American; (2%) Pacific Islander

Measures

- Revised-Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason, Levine, Basham & Sarason, 1983) for quantity (SSQ-N; χ² = .94) and quality (SSQ-S; χ² = .97) of social support.
- Confidence Scale (α = .92; Stanley, Hoyer, & Trathen, 1994) for romantic confidence
- Generalized Expectancy for Success Scale (GESS) (α = 91.; Hale, Fiedler, & Cochran, 1992) for career aspirations

Analysis

- Pearson 2-tailed correlation
- One-way MANOVA

Results: MANOVA Table for Social Support & Confidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV Variables (Social Support)</th>
<th>DV Variables</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Support Satisfaction (Quantity)</td>
<td>Confidence Scale</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.741</td>
<td>2.262</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Social Support (Quantity)</td>
<td>GESS Scale</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>2.040</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support Satisfaction &amp; Amount of Social Support</td>
<td>GESS Scale</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1.448</td>
<td>1.880</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results: Pearson Correlation Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Amount of Social Support (SSQ-N)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Career Confidence (GESS)</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship Confidence (CSS)</td>
<td>.285</td>
<td>.441</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p<.025 level

a. R = .952 (Adjusted R² = .470)
b. R = .946 (Adjusted R² = .405)

p<.001 level

Discussion

The results indicate that for those who experienced parental divorce, the quality of social support has a positive influence in terms of career expectations and relationship confidence and that there was a significant relationship between the amount of social support and confidence levels.

The findings also suggest that the perceived quality of relationship regarding social support has a greater influence on confidence levels than the quantity or amount of social support given by parents, family members, or friends.

Clinical Implications

The results of the study emphasize the importance of social support and provide support for previous research indicating that involvement with both parents after the divorce is an important adjustment factor for children of parental divorce (Austin et al., 2013).

The findings from the study and previous research indicate the quality of parental support is related to adolescent’s adjustment to divorce, specifically in terms of their career confidence and relationship confidence (Sigal, Wolchik, Tein, & Sandler, 2012).

When discussing the well-being of children, clinicians may encourage parents to maintain a consistent relationship with their children and encourage healthy relationships with other supportive family members.

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References


