

Methodist University College, Ghana
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

**THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL STATUS ON
DEPRESSION AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG
ADOLESCENTS IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF
THE CHRISTIAN METHODIST SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL**



SEGBEFIA, ELLEN

(1011000225)

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DECLARATION

I, Ellen Segbefia, confirm that this work is my own and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in this work have been fully acknowledged.

.....

Ellen Segbefia

(Student)

.....

Date

We hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University.



.....

Prof. Samuel A. Danquah

(Thesis Supervisor 1)

.....

Date

.....

Dr. Benjamin Amponsah

(Thesis Supervisor 2)

.....

Date

DEDICATION

To God Almighty.



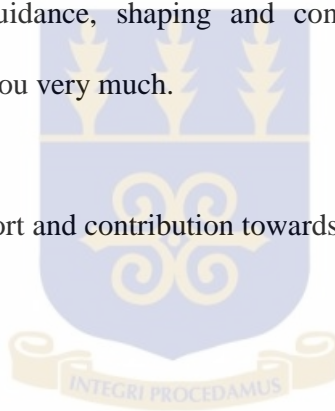
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ABSTRACT

Divorce, single parenting and issues associated with parental status on an adolescent's well-being specifically, adolescents' depression and self-esteem has been on an increase worldwide and Ghana is no exception. This study was aimed at examining the influence of parental status on depression and self esteem of adolescents in Ghana after noticing that adolescents going through formal education face many challenging situations as a result of diverse marital issues of their parents. Specifically, the study was aimed at examining if a significant difference existed between parental status on depression and self-esteem of Ghanaian adolescents. It also investigated relationship between depression and self-esteem among adolescents. It further examined if a difference existed between female adolescents who live with their single-parent mothers and male adolescents who live with both parents on depression. Lastly, it examined whether a significant sex differences existed among adolescents on self-esteem. In all, 308 respondents were selected across the three stages of the senior high educational level to respond to the questionnaire. Findings of the analyses revealed that adolescents of single-parents had significantly more depression than adolescents of intact-parents. Adolescents of intact-parents had significantly higher personal self-esteem and general self-esteem than of single-parents but there was no significant difference existed between them on social self-esteem. There was a significant negative relationship between depression and social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem. However, there was no significant interaction effect observed between sex (male and female) and parental status (single-parent-father, single-parent-mother, and intact-parents). Male adolescents had significantly higher social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem than female adolescents. Necessary implications and recommendations to the educational sector, clinicians and other relevant mental health professionals have been made.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Families, the world over, have been undergoing drastic changes over the past half a century (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995) and adolescents have been found to be the most affected in terms of marriage breakup (Mandara & Murray, 2000). Marriage, a union between men and women is intended as a source of happiness, pleasure, compassion, love, a powerful form of communication and it typically provides a reliable means for satisfaction of sexual desires (Amidu, Owiredu, Gyasi-Sarpong, Woode, & Quaye, 2011; Oniye, 2008).

Marriage sometimes suffers from setbacks which usually result in divorce. There are situations like separation, or death of a partner which leaves one of them widowed. Whilst separation and death are two unfortunate situations that do occur, divorce is often more of a mutual agreement by couples to dissolve their marriage. Divorce is generally frowned upon in the society (Duncan, 2004). Whatever the cause, where there are children, usually one of the partners has to take care of them. In other words, there will be a single parent heading the family.

Parental status is referred to a parent which includes a biological parent, step-parent, foster parent, adoptive parent or guardian but with a child. A single parent (an aspect of parental status) refers to a parent who is not living with his/her spouse or partner but is considered as the primary caregiver who has the major responsibilities of raising the child or children (Dowd, 1997). It usually happens when one is divorced, widowed, or unmarried. They may be teenaged (or older) who may have been previously married or not (Weinraub, Horvath, & Gringlas, 2002).

Statistics show that the early 1960s was the end of baby-boom period (1946-1965) when many people married at a very young age and had relatively large families (Carlson, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2008). Among Canadians, legalization of birth control pill, introduction of 'no fault' divorce as well as growing participation of women in higher education or in gainful employment at the end of 1960s were reported to have influenced the delay of family formation, smaller family size and an increased diversity of family structures (Statistics Canada, 2012). This situation was also similar in the US where the number of married couples had declined from 85% in 1970 to 69% in 1994 for children under 18 years (Saluter, 1996), and from 40% of all households in 1970 to 23% in 2007 for the proportion of married-couple with their own children (Kreider & Elliott, 2009). In other words, among US citizens, children living with single parents (divorced or separated) in 1960 were 50.6%, to the peak of 66.5% in 1982 (probably due to improvement in data collection and processing procedures), and declining to 55.4% in 1994 (Adegoke, 2010; Saluter, 1996), 25.4% in 1996, and then marginally increasing to 25.5% in 2001, 26.4% in 2004, and 27.3% in 2009 as reported by United State Census Bureau (2011).

Sixteen years ago, it was reported in the United States that 109.2 million adults (55.9% of the adult population) were married and living with their spouse. In the same year, 19.3 million adults representing 9.9% of this population were currently divorced. Over one-third of these households (35.6%) had children who were less than 15 years. About 19.8 million children under 18 years lived with one parent (Lugaila, 1998a). In 1998, 110.6 million adults (56% of the adult population) were married and living with their spouse and 19.4 million divorced adults. It was also stated that about 19.8 million (27.7%) children under 18 years lived with one parent (Lugaila, 1998b).

Adegoke (2010) therefore, speculated that close to two thirds of new marriages would end in divorce as the proportion of marriages ended by death of a spouse had declined, whilst the proportion which ended by divorce has increased since the 19th century. Among Nigerians, high divorce rate is being witnessed as a result of urbanization and industrialization. The extended family that used to resolve conflicts or misunderstandings that arise between couples was no longer functioning effectively as there is a shift towards the nuclear family system which is characterised by less involvement of extended members in the resolution of marital conflicts (Adegoke, 2010).

Among Ghanaians, it has been reported that a significantly higher proportion of households are headed by divorced and widowed females than divorced and widowed males and the trend seems to be increasing (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2005a). In 1960, there were 16.7% divorced females as compared to 5.6% males. In 2000, there were 22.4% divorced females as compared to 5.5% males. Furthermore, there were 2.3% widowed males and 21.3% widowed females in 1960 whilst in 2000, there were 1.9% widowed males and 22.0% widowed females (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2005a). The 2010 Population and Housing Census, as reported by Ghana Statistical Service (2012), indicated that there are 4.2% divorcees in Ghana with 2.7% males and 5.5% females. Furthermore, there are 6.0% widows comprising of 1.6% for males and 10% females taking care of people who are 18 years old. A critical look at the first two data sets (i.e. year 1960 and 2000) indicates that there were increases in the divorce rate for female Ghanaians but not for Ghanaian males. However, there was a decreased of percentage for widowed males but not for their female counterparts. Conversely, there was a decrease in, percentage-wise, the proportion of divorced males and females in the 2010 census (GSS, 2012). Rural dwellers have more widowed (8.5% as compared to 7.9% in urban areas) individuals whilst the urban dwellers

have more divorced (8.1% as compared to 7.45 in rural areas) individuals. It was further found that higher proportions of females than males are in wedlock at younger ages (15-39) but subsequently higher proportions of females than males are either divorced, separated or widowed (GSS, 2005a).

Urbanization has been tagged as one of the factors contributing to the increasing single headed households. About a third of households in Ghana (31%) are headed by females, a situation which is also partly a reflection of migration trends, divorce, single parenthood and widowhood (GSS, 2005b). It has been revealed that about two-thirds (65.1%) of households have both parents living with their children, whereas 6.8% have neither parent present. It further revealed that about 30% of all households are headed by single parents with about a quarter of households having children living with only their mothers whilst about 3% of households have children living with only their fathers (GSS, 2008). It has also been speculated that the changes in lifestyle, educational and other socio-economic opportunities that go with urbanization do contribute to emerging household structure (GSS, 2005b).

In most situations, the negative effects of the divorce or separation on the children are not seriously taken into consideration. The adolescent stage is one of the most crucial periods in human development as they are in a transition from childhood to adulthood. They are usually confused as to where they belong with a lot of physiological, social and psychological changes. They start seeking to understand their personality very well, focus on how they appear to others, and seeking to understand many aspects in life (Beckett, 2002). Hence, with this trend, it can be expected that the negative effect of the divorce and single parenthood would be impacted more on the children (Adegoke, 2010). Some of the most frequently reported negative impacts of divorce or single parenthood on adolescents are poor academic

performance, depression and low self-esteem (Barajas, 2011; Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Palosaari & Aro, 1995; Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012). In fact, it has been reported that children of divorced parents scored higher on depression than children of non-divorced parents (Brubeck & Beer, 1992).

1.2 Problem Statement

Parenting is a biological and social process (Lerner, Castellino, Terry, Villarruel, & Mckinney, 1995) which transcends generational groups and functions with regard to domains of survival, reproduction, nurturance and socialization. It is a complex process, involving much more than a mother or father providing food, safety succor to an infant or a child. Parenting involves bidirectional relationships between members of two or more generations and can extend through all or major parts of the respective life spans of these groups and may engage all institutions within a culture and is embedded in the history of a people (Ford & Lerner, 1992).

It is a major function of the family to raise the young person in a healthy manner (Bornstein, 1995). Mainly, to provide a safe, nurturing, loving and supportive environment that allows the (children) to have a happy and healthy youth. This type of experience allows the youth to develop the knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours necessary to become an adult making productive contribution to self, family, community and society (Lerner et al., 1995). According to Erel and Burman (1995), two-parent homes facilitate a better environment for youth's wellbeing compared with single-parent homes. Hence, it is anticipated that children from single parent homes will be severely handicapped as there will be lack of the physical presence of both parents which has its psychological and physical consequences (Bergman, 2007).

Having been in education and as such worked with children and adolescents for sometime has resulted in the researcher's interest in the establishment of healthy foundation in education, development and training of children. In working with these children who come from various family backgrounds, it was discovered that adolescents going through formal education face challenging situations as a result of diverse marital issues. Mandara and Murray (2000) for instance reported of the importance of two family parents as compared to single family parents, especially when the father is absent. However, since most of these children make it in life, the effects of parental status are ignored. Nonetheless, it has also been reported that children of divorced parents suffer from depression more than children of non-divorced parents (Brubeck & Beer, 1992). These bases ignited the purpose of this particular research to finding out the comparative difference between the parenting statuses on adolescents' depression and self-esteem. Specifically, this study was geared towards examining the influence of parental status on depression and self-esteem among adolescents in Ghana.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The study aimed at examining the influence of parental status on depression and self-esteem among adolescents. Hence, it specifically sought;

1. To examine if a significant difference exists between parental status (single and intact parental status) on depression among Ghanaian adolescents.
2. To investigate whether a significant difference exists between parental statuses (single and intact parental status) on self-esteem among Ghanaian adolescents.
3. To examine if a significant relationship exists between depression and self-esteem among Ghanaian adolescents.

4. To find out if a significant difference exist between female adolescents who live with their single-parent mothers and male adolescents who live with both parents on depression.
5. To examine whether a significant sex differences exist among adolescents on self-esteem.

1.4 Significance

The study would throw more light on the influence of parental status on depression and self-esteem among adolescents in Ghana. It would fill in the gap when it comes to data on the influences of parental status on adolescents' psychological needs, especially among Ghanaians. This would also help parents to know how much divorce interferes with the emotions of their wards. This study would provide an empirical justification for parents and prospective parents to manage their marriage as well as taking care of their wards as problems in the family can affect children negatively. It is hoped that the findings would help to slow down the rate of divorce among married couples.

Clinicians or counsellors, teachers, and other health professionals will become more informed on the influence of parental status on adolescents' psychological well-being, specifically depression and self-esteem. The results and recommendations would pre-inform them on how to cater for these emotional situations by the development of appropriate therapy and counselling service to improve their mental health status.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study would use multiple theories in guiding our understanding of the concept of parental status and its influence on adolescents. Four theories being the family structure perspective, parental absence perspective, the family income perspective, and the economic disadvantage perspective are discussed in this chapter.

(a) The Family Structure Perspective

The conventional methods of studying African American families have focused on the pathological aspect rather than on the strength of the family (Littlejohn-Blake & Darling, 1993). The family structure perspective therefore, emerged to look at this side of the equation which essentially states that two-parent homes facilitate a better environment for youths' well-being compared with single-parent homes (Amato & Keith, 1991). This theory posits that adolescents and children from single-parent homes are severely handicapped. Accordingly, this perspective argues that if parents are important resources for children's development, then, all other things being equal, the most salient effect of single-parent homes on children is the lack of the physical presence of two parents (Amato & Keith, 1991; Mandara & Murray, 2000).

Most Africans, especially Ghanaians, have two family systems being the nuclear and the extended family system (Nukunya, 2003). The father is the head of the nuclear family which is made up of the father mother and children. The extended family system is headed by the 'abusua-panyin' or family head, usually an elderly male figure. However, the extended family system seems to be failing due to many factors including urbanization and migration.

Hence, the buffering system of assistance from members of the extended family against current socio-economic pressure is almost gone and now is usually borne by parents of the nuclear family. Thus in the advent of divorce or separation, a 'single' parent has to bear all the pressure involved with parenting a child (Hendricks, 2000). Mandara and Murray (2000) further reported that various studies have been conducted which further confirms the importance of two family parents as compared to single family parents, especially when the father is absent. However, this notion has been criticized for emphasizing too much on family structure at the expense of family process and for being politically conservative (Amato & Keith, 1991; Scanzoni, Polonko, Teachman, & Thompson, 1989) as it has been argued that family structure does not exert a direct effect on adolescents but, rather, an indirect effect through the social controls provided by family relationships (Demuth & Brown, 2004; Nye, 1958). McLeod, Kruttschnitt, and Dornfeld, (1994) also found that the consequences of single parent homes as compared to two parent homes were mainly related to economic deprivation. Furthermore, not even all studies have shown that two parent homes is advantageous over single parent homes as reported by Mandara and Murray (2000).

(b) Parental Absence Perspective

Closely related to the family structure perspective is the parental absence perspective. Families are noted worldwide as the key social institution for fostering good moral values and other socialization processes into young children. By tradition, it is assumed that the two-parent family (with both parents and child living in the same household) is a better environment for children's development than the single-parent family. For that matter, it has therefore been presumed that the socialization deficits that results from children's growing up with one parent rather than two can be attributed to the negative effects of divorce or separation. This is because divorce is associated with a decrease in the quantity and quality of

contact between children and their parents as both parents would be busy in gainful employment. Hence, there is a decrease in parental attention, help and supervision which leads to academic, emotional and behavioural and similar kinds of problems (Amato, 1987; Amato & Keith, 1991; Furstenburg & Nord, 1985; White, Brinkerhoff, & Booth, 1985).

The lack of parental models in the household may result in the inadequate learning of social skills such as cooperating, negotiating, and compromising necessary for success in the larger world (Amato & Keith, 1991). Hence, it has been well discussed and reported that a focus on parental absence leads to the following hypotheses. First, children who experience the death of a parent (or the loss of a parent for any other reason) would exhibit problems similar to those of children who experience parental divorce. Second, children of divorced parents have fewer problems if the custodial parent remarries than if the custodial parent remains single as a stepparent can provide an alternative role model and source of support. Third, this perspective suggests that the disruptive effects of living in a single-parent family are partly mitigated if noncustodial parents maintain close relationships with children. This leads to the hypothesis that the frequency and quality of contact with the noncustodial parent is positively associated with children's well-being (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Therefore, with respect to this study, adolescents living with single parents were expected to be more depressed and or have low self-esteem as compared to adolescents living with both parents. That is, the situation of 'two heads are better than one' applies in this case as the two parents can pull their resources together and generate more income than when there is only one parent. It was also expected that although some adolescents can make it out of these emotional problems, others would be trapped in it.

(c) The Family Income Perspective

The proponents of the economic deprivation perspective argued that the potential effects of single parents is not due to the physical absence of one parent but to the absence of the economic resources generated by the absent parent. Therefore, the effects of marital status on child wellbeing will be reduced when income is statistically controlled or when families are matched on income level (Mandara & Murray, 2000). McLeod, Kruttschnitt, and Domfeld (1994) argued that parents who experienced income loss became more rejecting of their children and that their children were at risk for developing feelings of inadequacy associated with parental rejection. It can be assumed that, all other things being equal, adolescents living with single parent will face more financial challenges as compared to those living with both parents. This limits their ability to associate with other friends and to explore their ability in the environment. However, the empirical research on the effects of income has not been adequately tested (Amato & Keith, 1991) nor has it consistently supported these assumptions for African American children (Heiss, 1996).

(d) Economic Disadvantage Perspective

Like the family income perspective, the economic disadvantage perspective points out the economic disadvantage of the divorced parents as compared to the married ones. It has been surmised that divorce usually lead to a decline in the standard of living of mother-headed families, often pushing them below poverty level (Duncan & Hoffman, 1985; Weitzman, 1985). Lack of economic resources increases the risk of the nutrition and health as well as a number of developmental problems in children (Williams, 1990). This perspective therefore, assumes that it is the economic hardship, rather than the family type, that is responsible for the lowered well-being of children from divorced parents. The economic disadvantage perspective also holds that problems observed in children of divorce are due primarily to the

loss of income experienced by custodial mothers. It has therefore been reported that poor single mothers are unable to afford private lessons, books, and other goods that facilitate academic success which further leaves their children at psychological disadvantages. Economically disadvantaged circumstances may also force families to live in neighborhoods which may be stigmatizing for children and may further facilitate the entry of adolescents into deviant subcultures as well as enrolling in school whose programs are poorly financed and services are inadequate (McLanahan, 1989; Voydanoff & Majka, 1988).

From this perspective, few differences should be observed between children from divorced and intact families if income is statistically controlled and families matched on income level. It is further hypothesised that the well-being of children from divorced parents is enhanced if custodial mothers remarry, because this usually results in improvements in financial status. It also hypothesized again that children experience fewer problems if fathers rather than mothers have custody since fathers generally earn more income than mothers do (Amato & Keith, 1991).

2.2 Review of Related Studies

Several studies (e.g., Atindanbila, Asare, & Awuah-Peasah, 2012; Elfhag, Tynelius, & Rasmussen, 2010; Mandara & Murray, 2000 and Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012) have one way or the other touched on some aspect of parental status and its influence on adolescents' well-being, specifically depression and self-esteem. The inter-relationships between depression and self-esteem were not left out of this study. The following subsections capture in detail, the various research works done on the influence of parental status on depression and self-esteem among adolescents.

2.2.1 Self-Esteem

The study by Mandara and Murray (2000) examined the effects of marital status, family income, and family functioning on African American adolescents' self-esteem. One hundred sixteen adolescents participated with 64% being females. Even when family income and family functioning were controlled, it was found out that boys with married parents had higher overall self-esteem as compared to boys with non-married parents. However, parental marital status had no effect on girls' self-esteem. Family functioning, on the other hand was a very strong predictor of self-esteem for both sexes. Family relational factors were more important to girls' self-esteem, whereas structural and growth factors were more important for boys. It was then concluded that African American adolescent boys with non-married parents are at risk for developing low self-esteem compared with other African American adolescents, but a more controlled and structured environment may serve as a buffer for non-married parents.

Another study by Elfhag, Tynelius, and Rasmussen (2010) aimed at mapping the associations of self-esteem in families with 12-year-old children and in separated spouses. The authors assessed self-esteem using the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adults and the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Children in 1,236 pairs of spouses and their 12-year-old children, and 159 pairs of ex-spouses. It was found out that ex-spouses had a lower global self-worth than did married and cohabiting spouses. In other words, the researchers found links for all aspects of self-esteem for married and cohabiting spouses in contrast with ex-spouses who lacked such associations. They also found parent-child associations for self-esteem. Girls resembled their mothers' global self-worth more than their fathers' and more than the boys.

Family members manifest similar levels of self-esteem. The spouses' similarity can be due to assortative mating, a convergence over time, or both. For children, environmental influence (in the family context) can contribute to the formation of self-esteem. Stronger mother-daughter link suggests that maternal identification of self-esteem is an environmental factor for girls in particular.

It has further been noted that being a single mother may have implications for health behaviours that can also affect the child. Additionally, information about food intakes and body weights as well as the psychological dimensions of an eating behaviour and self-esteem were of relevance to a study by Elfhag and Rasmussen (2008). They explored these variables for single, married and cohabiting mothers, and their children. Hence, food style patterns were assessed by self-reported consumption of fruits, vegetables, sweets and soft drinks. Eating behaviour was measured by the Dutch Eating Behaviour Questionnaire and self-esteem by the Harter self-perception scale. The respondents were made up of 1781 mothers (of whom 278 were made up of single mothers) and their 12-year-old children. Results from the data analyses revealed that single mothers had lower intake of fruits and vegetables and lower self-worth compared to the married and cohabiting mothers, after age, education, and Body Mass Index (BMI) was controlled. Although single mothers did not have a higher BMI, their daughters were heavier than girls from complete families. Furthermore, daughters to single mothers had a higher intake of soft drinks, higher levels of restrained eating, and lower self-worth but no such difference was found for the boys.

Atindanbila, Asare, and Awuah-Peasah (2012) examined the effect of parenting on self-esteem among adolescents of Labadi Presbyterian Secondary School. A total number of 165 respondents of both sexes with ages ranging from 15 -20 years were selected using a

stratified sampling technique from the students in the school. The cross sectional survey design was used for the study. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to collect the data on the self-esteem of the students. The results from the data analyses showed that the self-esteem of adolescents living with both parents was higher than those living with single parents. Again male adolescents had higher self-esteem than their female counterparts. It was argued that this significant difference between the males and females might be because boys and girls respond differently to the separation, death, and divorce situations of their parents. The results also showed that there was no significant correlation between age and self-esteem.

A large-scale representative surveys was conducted among students in the United States (Bachman, O'Malley, Freedman-Doan, Trzesniewski, & Donnellan, 2011). It was revealed that these students, in general, had high self-esteem scores for all groups being African-American, Whites, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. African-American students scored the highest, Whites scored slightly higher than Hispanics, and Asian Americans scored the lowest. Males scored slightly higher than females on self-esteem. Multivariate controls for grades and college plans actually heightened these race/ethnic/gender differences. Age differences in self-esteem were modest, with 12th graders reporting the highest scores.

Two analyses were conducted to examine gender differences in global self-esteem by Kling, Hyde, Showers, and Buswell (1999). The first analysis, a computerized literature search, yielded 216 effect sizes, which represented the testing of 97,121 respondents. The overall effect size was 0.21, indicating a small difference favouring males. Age was also reported to be significant with the largest effect emerging in late adolescence. In the second analysis, gender differences were examined using 3 large, nationally representative data sets from the

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Of the approximately 48,000 young American respondents, it was indicated that males had higher self-esteem as compared to females. Summing the two studies up, both analyses provided evidence that males score significantly higher on standard measures of global self-esteem than females, although the difference is might be small.

The absence of the father in the home has also been studied as it has been thought to be on the increase in the United States as the notion that absence of fathers in homes is associated with a variety of social pathologies is gaining national momentum. Hendricks et al's. (2005) study therefore, explored the relationship of fathers' absence on self-esteem and self-reported sexual activity among rural southern adolescents. A sample of 1,409 adolescents (558 males and 851 females) aged 11 to 18 years was surveyed using Miller Self-Esteem Questionnaire (MSQ) to measure self-esteem. Analysis of the data revealed that increased sexual activity occurred in homes where there is no father present in the residence. Furthermore, a significant relationship between fathers' absence and lower self-esteem was obtained although the magnitude of the difference was not large. No significant relationship was found between self-esteem and sexual activity. Seemingly, the absence of the father has a potentially detrimental effect on adolescents' lifestyle choices.

Dukes and Martinez (1994) examined the impact of the combination of race and gender on global and public domain aspects of adolescent's self-esteem. The differences between ten ethno-genders were examined using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and a 3-item index. Black and Hispanic males had the highest levels of global self-esteem, whilst Asian and Native American females had the lowest. On the public domain components, white and black males had the highest scores, whilst Asian and Native American females had the lowest

which suggests that females (except blacks) had lower levels of both global and public domain self-esteem than did males.

Luo, Wang, and Gao (2012) conducted a study to examine the effects of the absence of fathers and timing of separation on the mental health of adolescents after observing that many rural children in China had been experiencing life without fathers since the 1990s. Hence, 2233 students with their ages ranging from 11 to 23 years, from five provinces of China, including 1024 adolescents who had experienced the absence of their fathers in the family were used for the study. The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, self-report questionnaires were used to obtain data for the study. Results from the data analyses revealed that respondents who experienced life without fathers had increased state-anxiety and lower self-esteem as compared to the other respondents. The above results could have been influenced by gender and grade. A limited effect of the timing of separation was found on the mental health of students whose fathers were absent.

Berg (2004) used data from 930 adolescents in custodial mother-stepfather families, and 301 adolescents in custodial father-stepmother families, to examine the influences of closeness to parental figures (custodial, step, and non-resident) on adolescents' self-esteem. The results obtained from the analyses of data indicated that adolescents' perceived closeness to their female resident parents (custodial or step-) has a positive effect on self-esteem. Also, closeness to resident female parents explains the largest relative proportion of the variance in adolescent self-esteem, compared to male resident parents or to non-resident parents of either sex.

Research on parenting after a divorce, had mainly focused on parenting of divorced mothers, with few exceptions concentrating on non-residential fathers. A study by Bastaits, Ponnet, and Mortelmans (2012) therefore, sought to compare both parenting dimensions support and control of fathers in different family structures (non-residential fathers, fathers in joint custody and married fathers). The researchers also investigated the association between fathers' parenting dimensions and children's self-esteem, controlled for the parenting dimensions of the mother. Data from 587 children (50 % girls) between 10 and 18 years old and their parents were obtained and used for the study. The results obtained from the analyses of data revealed that parental support of fathers affected the self-esteem of children, even after controlling for mothers' parenting dimensions and family structure. Furthermore, children reported higher self-esteem when their fathers were more supportive with non-residential fathers ($n = 225$) being less supportive and controlling than fathers in joint custody ($n = 138$) and married fathers ($n = 224$). Boys reported higher self-esteem than girls as well as children of more highly educated fathers reporting higher self-esteem. There were however no differences in children's self-esteem according to family structure (married fathers, fathers in joint-custody arrangements, or non-residential fathers), but fathers' parental support and control of married fathers, non-residential fathers and fathers in joint custody could affect children's self-esteem differently.

A study investigated the temporal relationship of divorce with self-esteem of children and to assess the differences in self-esteem, if any, between children of divorced families and children of intact families. The self-esteem of 60 students in Grade 9 and from divorced homes was measured using the Culture-free Self-esteem inventory. The results revealed that there was no significant positive correlation between the passage of time and higher self-esteem among these students. The Independent t test results between the 60 students in Grade

9 from homes with both parents and the 60 from homes of divorced parents revealed that a significant difference in self-esteem were found between the two groups (Bynum & Durm, 1996).

Another study investigated whether an intimate relationship in young adulthood protects young people from depression in the presence of risk factors (parental divorce, low self-esteem in adolescence). Data were obtained from a follow-up survey of adolescents from the age of 16-22 (n = 1656). The prevalence of depression was highest among persons from divorced families who had reported low self-esteem at the age of 16 and who in young adulthood lacked an intimate relationship. An intimate relationship was found to protect young adults with the risk factor of earlier low self-esteem from depression irrespective of family background. The pattern was similar in both sexes (Palosaari & Aro, 1995).

A study was design by Orth, Robins, and Roberts (2008) to find out the effects of low self-esteem and depression on each other. Two models being the vulnerability model and the scar model were used to test the hypotheses that low self-esteem serves as a risk factor for depression or low self-esteem is an outcome but not a cause of depression respectively. Two large longitudinal sets of data were used with each having 4 repeated assessments between the ages of 15 and 21 years and 18 and 21 years, respectively. The analysis revealed that low self-esteem predicted subsequent levels of depression, but depression did not predict subsequent levels of self-esteem. These findings were found to hold true for both men and women and after controlling for content overlap between the self-esteem and depression. Therefore, the results of this study supported the vulnerability model but not the scar model of self-esteem and depression.

Data from another two large longitudinal studies were used by Orth, Robins, Trzesniewski, Maes, and Schmitt (2009) to analyze the reciprocal relations between self-esteem and depressive symptoms across the adult life span. The results after the analysis indicated that low self-esteem predicted subsequent depressive symptoms, but depressive symptoms did not predict subsequent levels of self-esteem. This pattern of results which was replicated across all age groups, were found true for both affective-cognitive and somatic symptoms of depression, even after controlling for content overlap between the self-esteem and depression scales. The study's result showed that low self-esteem operates as a risk factor for depressive symptoms at all phases of an adult's life span.

The results of a study by Alqashan (1999) which compared the differences in self-esteem, locus of control, and attitude toward parents between adolescents from divorced and intact families indicated that adolescents from divorced families had higher self-esteem than adolescents from intact families. Furthermore, females from divorced families had higher self-esteem compared to their male counterparts. However, there was no significant difference in locus of control between divorced and intact families as well as no gender differences. Children from divorced families negatively evaluated their fathers whereas divorced mothers were evaluated positively.

Orth, Robins, and Meier (2009) used data from 3 longitudinal studies of adolescents and young adults to examine the self-esteem buffering hypothesis which states that in the face of challenging life circumstances, individuals with low self-esteem are prone to depression because they lack sufficient coping resources, whereas those with high self-esteem are able to cope effectively and consequently avoid spiralling downward into depression. The results of the data analysis did not support the self-esteem buffering hypothesis but suggest that low

self-esteem and stressful events operate as independent risk factors for depression. Thus in all the 3 longitudinal studies, low self-esteem and stressful events independently predicted subsequent depression but did not interact in the prediction.

A study by Courtney, Gamboz, and Johnson (2008) examined whether low self-esteem was associated with depressive symptoms and problematic eating behaviours among 197 adolescents. The results revealed that youths with low self-esteem were at greater risk for high levels of depressive symptoms and eating disorder symptoms. Furthermore, depressive symptoms were found to mediate the association of low self-esteem with problematic eating behaviours.

Ho, Lempers, and Clark-Lempers (1995) conducted a research to examine the relationship between economic hardship, family relationships, and adolescent self-esteem in a sample of 387 families. The results of their data analyses revealed that economic hardship had a negative effect on adolescents' self-esteem. Furthermore, the negative effect was primarily mediated through the parent-adolescent relationship. The findings also indicated that marital relationship was negatively affected by economic hardship, but there was no direct relationship between parents' marital relationship and adolescents' self-esteem.

2.2.2 Depression

A meta-analysis involving 92 studies compared children living in divorced single-parent families with children living in continuously intact families on measures of well-being (Amato & Keith, 1991). Children of divorce scored lower than children in intact families across a variety of outcomes. For some outcomes, methodologically sophisticated studies yielded weaker effect sizes than did other studies. In addition, for some outcomes, more

recent studies yielded weaker effect sizes than did studies carried out during earlier decades. Some support was found for theoretical perspectives emphasizing parental absence and economic disadvantage, but the most consistent support was found for a family conflict perspective (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Some psychological problems of Chinese senior middle school students have been noted to be linked with school academic factors, but it's remained unknown whether family factors do influence it. Hence, in a senior middle school in Hangzhou, China, the Plutchik–van Praag Depression Inventory (PVP) was trialed on 78 students with 52 students from intact, 15 students from single-parent, and 11 students from reunited families. The results revealed that most students perceived their biological parents as their first two caregivers, but their caregiver orders did not influence the depressive tendency in either group. Students from single-parent families were more depressed than those from other families, while students from reunited families reported their PVP scores similarly to those from the intact families did. This implies that entering a reunited family even after divorce could be a complimentary strategy for students to normalize their depression scores (Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012).

Brubeck and Beer (1992) conducted a study which used 131 subjects from a small north central Kansas High School to complete the Beck Depression Scale, Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory short form (including the Lie scale), the Death Anxiety Scale, and the first 11 questions of the Beck Scale of Suicide Ideation with the aim of examining these variables between divorced and non-divorced parents. Other background information obtained from each student's files included age, grade, marital status of parents, sex and grade point averages (on a 4-point scale). On anxiety, girls had a significantly higher mean than boys whilst freshmen's and sophomores' scores were significantly higher than those of juniors and

seniors but there was no difference between means of students of divorced and non-divorced parents. On self-esteem and GPA, children of divorced parents scored significantly lower than children of non-divorced parents, but there was no significant difference between the sexes on self-esteem. On GPA, girls scored significantly higher than boys. On depression, the children of divorced parents scored higher than children of non-divorced parents but there was no sex difference (Brubeck & Beer, 1992).

A study by Clarke-Stewart and Hayward (1996) explored the well-being of children after divorce, especially those in the custody of the same-gender parent, using 187 school-age children with 72 children in father's custody and 115 children in mother's custody. Major findings after the data analyses were that across a variety of assessments of psychological well-being such as self-esteem, anxiety, depression, problem behaviours, and children (especially boys) did significantly better in the custody of their fathers. Moreover, children in father custody had the advantage of maintaining a more positive relationship with the non-resident parent, the mother. It was also found out that these differences in children's well-being were not eliminated by statistically controlling for the custodial parent's psychological state and adequate income or the child's contact with the non-resident parent-other variables that also predicted children's well-being. Some gender advantage was also found for girls in mother custody. For these children, well-being was predicted by close "parent like" contact with the non-resident father participating in a variety of activities and spending holidays together (Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996).

In a cross-sectional study by Maharaj et al. (2008) to determine the prevalence of depression and psychosocial factors associated with depression among 1290 secondary school students who were aged 13–15 years, it was revealed that there was a significant associations between

depression and the categories of age, gender, living arrangements and school type. Further logistic regression indicated that females were significantly more depressed compared with males as well as respondents not living with both parents were significantly more likely to be depressed than those who were.

In a longitudinal study (Stadelmann, Perren, Groeben, & von Klitzing, 2010), it was examined whether the effect of parental separation on kindergarten children's behavioural/emotional problems varies according to the level of family conflict, and children's parental representations. One hundred and eighty seven children were assessed at ages 5 and 6 years. Family conflict was assessed using parents' ratings. Children's parental representations were assessed using a story-stem task. A multi-informant approach (parent, teacher, and child) was employed to assess children's behavioural/emotional problems. Bivariate results showed that separation, family conflict, and negative parental representations were associated with children's behavioural/emotional problems. However, their multivariate analyses, when controlling for gender and symptoms at age 5 years, found that children of separated parents who showed negative parental representations had a significantly greater increase in conduct problems between 5 and 6 years than all other children. In terms of emotional symptoms and hyperactivity, symptoms at 5 and (for hyperactivity only) gender were the only predictors for symptoms 1 year later. The results also suggest that kindergarten children's representations of parent-child relationships moderate the impact of parental separation on the development of conduct problems, and underline play and narration as a possible route to access the thoughts and feelings of young children faced with parental separation (Stadelmann, Perren, Groeben, & von Klitzing, 2010).

Sen (2004) used data from the 1996 round of Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children' (HBSC), USA, which surveyed a representative sample of more than 9000 adolescents enrolled in grades 6-10 for her study. The primary aim of her study was to test whether there were significant differences between genders, and between non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics and Asians in the likelihood of seeking help, and from whom, when depressed. Gender and race-ethnicity differences in the likelihood of being depressed were also explored to find if they corresponded to results in the extant literature. Multinomial logit models were mostly used. Results of the data analyses revealed that adolescent females are significantly more likely than adolescent males to suffer from depressed mood. However, adolescent males are less likely to ask for help than females (odds ratio: 0.72).

A study by Galambos, Leadbeater, and Barker (2004) used a longitudinal data (N=1322; 648 males, 674 females) from adolescents who aged between 12 to 19 years (in 1994) to investigate gender differences in and risk factors for depressive symptoms and major depressive episodes (MDEs). These samples had participated in three waves of Canada's National Population Health Survey (1994, 1996, and 1998). Results from the data analyses showed that although there was not a statistically significant increase in depressive symptoms in early adolescence, there was a robust gender difference in the levels of depressive symptoms and the prevalence of MDE across time, with girls more affected than boys. Over time, decreases in social support and increases in smoking were both linked to increases in depressive symptoms. Moreover, youth who smoked and who were free from major depression in 1994 were 1.4 times more likely to report a MDE in 1996 or 1998.

Another study by Li, DiGiuseppe, and Froh (2006) which investigated the roles of coping and masculinity in higher rates of depressive symptoms among adolescent girls as compared to

boys revealed that adolescent girls were more depressed than boys, and that girls used more emotion-focused and ruminative coping than did boys. The Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale and the Bem Sex Role Inventory, and a measure of coping with general stressors were responded by 246 adolescents in the study. A model was therefore designed and tested through path analysis, which involved the variables of sex, gender, problem-focused coping, rumination, and distraction.

The prevalence of depressive mood was examined by Wichstrøm (1999) in a representative and nationwide sample of approximately 12,000 Norwegian adolescents. It was evident that from the age of 14, girls scored 0.5 SD above boys in depressed mood, a difference that was stable throughout the adolescent period. At the age of 12, no gender difference was found. The gender difference was due to girls becoming more depressed from 13 to 14 years of age. An extended version of the gender intensification hypothesis was tested as an explanation for the gender difference in depressed mood. Structural equation modelling and regression analyses showed that the gender difference could be explained, in part, by increased developmental challenges for girls—pubertal development, dissatisfaction with weight and attainment of a mature female body, and increased importance of feminine sex role identification. Depressed mood was not associated with masculinity or school change, as had been predicted.

Hamid, Ahmad, and Tasleema (2011) undertook a study to know the depression level among adolescents of Kashmir division in relation to sex and rural/urban dichotomy. A total of 600 adolescents of Kashmir division were randomly selected to respond to the depression measure, a self-report scale developed by the centre for epidemiologic studies of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The analysis of the data showed that there was no

significant difference between rural and urban adolescents on depression but there was a significant difference between male and female adolescents on depression. Depression among female adolescents was found to be higher than that of male adolescents probably due to the reason that they feel insecurity in terms of status, or power.

A similar study which was conducted by Petersen, Sarigiani, and Kennedy (1991) earlier than the previous article examined the developmental pattern of depressed affect over early and middle adolescence with special focus on the patterns of boys as compared to girls. Also, a developmental model for mental health in adolescence was tested for its power in explaining the emergence of gender differences in depression. Hence, a longitudinal data on 335 adolescents randomly selected from two school districts were used to test the hypotheses. The results obtained revealed that girls are at risk for developing depressed affect by 12th grade because they experienced more challenges in early adolescence than did boys. The sex difference in depressed affect at 12th grade disappears once early adolescent challenges are considered.

The aim of a study by Maag and Irvin (2005) was to determine the differences in reported alcohol use and depressive symptomatology among a sample of 524 African-American and Caucasian adolescents. Specifically, the study was interested in determining if ethnicity, gender, and age predicted severity of scores obtained on the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale (RADS) and Adolescent Drinking Index (ADI). The results revealed that there was no significant difference on RADS between the groups although; Caucasians obtained significantly higher scores on the ADI than African-Americans. Females scored higher on the RADS but lower on the ADI than males. In terms of extreme scores, females were less likely to belong to the severe depression group, while older adolescents in general and African-

Americans in particular had a greater probability of belonging to the heavy-drinking group. Finally, using RADS and ADI cutoff scores, females were less likely than males to belong to the depression only group as were African-Americans. Older adolescents, in general, and African-Americans in particular had a greater probability of belonging to the mixed group than did their counterparts.

However, a study by Uba, Yaacob, and Juhari (2010) examined the relationship between bullying and depression among teenagers. A total of 242 (119 males and 123 females) respondents, aged between 13 and 17 years selected from secondary schools in Selangor, Malaysia (mean age = 14.67 years; SD = 1.27) were used in the study. Teenage depression was measured with from Children Depression Inventory (CDI), while bullying was measured with the bullying subscale of the Peer Relationship Questionnaire (PRQ). The results obtained from the analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation between bullying and teenage depression, significant gender difference between males and females in bullying but a non- significant difference in depression between male and female teenagers.

Nolen-Hoeksema's (1994) study also revealed that there were no consistent gender differences in rates of depression among prepubescent children. She further elaborated that by mid-adolescence (age 13 to 15 years), girls show significantly higher rates of depressive disorders and depressive symptoms than boys and argued that the emergence of gender differences in depression are most likely to be due to an interaction of two factors being girls' entrance into early adolescence with a style of responding to frustration and distress that is less efficacious and action-oriented than boys, and girls beginning to face certain uncontrollable stressors in early adolescence to a greater extent than boys.

The purpose of another study by Hurtack (2008) was to investigate the relationship between father absence and depression, sexual attitudes, and substance use among adolescents. Data were obtained from 49 high school students (28 males, 21 females) from 9th to 12th grade from a private high school in Pennsylvania. The Beck Depression Inventory-II was used to measure levels of depression. A sexual attitudes, substance use, and family demographic survey was carried out. The results after data analyses revealed that there was no significant relationship between adolescent adjustment and father absence. Father's absence did not significantly predict sexual attitudes, depression or substance use. No significant gender differences were found among the adolescents.

Malik and Irsha (2012) designed a between subjects study to examine the relationship of single parenting with depression, stress and anxiety among parents its contribution to behavioural problems among children of these families. A sample size of 63 parents of school children including 33 single parents and 30 from two-parent families used as a comparison group were used in this study. The Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS), and Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for childhood behaviour problems were used to assess the subjects. It was found out that single parents had higher Depression, Anxiety and Stress score as compared to the comparison group. Statistically significant difference was also observed between children of both groups on behaviour problems.

A study by Park, Heo, Subramanian, Kawachi, and Oh, (2012) investigated family and school environmental influences on adolescent depression. Middle and high school students (N = 75,066) were randomly selected to respond to questions on their academic and socioeconomic backgrounds, parental support, parental education level, physical activities, lifestyle habits and their experience of depression in the past one year. The results revealed

that girls reported having more depression than boys with those students who lived with a single parent or no parent experiencing more depression than students living with both. Students living with rich parents were also found to be more likely to be depressive and maternal higher education was significantly associated with higher probability of boys' depression experience. Increasing age was also found to be associated with increasing depression.

The mediating factors between childhood experience of parental divorce and subsequent depression in young adulthood was examined by Palosaari, Aro, and Laippala (1996). This was a follow-up study of one Finnish urban age cohort from the age of 16 to 22 (n = 1656). The result revealed that depression is more common among the offspring of divorced families. Low self-esteem at age 16 was also an indicator of vulnerability to depression in young adulthood irrespective of family background or gender. It was also revealed that among girls, the long-term impact of divorce was mediated through low self-esteem and lack of closeness to their father. When the relationship with their father was closed, no excess risk of depression was found among girls from divorced families. However, there was no noticed statistical connection between low self-esteem or unsatisfactory relationship with parents and depression after parental divorce among boys.

In a long-term study of the effects of divorce conducted by Aro and Palosaari (1992), children in a Finnish town followed up at age 16 years to age 22 years. It was found out after the analysis that depression in young adulthood was found to be slightly more common among children from divorced families than intact families. In addition, it was found out that the life trajectories of children in divorced families had more stressful paths and more distress in both adolescence and young adulthood.

The importance of a child's age at parents' divorce on later well-being has been studied by Palosaari and Aro (1994). Children (from age 16 to 22 years) who had experienced parental divorce before school age ($n = 134$), in latency at age 7 to 12 ($n = 129$), and in adolescence at age 13 to 16 ($n = 71$) were followed-up in a population-based study. It was found out that in young adulthood, 24% of the boys who had experienced parental divorce in latency were depressive as compared with 9% and 6% in the other two groups, respectively. Interpersonal problems in adolescence also predicted depression in young adulthood especially in the group of latency-aged boy. Among girls, depression was independent of the timing of parental divorce.

Another longitudinal study by Rodgers (1994) found high levels of depression in women of divorced parents, but not in men. It has also been found that in childhood, there had been few behavioural differences between girls from divorced and intact families. A significant interaction reflected little relationship between parental divorce and symptoms for women in first marriages, but a strong relationship in the never married, divorced, and remarried. Greater adult depression was not attributable to social networks, emotional support, recent life events, financial circumstances or the main effect of marital status.

Tulisalo and Aro's (2000) study used a population which consisted of young people (of 22 years old) who had experienced parental divorce in childhood ($N=356$) to examine the role of remarriage of a parent in adolescents' depressive symptoms. Hence, the associations between a parent's remarriage and potential modifying factors which includes atmosphere at home, school performance, dating behaviour, life-events, the importance of siblings, and socioeconomic status, and depressive symptoms among adolescents were studied. The results revealed that a poor atmosphere at home at 16 years and fathers' remarriage (but not

mothers') in childhood were associated with subsequent depression. That is, girls whose father had not remarried and boys whose father had remarried were found to have more depression than the other groups. Dating behaviour in adolescence modified proneness to depression in these groups.

Uba, Yaacob, Juhari, and Talib (2010) conducted a study which examined the moderating effects of self-esteem in the relationship between depression and bullying among 242 teenagers aged 13 to 16 years. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to measure self-esteem, teenage depression was measured with Children Depression Inventory, and bullying, using the Bully sub scale of the Peer Relationship Questionnaire. The analyses revealed no gender differences on self-esteem. In addition, they found a significant negative and medium relationship between depression and self-esteem, self-esteem and bullying, and a significant positive and small relationship between depression and bullying. However, self-esteem was found not to be a moderator

2.3 Statement of the hypotheses

Based on the literature reviewed above, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. Adolescents from single-parent homes would be significantly more depressed than adolescents who have intact-parent homes.
2. Adolescents from intact-parent homes would significantly report higher self-esteem than adolescents who have single-parent homes.
3. A significant negative relationship would exist between depression and self-esteem of adolescents.
4. Female adolescents living with single-parent fathers would be significantly more depressed as compared to their male counterparts living with both parents.

5. Male adolescents would have significantly higher self-esteem than their female counterparts.

2.4 Definition of terms

Parental Status: This refers to whether an adolescent has either single or intact parents in the house.

- **Single parent home:** A home with only one parent/guardian caring for the children (adolescents)
- **Intact-parent home:** A home with both parents caring for the children (adolescents).

Depression: This refers to how sad an adolescent is or unhappy as measured by Children's Depression Inventory (CDI; Kovacs, 1981).

Self-Esteem: This refers to how an adolescent values himself /herself with respect to general, social, and personal prestige as measured by the Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population

Senior high school students (both sexes and across senior high school 1 to senior high school 3) in the Greater Accra region were the main population of interest to the researcher.

3.2 Respondents

The study used a total of 308 respondents (adolescents) selected from the senior high level of education with 155 respondents living with single-parents whilst 153 respondents lived with both parents. This sample size was based on the suggestion by Sudman (1976, 1983) that there should be a minimum of hundred (100) individuals in any major subgroup that will be analysed separately or comparatively and at least 20 to 50 in minor subgroups; taking intact-parent home and single-parent home to be the major and minor subgroups respectively.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

The study employed a probability sampling method specifically, the stratified random sampling technique. That is, respondents were randomly selected from classes that were in strata. Specifically, this sampling strategy was used after randomly selecting eight classes from SHS 1 to SHS 3 that were available at the time of the study. Random sampling technique was then used to select respondents from these various classes to part of the study.

3.4 Instruments/Measures

Two questionnaires were used in this current study. These were the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI), and the Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory. The first part of these two

scales was made up of the demographic data section which solicited for respondents' personal information (see Appendix 3, section A).

3.4.1 Children's Depression Inventory (CDI)

The next section (section B) was made up of the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI; Kovacs, 1981). This is a 27 group of statements (with every group consists of three statements representing the subject's feeling at the last two weeks) self-report measure of depression, usually used as a screening instrument for depression in a normal adolescent sample or as a measure of symptom severity in adolescents of the ages 7 to 18 years. It is useful for providing the clinician with structured, age and gender norm-referenced information about the child symptomatology. Its items are scored on a three-point scale of 0, 1 or 2, yielding a range of total scores from 0 to 54, with higher score indicative of more severe depression (Khalil et al., 2010; Kovacs, 1981). Children's Depression Inventory has five subscales being negative mood (items 1, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 13), interpersonal problems (items 5, 12, 26, and 27), ineffectiveness (items 3, 15, 23, and 24), anhedonia (items 4, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22), and negative self-esteem (items 2, 7, 9, 14, and 25). It has an internal consistency score of 0.83 (Vulić-Prtorić, Sorić, & Macuka, 2005). A study by Finch, Saylor, Edwards, and McIntosh (1987) also had a reliability coefficients ranged from .82 over 2 weeks to .66 and .67 for the longer intervals (4-week, and 6-week). The CDI has good content validity and a concurrent validity (Allen, Combs-Orme, McCarter, & Grossman, 2000).

3.4.2 Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI)

The Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI) formed the section C of the questionnaire. The Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory—Form AD measures adults' self-esteem specifically on the following sub-scales (a) general self-esteem (items 2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 13, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28, 30, 32, 37, and 37), (b) social self-esteem (items 1, 5, 7, 10, 16, 21, 31, and 35), and (c) personal self-esteem (items 12, 15, 17, 22, 27, 34, 36, and 40). There is also a lie scale (items 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 33, and 38) which indicates whether the participant is trying to falsely project high self-esteem (a social desirability concern). In all, this scale has 40 items on a 'yes' or 'no' response format. This scale takes 10-15 minutes to be administered which can be done individually or in groups with no limit time. It is scored by summing up all the ticked responses on the 'dotted' responds-lines on the questionnaire. Hence, the more a respondent tick on a 'dotted-response-line' the more the self-esteem scores. Concurrent validity was established by comparing it with Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory. It also has a test-retest reliability of 0.81 with a sample of 127 students. The internal consistency for the general sub-scale has been reported to be 0.78, social sub-scale to be 0.57, personal subscale to be 0.72 and, lie sub-scale to be 0.54 (Battle, 1981; Brook, 1995).

3.5 Procedure

A pilot study was first conducted using a total of 30 students from Ngleshie Amanfro Senior High School to ascertain the consistency or the appropriateness of the scales among the respondents. The results indicated a favourable outcome for the measures. After checking for the consistency of the scale, the main study was then carried out. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the Children's Depression Inventory was .74 whilst the reliability coefficient for Cultural Free Self-Esteem Inventory was .77.

Therefore, an introductory letter from the Psychology Department, Methodist University College of Ghana, was taken to the school of interest to the study to help seek permission for the study. An appointment date was set for the collection of the data in the selected school. On the set day and with the assistance of a research assistant and a school teacher, eight classes from SHS1 to SHS 3 which were in strata were selected randomly. That is, names of all the available classes from SHS1 to SHS3 were written on pieces of paper and picked out afterwards in the lottery fashion. The respondents in those selected classes were also randomly selected using the simple lottery system. That is, 50 'yes' and depending on the class size 'nos' were written on pieces of paper and respondents were made to pick. Those who picked out the 'yes' became the respondents of the study. The questionnaires were given to the selected respondents for responding. This was done after the respondents were given adequate information about the study and other ethical rules (like informed consents, withdrawal without penalty and others like it) have duly been dealt with. The data collection was done during early school hours, class by class, so as to get adequate time for each respondent in filling the questionnaire.

3.6 Design

A descriptive correlation design was used in this study since it sets out to describe the types of parental status on adolescents' depression and self-esteem as well as to examine the relationship between adolescents' depression and self-esteem. Hence, it has the inherent ability of bringing the qualities of two different designs into one (Beauvais, Stewart, DeNisco, & Beauvais, 2014).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This current study used self-report questionnaires to obtain data from the respondents. Therefore, some ethical issues like informed consents (both verbal and in writing—signing of consent forms) were obtained. Respondents (students) were well informed about the study, on confidentiality issues, and liberty to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. They were adequately debriefed after the study to allay any misconception and fears that may have been harboured during the study. Other codes of ethics (like anonymity) prescribed by the American Psychological Association were also strictly followed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The study was guided by five main aims in its quest of examining the influence of parental status on depression and self esteem among adolescents. The first aim was to examine if a significant difference exists between parental statuses on depression among adolescents. The second aim was to investigate whether a significant difference exists between parental statuses on self esteem among adolescents. The third aim was to examine if a significant negative relationship exists between depression and self-esteem among adolescents. The fourth aim was to find out if significant interaction effect exists among adolescents on depression, and the fifth aim was to examine whether a significant sex differences exist among adolescents on self-esteem.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of three hundred and eight (308) respondents were used in this study with a mean age of 16.85 years, standard deviation of 1.52 years, and ranging from 13-26 years. This also included 124 (40.3%) males and 184 (59.7%) females. Majority (260) of the respondents were Christians with Muslims (48) forming the minority. One hundred and seventy (170; 55.2%) respondents were in form 1, 98 (31.8%) were in form 2, and 40 (13%) respondents were in form 3. Majority (253; 82.1%) of the respondents had both parent being alive, 35 (11.4%) had only the mother alive, 15 (4.9%) had fathers alive, and 5 (1.6%) had both parents deceased. Respondents had a wide range of siblings, from none to 21, with a mean of 4, mode of 3, and a standard deviation of 2. Most of the respondents were the eldest (first born) among the siblings, with the birth order ranging from 1 to 11. Further detailed information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE(%)
Sex	308	100
Male	124	40.3
Female	184	59.7
Religion	308	100
Christian	260	84.4
Muslim	48	15.6
Form	308	100
SHS 1	170	55.2
SHS 2	98	31.8
SHS 3	40	13
Parental Status	308	100
Both alive	253	82.1
Mother alive	35	11.4
Father alive	15	4.9
Both Deceased	5	1.6
Whom are you living with?	308	100
Single (parent)	155	50.3
Intact (parent/guardian)	153	49.7

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

Five hypotheses were formulated based on the above aims. Inferential statistics like the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r), Two-Way Analysis of Variance, and Independent t test were used to test the various hypotheses. The sixteenth version of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used in analysing the data.

HYPOTHESIS ONE

The first hypothesis stated that adolescents who have single-parental status would be significantly more depressed than adolescents who have intact-parental status. The Independent *t* test was used to analyse this hypothesis and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Adolescents' Parental Status on Depression

Parental Status	Depression	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig
Single parent	Negative Mood	155	2.75	2.15	1.831	306	.034
Intact parent		153	2.30	2.01			
Single parent	Interpersonal Problems	155	0.69	0.92	-.815	306	.208
Intact parent		153	0.77	0.87			
Single parent	Ineffectiveness	155	2.22	1.66	2.560	306	.006
Intact parent		153	1.75	1.49			
Single parent	Anhedonia	155	50.3	2.67	1.214	306	.113
Intact parent		153	4.61	3.19			
Single parent	Negative Self-Esteem	155	1.07	1.33	2.259	306	.013
Intact parent		153	0.75	1.08			
Single parent	Total	155	11.50	6.51	2.553	306	.006
Intact parent		153	9.75	5.47			

Findings from Table 2 indicate that respondents of the single-parental status had significantly more depression than respondents of the intact-parental status [$t(306) = 2.642, p = .006$ (one-tailed)]. Therefore, the hypothesis that adolescents who have single-parental status would be significantly more depressed than adolescents who have intact-parental status was supported by the data. However, taking the subscales into consideration, two out of the five subscales revealed no significant difference between single-parental status and intact-parental status. That is, there were no significant differences between single-parental status and intact-parental status on interpersonal problems [$t(306) = -0.815, p = .208$ (one-tailed)] and

anhedonia [$t(306) = 1.214, p = .113$ (one-tailed)]. Nevertheless, there were significant differences between single-parental status and intact-parental status on negative mood [$t(306) = 1.831, p = .034$ (one-tailed)], ineffectiveness [$t(306) = 2.560, p = .006$ (one-tailed)], and negative self-esteem [$t(306) = 2.259, p = .013$ (one-tailed)] with respondents of single-parental status having more scores on these three subscales than respondents of intact-parental status.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

The second hypothesis stated that adolescents who have intact-parental status would significantly report higher self-esteem than adolescents who have single-parental status. The Independent t test was again used to analyse this hypothesis and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Adolescents' Parental Status on their Self-Esteem

Parental Status	Self-Esteem	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
Single parent	Social	155	5.61	1.51	-1.037	306	.150
Intact parent		153	5.80	1.67			
Single parent	Personal	155	4.47	1.95	-1.667	306	.049
Intact parent		153	4.84	1.87			
Single parent	General	155	10.05	2.91	-1.833	306	.034
Intact parent		153	10.67	2.82			

Results from Table 3 indicate that respondents of the intact-parental status had significantly higher self-esteem than respondents of the single-parental status for personal self-esteem [$t(306) = -1.667, p = .049$ (one-tailed)] and general self-esteem [$t(306) = -1.833, p = .034$ (one-tailed)] but not for social self-esteem [$t(306) = -1.037, p = .150$ (one-tailed)]. Therefore,

the hypothesis that adolescents who have intact-parental status would significantly report higher self-esteem than adolescents who have single-parental status was supported by the data.

HYPOTHESIS THREE

The third hypothesis stated that a significant negative relationship would exist between depression and self-esteem among adolescents. The Pearson r was used to analyse this hypothesis and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix between Depression and Self-Esteem

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Negative Mood (Depression)		.308*	.331*	.442*	.498*	.769*	-.389*	-.426*	-.442*
2. Interpersonal Problems(Depression)			.204*	.160*	.268*	.436*	-.215*	-.154*	-.231*
3. Ineffectiveness (Depression)				.280*	.320*	.594*	-.381*	-.332*	-.418*
4. Anhedonia (Depression)					.327*	.793*	-.396*	-.405*	-.328*
5. Negative Self-Esteem (Depression)						.632*	-.333*	-.283*	-.377*
6. Total Depression							-.500*	-.491*	-.507*
7. Social (Self-Esteem)								.442*	.578*
8. Personal (Self-Esteem)									.575*
9. General (Self-Esteem)									

*: $p < .01$ (one-tailed)

Findings from Table 4 indicate that there is a significant negative relationship between depression and social self-esteem [$r(306) = -.500, p = .000$ (one-tailed)], personal self-esteem [$r(306) = -.491, p = .000$ (one-tailed)], and general self-esteem [$r(306) = -.507, p = .000$ (one-tailed)]. Therefore, the hypothesis that a significant negative relationship would exist between depression and self-esteem among adolescents was supported by the data.

HYPOTHESIS FOUR

The fourth hypothesis stated that female adolescents living with single-parent father would be significantly more depressed as compared to their male counterparts living with both parents. The two-way analysis of variance was used to analyse this hypothesis and the results are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Means and Standard Deviations of Scores on Depression

Parental Status	Sex						Row Mean and Standard Deviation		
	Male			Female			N	M	SD
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Single-Parent (Father)	17	12.00	9.13	23	12.26	5.65	40	12.15	7.23
Single-Parent (Mother)	41	9.49	5.08	72	12.15	6.71	113	11.19	6.28
Intact-Parent	66	9.33	5.60	89	10.21	5.40	155	9.84	5.49
Total	124	9.75	6.06	184	11.23	6.03	308	10.63	6.07

The results of the analysis presented in Tables 5 above revealed that female adolescents of single-parent father ($M = 12.26$, $SD = 5.65$) had more scores on depression than male adolescents of the intact parents ($M = 9.75$, $SD = 6.06$). These mean and standard deviation scores were then subjected to further inferential analysis. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary Table of Two-Way ANOVA on data contained in Table 5

Source	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	Sig
Parental Status	194.123	2	97.061	2.693	.069
Sex	86.756	1	86.756	2.407	.122
Parental Status*Sex	64.662	2	32.331	.897	.409
Error	10883.609	302	36.038		
Total	11323.542	307			

Results from Table 6 reveal that there were no significant interaction effect observed between Sex (male and female) and Parental Status (single-parent-father, single-parent-mother, and intact-parents) [$F(2, 302) = .897, p = .409$] on depression. Hence, there is no significant difference between the means of female adolescents of single-parent father and male adolescents of the intact parents. There was no significant difference between the parental statuses [$F(2, 302) = 2.693, p = .069$] and sexes [$F(1, 302) = 2.407, p = .122$]. Therefore, the hypothesis that female adolescents living with single-parent father would be significantly more depressed as compared to their male counterparts living with both parents was not supported by the data.

HYPOTHESIS FIVE

The fifth hypothesis stated that male adolescents would have significantly higher self-esteem than their female counterparts. The Independent t test was used to test this hypothesis and the summary of the statistical analyses are presented in Tables 7.

Table 7: Summary of Adolescents' Sex on their Self-Esteem

Sex	Self-Esteem	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig
Male	Social	124	5.93	1.59	2.020	306	.022
Female		184	5.55	1.58			
Male	Personal	124	5.00	1.81	2.565	306	.006
Female		184	4.42	1.96			
Male	General	124	10.88	2.54	2.489	306	.007
Female		184	10.01	3.04			

Results from Table 7 indicate that male adolescents (with mean values of 5.93, 5.00, 10.88 for social, personal, and general self-esteem respectively) have significantly higher self-esteem taking into consideration their social self-esteem [$t(306) = 2.020, p = .022$], personal self-esteem [$t(306) = 2.565, p = .006$], and general self-esteem [$t(306) = 2.489, p = .007$] than female adolescents (with mean values of 5.55, 4.42, 10.01 for social, personal, and general self-esteem respectively). Therefore, the hypothesis that male adolescents would have significantly higher self-esteem than their female counterparts was supported by the data.

4.4 Summary of Findings

In all, this study tested five hypotheses to unearth the influence of parental status on adolescents' depression and self-esteem. The findings from the data analyses were as follows:

1. Respondents of the single-parental status had significantly more depression (total) than respondents of the intact-parental status. Taking the sub-scales into consideration, respondents of the single-parental status had significantly more negative mood, ineffectiveness, and negative self-esteem than respondents of the intact-parental status. However, there was no significant difference between them on interpersonal problems and anhedonia.

2. Respondents of the intact-parental status had significantly higher self-esteem than respondents of the single-parental status for personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem but not for social self-esteem.
3. There was a significant negative relationship between depression (and its sub-scales) and social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem. There were also significant positive relationships among the subscales within the two main scales (depression and self-esteem).
4. There was no significant interaction effect observed between sex (male and female) and parental status (single-parent-father, single-parent-mother, and intact-parents) as well as sex and parental status as main effects on depression (total).
5. Male adolescents had significantly higher self-esteem with regard to social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem than female adolescents.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This current research aimed at examining if a significant difference exists between parental status on depression among Ghanaian adolescents. It also investigated whether a significant difference exists between parental statuses on self-esteem among Ghanaian adolescents. Furthermore, it examined if a significant negative relationship exists between depression and self-esteem among adolescents as well as finding out if a significant difference exist between female adolescents who live with their single-parent mothers and male adolescents who live with both parents on depression. Finally, the study examined whether a significant sex differences exist among adolescents on self-esteem.

The discussion is therefore be based on these five main aims.

5.1.1 Parental Statuses and Depression

There was a significant difference between the parental statuses on depression. Adolescents who have single parent were found to have significantly more depression as compared to adolescents who had intact parents. At the subscale levels, it was noticed that adolescents who have single parent were having significantly more negative moods, feelings of ineffectiveness, and negative self-esteem than adolescents who have intact parents. However, there was no significant difference between adolescents who had either single or intact parent on interpersonal problems and anhedonia. This affirms the postulation of the family structure perspective which stated that adolescents from single-parent homes are severely handicapped (Amato & Keith, 1991) as compared to adolescents from two-parent homes.

This study also sets practical example for the proposition made by the parental absence perspective. That is, the negative mood and negative self-esteem elicited by adolescents from

single-parent homes (as compared to their counterpart) is due to the socialization deficits which includes attention, help and support, and lack of parental models (Amato, 1987; Amato & Keith, 1991; Furstenburg & Nord, 1985; White, Brinkerhoff, & Booth, 1985). Furthermore, the family income perspective also argued that adolescents from single parental homes are bound to develop feelings of inadequacy (McLeod, Kruttschnitt, & Domfeld, 1994). In this study, this was reflected in the significant negative mood and negative self-esteem as compared to their counterpart.

This result is similar to the findings of Wang, Hou, and Xu (2012). They found out that students from single-parent families were more depressed than those from intact families. Other studies have also reported that children of divorced parents score significantly higher on depression than children of non-divorced parents (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Maharaj et al., 2008; Malik & Irshad, 2012; Park et al., 2012; Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012). This indicates that divorce or family separation does not help children's psychological well-being at least within the short term. It has been further found discussed that at the long-term these children recover but not as compared to their fellow peers that had intact parents. This exactly explains the situation among the adolescents studied in Ghana.

From the subscale level, it was evident that adolescents from single parent have significantly more negative mood, ineffectiveness, and negative self-esteem than intact parents which did account for the significant difference between them on the total depression. Moreover lower or negative self-esteem have been found to significantly predict depression (Uba, Yaacob, Juhari, & Talib, 2010; Yousafzai & Siddiqi, 2007). The long term effect of divorce, especially depressive mood, has also been documented among young adults who lived with single parents (Aro & Palosaari, 1992; Palosaari & Aro, 1994) and this effect even goes on

well into later adulthood (Rodgers, 1994). It has been found that, sometimes, even when a father remarries after an adolescent aged 16 years, combined with poor atmosphere lead to subsequent depression (Tulisalo & Aro, 2000). This, therefore, explains in part, the reason for the significant difference in depression levels between adolescents of the single and intact parents. Hence, in a country like Ghana where there are so many socio-economic challenges, it was definitely expected that when these challenges continue with family wrangling or divorce, depression among the younger ones, especially the adolescents will occur.

5.1.2 Parental Status and Self-Esteem

Findings of the analysis revealed that, with the exception of social self-esteem, adolescents of intact parents had significantly higher personal and general self-esteem than adolescents of single parents. This means that, with respect to social self-esteem, there was no significant difference between the two types of parental status. It can further be explained that the adolescents from both parental status have almost the same experience in their social circles. This includes number of friends, respect earned, and the amount and quality of time spent with them. However, personally, adolescents of intact parents see themselves in a better, composed, nice looking, and notable way as compared to the adolescents of the single parents. This could have created the significant disparity between these adolescents. Furthermore, with respect to general self esteem, the result indicates that adolescents of intact parents were significantly happier, self-confident, assertive, successful, and resourceful. These put adolescents of intact parents ahead of those of single parents.

From the Parental Absence theoretical point of view, it can be explained that adolescent from single parents see themselves less competent or not as normal as their other adolescents. That is, the decrease in quantity and quality of contact makes adolescents of single parents feel

inadequate, thereby creating a vacuum in their personal self-esteem. Their social skills such as negotiating, cooperating, and compromising become inadequate (Amato, 1987; Amato & Keith, 1991; Furstenburg & Nord, 1985; White, Brinkerhoff, & Booth, 1985). The family income perspective also affirms that adolescents develop feelings of inadequacy due to parental rejection linked to inadequate or lack of income (McLeod, Kruttschnitt, & Domfeld, 1994). These in turn have effect on adolescents' general self-esteem, especially adolescents of single parents. That is, the effects of the personal self-esteem reflected on the adolescents' general self-esteem as portrayed by the results of this study. The Economic Disadvantage perspective had made it clear that the lack of economic resources increases the risk of the nutrition, and health as well as a number of developmental problems in children (Williams, 1990). This affects their ability to perform well in the outside world.

The result of this study affirms a study conducted among Ghanaian adolescents by Atindanbila et al. (2012). They found out that adolescents of intact parents had significantly higher self-esteem than adolescents of single parents. Adolescents of single parents have higher negative self-concepts and behavioural problems probably due to inadequate support and guidance from that single parent (Atindanbila et al., 2012) as environmental influence in the family context have been found to contribute to the formation of self-esteem among children (Elfhag, Tynelius, & Rasmussen, 2010). Other studies conducted also revealed that children of intact parents have significantly higher self-esteem than children of single parents (Bachman et al., 2011; Berg, 2004; Elfhag & Rasmussen, 2008; Elfhag, Tynelius, et al., 2010; Hendricks et al., 2005; Luo et al., 2012; Mandara & Murray, 2000). Taking the study conducted by Mandara and Murray (2000) as an example, it is evident that family functioning has a strong effect on adolescents' self-esteem with adolescents of non-married parents developing low self-esteem. A study by Ho et al. (1995) revealed that indeed economic

hardship has great negative consequences on adolescents' self-esteem. These studies including the current study, therefore, reveal the emotional effect or consequences of divorce or separation on adolescents. However, a study by Bastaits et al. (2012) revealed that there is no significant difference between family structures on self-esteem.

5.1.3 Self-Esteem and Depression

The result revealed a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression, even including all the subscales of self-esteem and the subscales of depression. In other words, as self-esteem and all its subscales goes up, adolescents' depression and all its subscales comes down and vice versa. The result of these relationships, according to the Field's (2005) categorisation, had large effect sizes. This result is consistent with several past studies conducted (Orth, Robins, & Roberts, 2008; Orth, Robins, Trzesniewski et al., 2009; Palosaari, Aro, & Laippala, 1996). For instance, a study by Palosaari, Aro, and Laippala (1996) revealed that self-esteem, even at age 16 years, serves as an indicator to depression in young adulthood irrespective of family background or gender. Another study by Orth, Robins, and Roberts (2008) also reported a strong correlation between low self-esteem and depression in several cross-sectional studies and further found out that low self-esteem predicted subsequent levels of depression, but depression did not predict subsequent levels of self-esteem. A similar study was conducted by Orth, Robins, Trzesniewski et al. (2009) a year later and the result revealed that low self-esteem operates as a risk factor for depressive symptoms at all phases of life. A study conducted in the same year by Orth, Robins, and Meier, (2009) again confirm their earlier results that low self-esteem predicts depression among adolescents. This further indicates the strong ties between self-esteem and depression. Hence, with the strong ties between self-esteem and depression as evidenced by this current study and results of previous studies (Orth, Robins, & Meier, 2009; Orth, Robins, & Roberts,

2008; Orth, Robins, Trzesniewski et al., 2009; Palosaari, Aro, & Laippala, 1996), it can be said to a greater degree that when an adolescent experiences low self-esteem it should be expected that depression would follow.

5.1.4 Sex, Parental Status, and Depression

As by the findings of this current study, there was no significant difference between female adolescents living with single-parent father and their male counterparts living with both parents on depression. That is, although female adolescents living with single-parent father had more depression (the highest) than male adolescent living with both parents, the difference was not significant. Hence, their level of depression is the same or at best due to chance. Single parenting has been documented to be more difficult than when both parents look after children (Amato & Keith, 1991; Mandara & Murray, 2000; McLeod, Kruttschnitt, & Domfeld, 1994). For instance, the proponents of the economic disadvantage perspective posit that divorce usually lead to a decline in the standard of living (Duncan & Hoffman, 1985; Weitzman, 1985). The lack of economic resources exposes the adolescent to developmental problems and societal ridicules. He has to work harder to secure enough income to cater for the house leaving the adolescent to manage the home even at this tender age. This parental absence will lead to decrease in parental attention, help and supervision which will lead to academic, emotional, and behavioural problems (Amato, 1987; Amato & Keith, 1991; Furstenburg & Nord, 1985; White, Brinkerhoff, & Booth, 1985). Furthermore, the lack of parents to serve as a model in the household may result in the inadequate learning of social skills (such as cooperating, negotiating, and compromising) necessary for success in the larger world (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Most studies reviewed (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Maharaj et al., 2008; Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012) hardly examined the interaction effects between sex and parental statuses on depression. However, a study by Clarke-Stewart and Hayward (1996) which explored children's well-being (depression) in the custody of the same-gender parent revealed that boys did significantly better in the custody of their fathers as well as girls in their mother's custody. Another study also revealed that girls of single parents whose father had not remarried had more depression than others (Tulisalo & Aro, 2000). It can then be assumed that girls with the single parent father will have more depression than girls with single parent mother. That is, if adolescents of single parents have been found to have more significant depression than intact parents (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Wang, Hou, & Xu, 2012), and females having more significant depression than males (Hamid et al., 2011; Li et al., 2006; Maag & Irvin, 2005; Maharaj et al., 2008; Park et al., 2012; Sen, 2004), then it can also be assumed that female adolescents living with single parent father will also have more significant depression than male adolescents living intact parents.

However, the result of this current study's was contrary to the assumption based on those previous studies. It can therefore be deduced that social support (which includes extended family, dating, and similar others) is buffering the effect of divorce or single parenting. Hence, the effect of single parenting is not as much felt as intact parenting. It has also been reported that dating experiences and social support, sometimes, do moderate the effect of divorce on emotional problem adolescent face (Tulisalo & Aro, 2000). Hence, the no significant difference gotten is due to the wide social support system in Ghana which helped to cushion the effect of parental divorce on adolescents.

5.1.5 Sex and Self-Esteem

As indicated by the analysis, adolescent males had significantly higher social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem than adolescent females. That is, irrespective of whether these adolescents are from a single parent or intact parents, males have significantly higher self-esteem in all the three dimensions than their female counterparts. These significant differences might be accounted for by the cultural values in Ghana which put men at the forefront. On average, both male and female adolescents had intermediate level of social, personal, and general self-esteem as by the norms. In other words, both sexes had scores which were neither high nor low on social, personal, and general self-esteem although males had higher scores on all the dimensions.

This current result is in line with a similar study conducted in Ghana a year ago by Atindanbila et al. (2012). Their results also revealed that male adolescents have significantly higher self-esteem than their female adolescents. It was further explained that their significant difference was due to the different rate at which males and females respond to separation, death, and divorce of their parents (Atindanbila et al., 2012). Hence, this study reaffirms this explanation. The Ghana culture expects men or boys to be strong physically, spiritually, and psychologically. Hence, it forbids males to even cry in public because it portrays a sign of weakness. Other studies (Bachman et al., 2011; Bastaitis et al., 2012; Kling et al., 1999) have also produced similar results as like this current study's result. Dukes and Martinez (1994), for instance, also reported that females had lower levels of both global and public domain self-esteem than did males which support this study's result. However, other studies (Brubeck & Beer, 1992; Uba, Yaacob, Juhari, & Talib, 2010) have also pointed out that there is no significant difference between males and females on self-esteem. The reason attributed to this

result included cultural values as pertains in their countries which are different in this country.

5.2 Contributions of the study

Over the past few decades, single parenting and issues associated with it are on the increase the world over and Ghana is no exception (Adegoke, 2010; GSS, 2005a; Lugaila, 1998a, 1998b). Although data on this area are adequately provided and seriously monitored by western countries, among African countries and specifically Ghana, it is almost non-existent. This study was conducted to help fill in the gaps of unavailable and inconsistent data. Therefore, this study was design to examine the influence of parental status on depression and self esteem among adolescents in Ghana.

As a way of updating research data on influence of parental statuses, the findings indicated that adolescents from single parents had significantly more depression than intact parents. There was a significant negative relationship between depression and self-esteem. Adolescents from intact parents had significantly more self-esteem than adolescents from single parent. Males had significantly more self-esteem than females even though there was no significant difference between the sexes on depression.

5.3 Limitation of the study

As like many studies, this current study was not without a limitation. So many precautions were taken into consideration so as to avoid factors that can compromise the findings of this study. It was suspected that there might have been the problem of social desirability response bias during the data collection as applies to most sensitive survey studies. Nevertheless, maximum checks like adequate spacing of respondents were done to avert these problems.

Despite these check, extreme precautions should also be exercised whilst generalising. Nonetheless, this limitation does not affect the validity of the findings of this study.

5.4 Implications and Recommendations

This current study has practical implications for the a) educational sector, b) clinicians and, c) further studies.

a) Educational Sector

To begin with, the findings of this current study challenge the educational sector on mental health issues, specifically depression and self-esteem among adolescents. That is, the results of this study revealed that single parental status do have influence on adolescents' well-being, especially depression and low self-esteem. Hence, it implies that these adolescents from single parent homes will face emotional challenges which will undeniably have negative effect on their academics, especially if they have other challenges in their homes. Therefore, it is recommended that at this level of education, each school should have a counsellor, school or educational psychologist to help these adolescents to successfully navigate these challenges. Furthermore, guidance and counselling coordinators who are already at post should be further trained to deliver more effectively.

b) Clinicians and other mental health professional

Mental health problems among adolescents are on the increase (Zeratsion et al., 2013) and its effects is undeniably enormous on them. Information about adolescent mental health is continuously changing and newer ways of treating or managing these problems among adolescents are being discovered. Hence, mental health professionals are advised to continually update their facts about adolescent mental health. This study, therefore, makes

available one of the factors that causes depression and self-esteem among adolescents which is single parenting. It is again recommended that mental health professionals should update their knowledge base through workshops, seminars, and more researches.

c) Further studies

The results of this study reveal that there are more issues surrounding parenting statuses on adolescent mental health. Hence, this study serves as a tip of the iceberg on adolescents' mental health. Therefore, more researches of quantitative and qualitative nature needs to be conducted to holistically unearth the challenges surrounding both adolescents and pre-adolescents.

5.5 Conclusion

This current study examined the influence of parental status on depression and self-esteem among adolescents in Ghana. Specifically, the study examined if a significant difference exists between adolescent from single parent homes and intact-parent homes on depression. It also investigated whether a significant difference exists between adolescent from single parent homes and intact-parent homes on self-esteem. It further examined if a significant negative relationship exists between depression and self-esteem among adolescents. It again sought to find out if significant interaction effect exists among adolescents on depression, and lastly to examine whether a significant sex differences exist among adolescents on self-esteem. Three hundred and eight respondents were selected to participate in this study.

Findings of the analyses revealed that adolescents of the single-parental status had significantly more depression (total) than respondents of the intact-parental status. Taking the sub-scales into consideration, respondents of the single-parental status had significantly more

negative mood, ineffectiveness, and negative self-esteem than respondents of the intact-parental status. However, there was no significant difference between them on interpersonal problems and anhedonia. It was also found out that respondents of the intact-parental status had significantly higher self-esteem than respondents of the single-parental status for personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem but not social self-esteem. There was also a significant negative relationship between depression (and its sub-scales) and social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem. There were also significant positive relationships among the subscales within the two main scales (depression and self-esteem). No significant interaction effect was observed between sex (male and female) and parental status (single-parent-father, single-parent-mother, and intact-parents) as well as sex and parental status as main effects on depression (total). Male adolescents have significantly higher self-esteem taking into consideration social self-esteem, personal self-esteem, and general self-esteem than female adolescents.

Findings from this current study have been thoroughly discussed and necessary implications and recommendations to the educational sector, mental health professionals, and further studies appropriately made.

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APPENDICES