

Introduction

In this paper, I argue that parents in a broken marriage should not remain together. A broken marriage is one in which both partners are unhappy and unsatisfied with their relationship, they are unable to communicate without arguing, they believe their relationship has eroded and cannot be amended, and they perceive their partner as a burden they must tolerate. According to Shapiro (2012), only 17% of married couples consider themselves to be happy and their marriage a success. The other 83% are either divorced or unhappy in their marriage. Considering these numbers, it is imperative to look at the consequences caused by staying in an unhappy and broken marriage on both the parents and children.

I support my position with the following three arguments. First, I argue that children suffer from emotional insecurity, low self-esteem, and internalized conflict when parents stay in a broken marriage (Cummings et al., 2012). Second, I argue that remaining in a broken marriage lowers parents' self-esteem and overall life satisfaction (Hawkins & Booth, 2005). Third, I argue that staying in a broken marriage may cause parents to develop mental illnesses such as generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression (Priest, 2013), and a decrease in mortality rate (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010).

I also consider alternative positions readers may have. First, I consider the argument that parents staying together, despite their conflicts, will lessen the child's future chances of divorce. I refute this argument by explaining that children from high conflict households who had their parents divorced were less prone to experience marital dissolution than the ones who had their parents stay together (Gager et al., 2016). Second, I consider the argument that parents staying together can lessen the development of behavioral issues in children. I counter this argument by showing that high levels of marital conflict are linked to more substantial increases in children's behavioral issues in marriages that do not end in divorce than those that end in divorce (Morrison & Coiro, 1999). Third, I consider the argument that staying in a broken marriage enables children to perform better academically. I rebut this

Commented [cp1]: Does the wording sound OK? Because the "for the children" at the end sounds a bit odd ... But up to you

Commented [cp2]: "I define a broken marriage as ..."

Commented [cp3]: Not parallel ☹
If you don't understand – ask me
Also see chompchomp.com for practice

Commented [cp4]: Embedded clause – hard to process

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Lose these WILLs

Commented [cp6]: A bit wordy

argument by explaining that marital conflict is a risk factor for poor academic performance in children (Ghazarian & Buehler, 2008).

This paper is important because high marital conflict exists in many households around the world and many unhappy couples believe that staying together is more beneficial for their children. However, staying in a broken marriage may have drastic consequences on both the mental and physical health of the parents and children. Additionally, it can stimulate the development of behavioral issues in children as well as negatively impact **their** academic performance. Thus, it is critical to address the long-term effects of staying in a broken marriage on both the children and the parents.

Discussion of Sources

Source 1

Cummings, E. M., George, M. R. W., McCoy, K. P., & Davies, P. T. (2012). Interparental conflict in kindergarten and adolescent adjustment: prospective investigation of emotional security as an explanatory mechanism. *Child Development*, 83(5), 1703–1715. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23321191>

This scholarly paper is published in the journal of Child Development, which is a reputable journal discussing the environmental and biological influences on children's psyche. The journal is also part of "The Society for Research in Child Development," which is a multidisciplinary, professional association with an international membership of thousands of researchers, practitioners, and human development professionals. This academic paper examines the consequences of parental conflict on children and how they respond emotionally as adolescents whether through internalizing or externalizing conflict. The content of this article is special because it includes data collections using different methods and multi-reporter assessments on numerous families. This article includes scientific evidence that children who grow up in a toxic home with unhappy parents are emotionally insecure, allowing me to demonstrate the harmful effects on children's mental health and emotional attachments should parents choose to stay together in an unhappy marriage. This

source appeals to me for a variety of reasons. First, it employs a representative sample of families from various ethnic backgrounds. Second, the authors' claims are based on EST (emotional security theory), which is highly pertinent to my argument. Third, the authors present their findings in simplified diagrams, which make it easier for me to interpret the findings.

Source 2

Gager, C. T., Yabiku, S. T., & Linver, M. R. (2016). Conflict or divorce? Does parental conflict and/or divorce increase the likelihood of adult children's cohabiting and marital dissolution? *Marriage & Family Review*, 52(3), 243-261. <https://doi-org.aus.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/01494929.2015.1095267>

This article is published in the journal *Marriage & Family Review*, and is written by Gager and Linver, professors of family science and human development at Montclair State University, as well as Yabiku, a professor of sociology and demography at Pennsylvania State University. This paper investigates whether children who grow up in a home with parental conflict and divorce are more likely to undergo divorce as adults than children who grow up in a home with minimal conflict and intact families. The findings indicate that children from high-conflict homes who had their parents stay together had much greater rates of relationship disintegration than children whose parents had divorced. The content of this article is special since the authors employ a three-wave longitudinal data set and consider pre-divorce family factors, thus providing representative results. This source will be of use to me because it allows me to refute the argument, which states that parents staying together will lessen the child's future chance of divorce. I like this source because it provides extensive details about the three waves and includes children whose parents were divorced but lived together, which is a new idea in this field of research and is relevant to my topic.

Source 3

Ghazarian, S. R., & Buehler, C. (2010). Interparental conflict and academic achievement: an examination of mediating and moderating factors. *Journal of Youth and*

Adolescence, 39(1), 23-35. <http://dx.doi.org. aus.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10964-008-9360-1>

This scholarly paper is published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, which publishes papers based on quantitative analyses, theoretical papers, and comprehensive review articles regarding the subject of youth and adolescence. The authors are Ghazarian, an expert in complex statistical analysis and research methodology for medical, behavioral and social sciences at John Hopkins University, as well as Buehler, a professor of human development and family studies at the University of North Carolina. The paper examined the effect of marital conflict on children's academic performance. Inter-parental conflict was found to be a risk factor for decreased academic attainment. I will use this source to refute the argument, which states that parents staying together for the children will improve children's academic performance. I like this paper because the authors use a risk and resilience theoretical framework, which allows me to thoroughly understand the impairments parental conflict have on the children's health and development.

Source 4

Hawkins, D. N, & Booth, A. (2005). Unhappily ever after: effects of long-term, low-quality marriages on well-being. *Social Forces*, 84(1), 451-471.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3598312>

This article is published in the journal *Social Forces*, which is a social research publication that focuses on sociological investigation. The authors of this article are Hawkins, chair of the department of sociology and anthropology at the University of Nebraska Omaha, and Booth, a distinguished professor emeritus of sociology, human development, and demography at Pennsylvania State University who authored more than 100 articles and several books. The study examined the effects of an unhappy marriage on well-being. The researchers followed up with unhappy marriages over a 12-year period and assessed marital happiness on a variety of factors. The findings suggest that staying in a low-quality marriage leads to a reduction in overall life satisfaction and self-esteem. In my research paper, this

source serves to highlight the negative impacts of staying in an unhappy marriage on the self-esteem of the parents. This report appeals to me since it is a longitudinal study, which allows the researchers to accurately measure the impact of unhappy marriages over time.

Furthermore, the authors use three different hypotheses in three different scenarios, all of which support my position.

Source 5

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., & Layton, J. B. (2010). Social relationships and mortality risk: a meta-analytic review: e1000316. *PLoS Medicine*, 7(7).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316>

This scientific paper is published in PLoS Medicine, a reputable journal that publishes articles on biomedical determinants on health. The authors are Holt-Lustand and Smith, psychology professors at Brigham Young University, and Layton, an epidemiology professor at the University of North Carolina. This paper assesses the extent to which social interactions influence mortality risk, which features of social ties are strong predictors, and which factors may mitigate risk. The findings revealed that the impact of social interactions on mortality risk is analogous to that of well-known risk variables. This article will be used to support my claim that staying in a broken marriage is harmful to parents' health and to emphasize that choosing to remain in a broken marriage has the potential to be fatal. This source stands out to me because the authors used a meta-analytic review, which allows me to enhance my knowledge by discovering other reputable sources regarding the same topic.

Source 6

Morrison, D. R., & Coiro, M. J. (1999). Parental conflict and marital disruption: do children benefit when high conflict marriages are dissolved? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(3), 626–637. <https://doi.org/10.2307/353565>

This article is published in the Journal of Marriage and Family, which is the leading research journal in the family field and has been so for over sixty years. The authors are Morrison, an associate professor at the McCourt School Public Policy at Georgetown

University, and Coiro, a licensed clinical psychologist at Loyola University Maryland. The purpose of this study is to examine if the impacts of marital conflict differ between children whose parents leave high-conflict marriages and those whose parents stay in high-conflict marriages. The findings suggest that in marriages that do not break up, high levels of marital conflict are linked to much greater increases in children's behavioral issues, than in marriages that end in divorce. I will use this source to refute the argument that parents staying together can lessen the development of behavioral issues in children. This source appeals to me since the researchers assess and evaluate behavioral differences between boys and girls based on their parental orientation: married, divorced, or high-conflict but remaining together. Furthermore, the repercussions they investigate are contemporary, thus their findings are relevant today.

Source 7

Priest, J. B. (2013). Anxiety disorders and the quality of relationships with friends, relatives, and romantic partners. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 69(1), 78–88. <https://doi-org.aus.idm.oclc.org/10.1002/jclp.21925>

This article is published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* and is written by Priest, an associate professor of psychological and quantitative foundation at the University of Iowa. The study examined the effects relationships had on the development of anxiety disorders. The findings imply that relationship quality with relatives and partners is linked to generalized anxiety disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder for people who are unhappy in their marriages. I will use this source to support my claim that mental health disorders such as generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may develop in partners in an unhappy marriage. I will also use this source to highlight the importance of having a healthy marital relationship on mental health. I like this source because the author used more than one survey to assess the participants, which makes the data obtained more reliable and generalizable.

Source 8

Shapiro, D. A. (2012). *You Can Be Right (Or You Can Be Married)*. Scribner.

This book is published by Scribner, a reputable publishing house that has issued novels by well-known authors like Stephen King and Anthony Doerr. The author of this book is Dana Adam Shapiro, a renowned novelist, journalist, and filmmaker. Shapiro spent four years interviewing married and divorced couples. He gathered enough information to divide married couples and divorced people into percentages. He discovered that approximately 50% of couples are divorced, 17% are happily married, 17% are unhappily married, and 17% believe their marriage to be “meh” or tolerable. I intend to use this source in my introduction to highlight the significance of the issue, taking into account the vast number of people who are unhappy in their marriages. I am interested in this source because Shapiro vividly describes his interviews with others, as well as notes and analyzes their responses. This strategy allows me to comprehend what life is like for someone who is unhappy in their marriage.

Outline

- 1) Introduction:
 - a) Attention grabbing hook (statistical quote)
 - b) Brief background of the topic
 - c) State the importance of the topic
 - d) Briefly introduce supporting arguments:
 - i) Staying in an unhappy marriage may cause parents to develop mental illnesses such as GAD, PTSD, and depression.
 - ii) Children experience emotional insecurity and low self-esteem as a result of parents staying in an unhappy marriage.
 - iii) Staying in an unhappy marriage will lower parents' self-esteem
 - e) Briefly introduce counterarguments:
 - i) Staying together for the children can lessen their chance of future divorce.
 - ii) Parents staying together can lessen children's behavioral issues.

iii) Children will perform better academically if parents stay together.

f) State the thesis

2) Supporting Arguments

a) Staying in an unhappy marriage may cause parents to develop mental illnesses such as GAD, PTSD, and decrease mortality rate.

i) Explain argument

ii) Use research evidence from Gager et al.

iii) Use research evidence from Holt-Lunstad et al.

b) Children experience emotional insecurity and low self-esteem as a result of parents staying in an unhappy marriage.

i) Explain argument

ii) Use research evidence from Cummings et al.

c) Staying in an unhappy marriage will lower parents' self-esteem and life satisfaction

i) Explain argument

ii) Use research evidence from Hawinks & Booth

3) Counterarguments

a) Staying together for the children can lessen their chance of future divorce.

i) Explain argument

ii) Refute using evidence from Gager et al.

b) Parents staying together can lessen children's behavioral issues

i) Explain argument

ii) Refute using evidence from Morrison & Coiro

iii) Refute using "social modeling theory"

c) Children will perform better academically if parents stay together.

i) Explain Argument

ii) Refute using evidence from Ghazarian & Buehler

4) Conclusion

- a) Restate thesis
- b) Summarize arguments
- c) Summarize counterarguments
- d) Provide suggestions
 - i) Therapy
 - ii) Cohabitation
 - iii) Divorce

References

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Commented [cp7]: Excellent work! 😊

Note the comments though – points will be lost in the next draft ...

Well played 😊

Hawkins, D. N., & Booth, A. (2005). Unhappily ever after: effects of long-term, low-quality marriages on well-being. *Social Forces*, 84(1), 451-471.

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