

Design and development of an educational
programme for divorcing parents to prevent
adjustment problems in children

L Roodt

 **orcid.org/0000-0001-8210-4820**

Thesis accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work at the
North-West University

Promotor: Prof C Wessels

Co-promotor: Dr S Smith

Graduation: July 2021

Student number: 11126639

If you always do what you always did,

You will always get what you always got.

- Albert Einstein -

DECLARATION



Higher Degrees Administration

SOLEMN DECLARATION AND PERMISSION TO SUBMIT

Solemn declaration by student

I, **LISL ROODT**

declare herewith that the thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation/article entitled (**exactly as registered/approved title**),

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

which I herewith submit to the North-West University is in compliance/partial compliance with the requirements set for the degree:

Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work

is my own work, has been text-edited in accordance with the requirements and has not already been submitted to any other university.

LATE SUBMISSION: If a thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation/article of a student is submitted after the deadline for submission, the period available for examination is limited. No guarantee can therefore be given that (should the examiner reports be positive) the degree will be conferred at the next applicable graduation ceremony. It may also imply that the student would have to re-register for the following academic year.

Ethics number:

NWU-00098-18-S1

ORCID: 0 0 0 0 - 0 0 0 1 - 8 2 1 0 - 4 8 2 0

Signature of Student

LISL
ROODT

Digitally signed by
LISL ROODT
Date: 2020.12.09
09:10:19 +02'00'

University Number

1 1 1 2 6 6 3 9

Signed on this 9 day of December of 2020

Permission to submit and solemn declaration by supervisor/promoter

The undersigned declares that the thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation/article:

- complies with the A-rules and the technical requirements provided for in the Manual for Master's and Doctoral studies and in faculty rules;
- that the student's work has been checked by me for plagiarism (by making use of TurnItIn software for example) and a satisfactory report has been obtained;
- and that the work was language edited before submission for examination.

Faculty specific requirements as per A-rules: 1.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.2.4, 4.10.4, 5.3.2

- with regards to faculty rules on submission or acceptance by an accredited scientific journal;
- with regards to faculty rules on peer reviewed conference proceedings;
- the student is hereby granted permission to submit his/her article/mini-dissertation/ dissertation/thesis.

Signature of Supervisor/Promoter

Prof Cornelia
Wessels

Digitally signed by ProfCornelia Wessels
DN: cn=ProfCornelia Wessels, o=North West University, ou=Social Work, email=ProfCornelia.Wessels@NWU.ac.za, c=ZA
Date: 2020.12.09 10:04:07 +02'00'

Date 0 9 1 2 2 0 2 0

PREFACE

The article format was chosen in accordance with Regulation A.12.2 for the Ph.D. (SW) degree. The formulation of the articles followed the stipulations and Editorial Policy of CARSA (Addendum 1), OBITER (Addendum 2) and The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (JMFT) (Addendum 3).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere gratitude to everybody who contributed to making this research possible. Particularly the following:

- My loving husband
- My two beautiful daughters
- My dear parents
- Colleagues
- Participants
- Technical and language editors
- Prof Cornelia Wessels, my promotor, for all she has done to make this possible
- Our Heavenly Father for granting me the opportunity, strength, and endurance.

ABSTRACT

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

This study aims to design, develop and evaluate the content of a divorce educational programme to be attended by divorcing parents in South Africa during divorce proceedings to equip parents with knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

Keywords

Best interests of the child, develop, divorcing parents, educational programme, evaluate.

Divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only in South Africa, but also in the rest of the world. Children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning, and poor conflict management. While a divorce can be hard on children, it is often the fighting of the parents that most directly affects the children, and the impact depends on how well the parents can isolate the children from these disruptions. Divorce educational programmes for divorcing parents are presented globally and at many of these programmes, attendance is compulsory. South Africa requires a divorce educational programme for parents to prevent the adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

SECTION A refers to the problem statement, the research objectives, procedures, and methodology. The keywords as well as the limitations of the research study are discussed. The research was conducted according to the phases in intervention research. Phase 1 was an integrated literature review, Phase 2 was an empirical study utilising Google Forms, and Phase 3 was the design and development of the divorce educational programme. During Phase 4, the proposed programme was evaluated by means of the Delphi technique with experts in the field of divorce and during Phase 5, the proposed programme was presented to divorcing spouses.

The problem statement in Section A is based on the fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate (SA Stats, 2018), impacting negatively on the development and emotional

well-being of the involved children (Smith, 2010:2). This is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem.

This study aimed to design, develop and evaluate the content of a divorce educational programme to be attended by divorcing parents in South Africa to equip parents with the knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

The following objectives can be stated:

Objective 1:

To do an integrated literature review (**Phase 1**) and quantitative analysis (**Phase 2** – Google Forms) of the specific themes that should be addressed in an educational programme for divorcing parents (**Article 1**)

Objective 2:

To design and develop a divorce educational programme (**Phase 3**) for divorcing parents to equip parents to prevent the negative impact and adjustment problems of divorce in children (**Article 2**)

Objective 3:

To evaluate the content of the newly designed and proposed educational programme. The research was done in phases, utilising qualitative as well as quantitative data. The integrated literature study focused on existing divorce educational programmes globally.

SECTION B consists of the three articles in which the aims and outcomes of the study are reported.

Article 1

The purpose of the integrated literature review was to assist in the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to equip them with the knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce within the South African context. It is evident from literature and the researcher's practical experience (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-13) that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning and poor conflict management during the process of divorce. The fact

that South Africa has a high divorce rate (SA Stats, 2018), impacting negatively on the development and emotional well-being of the involved children (Smit, 2010:2), is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a substantial impact to improve public health (Salem *et al.*, 2013:231-238). Globally used divorce educational programmes were reviewed to determine what a divorce educational programme for South Africa should entail.

Article 2

This article focuses on the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

This programme will educate parents to understand the negative impact and consequences of divorce on children, what children need during and after divorce and will help parents to manage the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems.

Article 3

This article will focus on the evaluation of the content of newly designed programme and report on the findings of Phase 4 and 5 of the research.

SECTION C is a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

SECTION D contains an integrated bibliography and

SECTION E consists of addenda.

OPSOMMING

Die ontwerp en ontwikkeling van 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding om aanpassingsprobleme by hulle kinders te voorkom

Hierdie studie het ten doel om 'n opvoedkundige program te ontwerp, te ontwikkel en die inhoud te evalueer vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding om aanpassingsprobleme by hulle kinders te voorkom.

Sleutelwoorde

Beste belang van die kind, evalueer, ontwikkel, opvoedkundige program, ouers in die proses van egskeiding

Egskeiding is 'n ernstige en deurlopende probleem, nie net in die res van die wêreld nie, maar ook in Suid-Afrika. Kinders uit gesinne waar ouers skei, word die slagoffers van hul ouers se onvermoë om hul eie verskille, gebrek aan logiese redenasies en swak konflikhantering te hanteer. Alhoewel 'n egskeiding vir kinders moeilik is, is dit meestal die konflik tussen die ouers wat die kinders die ergste benadeel. Die impak van egskeiding op kinders is direk afhanklik van hoe goed die ouers die kinders van hul eie probleme en konflik kan isoleer. Egskeidingsprogramme vir ouers wat skei, word wêreldwyd aangebied en by baie van hierdie programme is bywoning verpligtend. Suid-Afrika benodig 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding om aanpassingsprobleme by kinders tydens die egskeidingsproses te voorkom.

AFDELING A van die studie verwys na die probleemstelling, die navorsingsdoelstellings, prosedures en metodologie. Die sleutelwoorde, asook die beperkinge van die navorsingstudie word bespreek. Die navorsing is gedoen volgens die fases in intervensienavorsing. Fase 1 was 'n geïntegreerde literatuuroorsig, Fase 2 was 'n empiriese studie met behulp van Google Vorms, en Fase 3 was die ontwerp en ontwikkeling van die opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding. Gedurende Fase 4 is die voorgestelde program aan die hand van die Delphi-tegniek met kundiges op die gebied van egskeiding geëvalueer, en gedurende Fase 5 is die voorgestelde program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding aangebied.

Die probleemstelling in Afdeling A is gebaseer op die feit dat Suid-Afrika 'n hoë egskeidingsyfer het (SA Stats, 2018), wat die ontwikkeling en emosionele welstand van die kinders betrokke in die egskeidingsproses negatief beïnvloed (Smith, 2010: 2). Hieruit blyk duidelik dat 'n behoorlike en toepaslike program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding 'n navorsbare probleem in Suid-Afrika is.

Hierdie studie het ten doel gehad om die inhoud van 'n opvoedkundige egskeidingsprogram te ontwerp, te ontwikkel en te evalueer. Die program sal ouers in die proses van egskeiding toerus met die nodige kennis om aanpassingsprobleme by kinders tydens die egskeidingsproses te voorkom.

Die volgende doelwitte kan gestel word:

Doelwit 1

Om 'n geïntegreerde literatuuroorsig (Fase 1) en kwantitatiewe analise (Fase 2 – Google Vorms) te doen van die spesifieke temas wat in 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers, wat van mekaar skei, vervat moet word (Artikel 1).

Doelwit 2

Om 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding (Fase 3) te ontwerp en te ontwikkel om ouers toe te rus om die negatiewe impak en aanpassingsprobleme van kinders tydens die proses van egskeiding te voorkom (Artikel 2).

Doelwit 3

Om te evalueer of die inhoud van die nuut ontwikkelde opvoedkundige program voldoende is.

Die navorsing is in fases gedoen en die navorser het kwalitatiewe sowel as kwantitatiewe data gebruik. Die literatuurstudie het gefokus op bestaande internasionale opvoedkundige programme vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding.

AFDELING B bestaan uit drie artikels waarin verslag oor die doelstellings en uitkomst van die studie gedoen word.

Artikel 1

Die doel van die geïntegreerde literatuuroorsig was om die ontwerp en ontwikkeling van 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding te ondersteun. Die program sal ouers met die nodige kennis toerus om aanpassingsprobleme by kinders tydens die egskeidingsproses binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks te voorkom. Dit blyk uit literatuur en die navorser se praktiese ervaring (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-13) dat kinders tydens die egskeidingsproses die slagoffers van hul ouers se gebrek aan logiese denke, swak redenasie en konflikhantering word. Die feit dat Suid-Afrika 'n hoë egskeidingsyfer het (SA Stats, 2018) wat die ontwikkeling en emosionele welstand van die kinders negatief beïnvloed (Smit, 2010:2), is 'n duidelike aanduiding dat 'n behoorlike en toepaslike program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding in Suid-Afrika 'n navorsbare probleem is. Die hoë voorkoms van egskeiding en die uitwerking daarvan op kinders beteken dat die vermindering van die risiko verbonde aan egskeiding 'n wesenlike impak kan hê om die algemene welstand van die gemeenskap te verbeter (Salem *et al.*, 2013: 231-238). Internasionale opvoedkundige programme vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding is nagevors om vas te stel wat 'n egskeidingsonderrigprogram vir Suid-Afrika moet behels.

Artikel 2

Hierdie artikel fokus op die ontwerp en ontwikkeling van 'n opvoedkundige program vir ouers in die proses van egskeiding om aanpassingsprobleme by kinders tydens die proses te voorkom.

Hierdie program sal ouers leer om die negatiewe uitwerking van egskeiding op kinders te verstaan, wat kinders tydens en na die egskeiding nodig het, en sal ouers help om die proses van egskeiding te bestuur om aanpassingsprobleme by kinders te voorkom.

Artikel 3

Hierdie artikel fokus op die evaluering van die inhoud van die nuut ontwikkelde program en doen verslag oor die bevindinge van die navorsing.

AFDELING C is 'n samevatting, gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings.

AFDELING D bevat 'n geïntegreerde bibliografie en

AFDELING E bestaan uit addendums.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION I

PREFACE I

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS II

ABSTRACT..... III

OPSOMMING.....VI

SECTION A: GENERAL INTRODUCTION..... 16

1. KEYWORDS 16

1.1 Best interests of the child..... 16

1.2 Develop 17

1.3 Divorcing parents 17

1.4 Educational Programme 18

1.5 Evaluate..... 18

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT..... 18

2.1 Contextualisation 18

3. CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY 24

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS 26

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 26

5.1 Aim..... 26

5.2 Objective 1: 27

5.3	Objective 2:	27
5.4	Objective 3:	27
6.	RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN	27
7.	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	53
8.	CHOICE AND STRUCTURE OF REPORT.....	55
	LIST OF REFERENCES	56
	SECTION B: ARTICLES.....	64
1.	ARTICLE 1	64
2.	ARTICLE 2.....	86
3.	ARTICLE 3.....	120
	SECTION C: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	150
1.	INTRODUCTION.....	150
2.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	151
3.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	152
3.1	Aim.....	152
3.2	Objective 1:	152
3.3	Objective 2:	152

3.4	Objective 3:	152
4.	TESTING THE CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT	164
5.	GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....	165
6.	CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH	167
	LIST OF REFERENCES	169
	SECTION D: BIBLIOGRAPHY	173
	SECTION E: CONSISTS OF ADDENDA.....	185
	ADDENDUM 1: CARSA GUIDELINES TO AUTHORS.....	185
	ADDENDUM 2: OBITER – STYLISTIC GUIDELINES.....	194
	ADDENDUM 3: THE JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY (JMFT) .	227
	ADDENDUM 4: ETHIC APPROVAL.....	233
	ADDENDUM 5A: HREC CONSENT FORMS EXPERTS	235
	ADDENDUM 5B: HREC CONSENT FORMS PARENTS	241
	ADDENDUM 5C: HREC CONSENT FORMS PARENT SELF STUDY	247
	ADDENDUM 6: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE	252
	ADDENDUM 7: DELPHI INFORMATION LEAFLET	256
	ADDENDUM 8: DELPHI LETTER TO EXPERTS.....	257
	ADDENDUM 9: DELPHI ROUND 1	258
	ADDENDUM 10: DELPHI ROUND 2	262
	ADDENDUM 11: PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS	267
	ADDENDUM 12: INFORMATION LEAFLET PARENTS.....	269
	ADDENDUM 13: PRESENTER PROGRAMME MANUAL.....	271
	ADDENDUM 14: PARENT PROGRAMME MANUAL	283

ADDENDUM 15A: SELF CONSTRUCTED QUESTIONNAIRE ATTENDANCE.....	307
ADDENDUM 15B: SELF CONSTRUCTED QUESTIONNAIRE SELF STUDY	311
ADDENDUM 16: PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING.....	315
ADDENDUM 17: TURN IT IN.....	316

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1: Steps in Intervention Research 28

Table 1-2: Trustworthiness 34

Table 1-3: Eight steps of coding according to Tesch 46

Table 1-4: Structure of research report 55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-1: Schematic overview of the proposed study: Intervention design
incorporating a multi-phased multi-method design..... 27

SECTION A: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

1. Keywords

Best interests of the child, develop, divorcing parents, educational programme, evaluate.

1.1 Best interests of the child

Although there is no standard definition of “best interests of the child”, the term generally refers to the deliberation undertaken by courts when deciding what type of services, actions, and orders will best serve a child, as well as who is best suited to take care of a child. “Best interests” are generally determined by considering many factors related to the child’s circumstances and the parent or caregiver’s circumstances and capacity to parent, without ever losing sight of the main concern – the child’s ultimate safety and well-being (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016).

According to Connell (2008:12), the American Law Institute defines the best interests of a child in the case of a divorce, and embrace a philosophy that the child’s best interests is served by

- parental planning and agreement about the child’s custodial arrangements and upbringing;
- continuity of existing parent-child attachments;
- meaningful contact between the child and each parent;
- caretaking relationships by adults who love the child, know how to provide for the child’s needs and place a high priority on doing so;
- security from exposure to conflict and violence;
- expeditious, predictable decision making, and
- avoidance of prolonged uncertainty regarding care and control.

In South Africa, the best interests of the child are the constitutional right of every child. Section 28(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) provides that “*a child’s best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child*”. The Children’s Act (38 of 2005) stipulates in section 9 that the child’s best interests are of paramount importance in all matters concerning the care, protection, and well-being of a child. Section 7 of this Act also stipulates several factors to be considered when a child’s best interests must be decided.

For this study, the best interests of the child were the paramount concern for the child’s ultimate safety and well-being during the process of parental divorce.

1.2 Develop

According to the American Psychological Association (Dictionary.com, 2017) develop means to bring out the capabilities or possibilities, or to bring to a more advanced or effective state, to elaborate or expand in detail. In the context of this study, develop will be viewed to identify the possibilities for a more effective programme for divorcing parents in South Africa.

1.3 Divorcing parents

According to the Divorce Act (70 of 1979), a marriage may be dissolved by a court by a decree of divorce, and divorce action is defined as an action by which a decree of divorce or other relief in connection therewith is applied for, and includes an application for:

- an interdict or the interim custody of, or access to, a minor child of the marriage concerned or for the payment of maintenance, or
- a contribution towards the cost of such action or to institute such action or make such an application or for the substituted service of processing, or the edictal citation of a party to, such action or such application.

A dissolution of marriage, which is more commonly known as divorce, terminates the marriage of the spouses and resolves issues between them, including child custody, visitation, child support, spousal support, asset, and debt division, former name restoration, and even restraining orders (Superior Court of California, 2016). For this

study, divorcing parents were viewed as a mother and a father (primary caregivers) whose marriage was dissolved by a court of law.

1.4 Educational Programme

Programme is defined by the Cambridge Business English Dictionary (2020) as a plan of activities to be done or things to be achieved.

The Cambridge Business English Dictionary (2020) further defines educational as the intent to teach someone something or having the result of teaching someone something.

In the context of this study, an educational programme is viewed as the intended systematic teaching of divorcing parents.

1.5 Evaluate

According to the American Psychological Association Dictionary (2020) evaluate means to assess, judge, or determine the significance, worth, or quality of results of an experiment. For the context of this study, evaluate will be viewed as a way to assess the content quality and significance of an educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

2.1 Contextualisation

In countries, such as the United States, around 39% of marriages end in divorce, (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). In 2006 more than 1,1 million children (13,75%) lived with a parent who was divorced or separated (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007: Owen & Rhoades, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). According to the South African Statistics release (SA Stats, 2018), 25 282 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018 and resulted in 14 302 (65, 6%) affected children younger than 18 years.

Due to a high incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced by the researcher in practice, and investigation into existing literature (Amato, 2012:12-19; Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:251-262;) it was pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only in South Africa, but worldwide. When one looks at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and their best

interests must be looked at as well as the trauma that they might experience. According to Fagan and Churchill (2012:251-262) divorce diminishes children's future competence in all five of society's major tasks or institutions, namely family, school, religion, marketplace, and government. They further state that the effect of divorce on children ranges from minor to noticeably significant and from short- to long-term. None of the effects applies to each child of every divorced couple, nor has any child suffered all the same effects. There is no way to predict how any child will be affected nor to what extent, but it is possible to predict divorce's collective effects and how children will be affected. In South Africa, the overall well-being of at least 22 000 children is being affected by divorce every year and these children are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with parents who are still married (Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249). These children may experience difficulties like emotional problems, acting-out behaviour, and poor school achievement during parental separation or divorce (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111). However, it must be noted that many parents face the challenges associated with divorce or separation healthily and effectively without high-conflict interactions (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512). In about 20% of divorce cases where children are involved, disagreement on custody and visitation arrangements leads to litigation resulting in conflict situations (Jacobs & Jatte, 2010:17). For some people, divorce might be the most stressful event of their lives and the unknown can cause even greater fear and stress than what they already know (Gadaua, 2012). Being aware of these may help to reduce the negative impact of divorce on children and prevent adjustment problems, and children may be more likely to have a happy, healthy relationship with both parents if they see their parents without the pressure and stress of an unhappy relationship (Giles, 2017). According to Amato *et al.* (2011:512), children appear to suffer when parents argue frequently, maintain inconsistent rules, and attempt to undermine one another's authority or relationship with their children. Gilman *et al.* (2005:110) confirm that children from divorce may suffer short-term depression, anxiety, and behavioural problems at home or school. Overall, divorce causes a temporary decrease in an individual's quality of life and puts some "on a downward trajectory from which they might never fully recover" (Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1). They further state that parental modelling diminishes many children's capacity for stable marriage later in life, though some children may react by doubling their efforts to ensure stability. For instance, compared to students from intact families, college students from divorced families use violence more frequently to resolve

conflict and are more likely to be aggressive and physically violent with their friends whether they are male or female.

Variables that appear to lower children's well-being following marital disruption, include declines in household income, poor psychological functioning among resident parents, ineffective parenting from resident parents, loss of contact with non-resident parents, continuing conflict between parents, and the absence of co-operative co-parenting behaviour (Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-11). Therefore, children must be empowered to be able to handle the new composition of their family and the new challenges.

It is evident from the researcher's practical experience and literature (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512; Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-13) that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning, and poor conflict management. While a divorce can be hard on children, it is often the fighting of the parents that affects the children most directly, and the impact depends on how well the parents can isolate the children from these disruptions. Stadelmann *et al.* (2010:106) confirm that the ability of divorced parents to establish a supportive, low-conflict parental unit has an influence on the quality of relationships throughout the family, even some 20 years after marital disruption.

Smit (2010:1) further states that divorce is an ongoing process and not just an incident and that the lack of proper management of the process often results in confusion and unnecessary conflict between concerning parties. It is therefore very important for parents and children to be prepared properly and guided through the ongoing process to prevent a lifelong negative impact on children that may result in high numbers of early school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, and criminal transgressions (Smit, 2010:2). According to Philyaw and Thomas (2013:4), children are happier, healthier, and better adjusted when both their parents play an active role in their lives, and their trauma can be lessened when their parents get along. Smit (2010:3) is also of the opinion that the psychological effect of divorce further interferes with children's potential to form positive emotional relationships with a spouse and their children later on in their lives. She further states that the main situations that have a negative influence on children during divorce are:

- Prolonged conflict between the parents

- Loss of a parent
- Loss of quality parenting
- Loss of family unity
- Loss of parental involvement
- Loss of identity
- Loss of economic security
- Decline in living standards

These losses can manifest on physical and emotional levels, but it is emphasised that effective communication and participation between parents have positive results on children's ability to adapt to their new circumstances following the divorce of their parents (Smit, 2010:3). According to Goldschlog (2009:1) and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2017), children do better when divorcing families learn to communicate their feelings without increasing conflict, listen to each other's views and stay involved as parents despite separation. According to the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244), the lack of parents' insights is often the result of a lack of the correct information. According to Singer (2009:363-369), one of the primary methods of family courts to intervene with divorcing parents is divorce educational programmes to promote positive long term post-divorce outcomes for children and families.

During the mid-1990s, the United States started to implement a public health approach to divorce and as of 2008, 46 states offered court-connected divorce educational programmes and 27 states mandated attendance for divorcing parents under certain conditions (Pollet & Lombreglia, 2008:523-543). In these states, parents are required to complete a co-parenting education class after they file for legal separation or divorce before the judge will grant the request. Findings from a meta-analysis indicated that overall, programmes for divorcing or separating parents significantly improve co-parent cooperation and conflict management, parent-child relationships, and child and parent well-being (Fackrell *et al.*, 2011).

It is evident from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018) that divorce proceedings in South Africa are increasing with detrimental effects on the children involved. It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244) that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and that a coherent procedural family law system is not in place. Therefore, a proper evaluation of the family dispute resolution processes was called for by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244). The SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244) further identified the need to assist families with procedural issues arising from separation, divorce, and child welfare. It is also the practical experience of the researcher that although mediation seems to have become a better means of communication and tool to resolve issues arising from separation/divorce than litigation, the practical implications of, and implementation of parenting plans after mediation still seem to be problematic after the divorce. The Children's Act (38 of 2005) refers to a parenting plan as a method to assist parents in the manner of exercising their parental responsibilities and rights after separation or divorce. Parenting plans are written agreements drafted and signed by both parents on how they will exercise their respective responsibilities and rights in the best interests of the child after the divorce. A neutral third party usually acts as a mediator. According to the named act, the children must also be consulted during this process. The existence of a parenting plan is however not a guarantee that those parents will stick to the plan or that they will have the insight or ability to communicate effectively and manage conflict in such a way that the best interests of the children are promoted in order to prevent adjustment problems during the process of divorce.

The researcher is of the opinion that the high divorce rate in South Africa (SA Stats, 2018), as well as previously discussed psychosocial problems (Brandon, 2006:172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111) resulting from divorce are disturbing and evident of the need for intervention. The researcher concluded from the literature (Anderson, 2014:378-387; Becher, 2020; Brandon, 2006: 172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005: 111-172; Kelly, 2006: 40; The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2017; Trillo-Padilla *et al.*, 2019: 2-10) that a divorce educational programme for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills. In the process it could prevent the negative impact and adjustment problems in children (Brandon, 2006:172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111-172; Kelly, 2006:40). It also reported increased parental awareness of children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, and greater

willingness amongst parents to settle custody and access disputes with their formal partner (Kelly, 2006:40). According to Gilman *et al.* (2005:109) children who maintain warm and loving relationships with their parents and who feel that their parents understand their experience, will adapt better during the process of divorce than children who have a less nurturing relationship with their parents. They further state that children living with parents who resolve their conflicts will fare better over a period than children living amid parental conflict. According to Becher *et al.* (2015:261-264) and Fackrell *et al.* (2011:107-119), divorce education is a challenge, but Grych (2005a:99) stresses that teaching skills to help contain and resolve conflict, manage anger, adopt a business attitude and prevent conflictive interaction may reduce the negative impact of stress factors affecting children's mental health and promote better adaptation following divorce.

The fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate (SA Stats, 2018), with a negative impact on the development and emotional well-being of the involved children (Smit, 2010:2), is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a substantial effect on the improvement of the well-being of the community (Salem *et al.*, 2013:231-238). Over the past twenty years, many educational programmes have been developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce. The most common denominator of all these programmes is focussed on parents (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111). According to Brandon (2006:172), it appears that such programmes can be beneficial to divorcing parents and their children by educating parents about the impact of divorce, separation, and conflict on their children. According to Fackrell *et al.* (2011:107-119), who conducted a meta-analysis of 19 studies to evaluate parent educational programmes, showed in several outcomes including co-parenting conflict, parent-child relationships, child well-being, and parent well-being that those who participated in a parent educational programme were significantly better off than those who did not. Brandon (2006:173) found that divorcing parents, who completed an educational programme, were more co-operative with their ex-spouses on difficult child-related issues, were more willing to allow children to spend time with the other parent and had lower re-litigation rates.

The Office of the Family Advocate concluded during a National Focus Group Forum that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend parent

information/educational programme before any divorce order is granted (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244). Parents' lack of insight is often a result of a lack of correct information. The content should educate parents about the advantages and availability of mediation; information about parental alienation and the best interests of the child principle. This information or educational programmes should, according to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244), be uniformly implemented across the country, to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service. Parties will have to attend the session in person and co-parents do not have to attend the programme jointly. The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will contribute positively towards the communication between different family members and prepare parents on the change to follow divorce. More effective conflict management among parents will enable parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to follow.

3. CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Various calls were made by the SA Law Reform Commission in South Africa (2015:244) that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend an educational programme to educate parents about various topics before their divorce. This will empower parents to act in such a way that their children's best interests will be promoted. According to Becher (2020) and Singer (2009: 363-369) divorce cases can be managed more effectively when family courts intervene by parents attending divorce educational programmes. The contribution of the study is to educate parents to be better prepared on what to expect and how to handle the changes in their lives. It will also equip them to indirectly reduce the negative impact on children and promote their best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005) and section 28(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) by preventing adjustment problems. The researcher developed the programme by taking the needs, as expressed by the family advocate (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244), into account. It is an independent programme that the researcher will make available to various role players after it has been developed and published. For the sake of this study, the content and efficacy of the newly developed programme were evaluated to ensure that the topics and the skills are those that will benefit the parents and assist them.

A wide variety of divorce educational programmes have been developed internationally and might be available for South African use, but none of these programmes have however been streamlined for the unique circumstances and diverse cultures of South Africa's "Rainbow Nation". South African is known for its ethnic and cultural diversity with 11 official languages as well as 8 other recognised languages. According to South African History Online (SAHO, 2012), a customary marriage is understood as being entered into under the traditions and customs of indigenous African customary law. There are some requirements that need be complied with to conclude a valid customary marriage, while a civil marriage is seen as a marriage contract concluded between two parties, and the marriage must be monogamous to be valid. Customary marriages differ as polygamy is permissible. A customary marriage is concluded between two individuals but is also extended to their respective families. Unlike civil marriages, customary unions occur gradually; a single event such as a ceremonial signing of an official document does not conclude it. Thus, marriage in terms of customary law is a familial matter, which does not require the approval of an official to be regarded as valid (SAHO, 2016). With this in mind, the practical implications of a divorce when the extended families are also involved during a divorce in South Africa required a special review of the circumstances and adjustment in possible programmes. A brief integrated literature review on existing divorce educational programmes internationally was done in Phase 1 of the study to make provision for the wide-ranging population involved. Although there are no existing programmes in South Africa, an integrated review of divorce-related adjustment problems in parents and children were done. According to Ramokgopa (2001:8), cultural values differ, for example, according to Ericson's stages of development and the importance of concepts such as competition, independence, and egoism to Africans who tend to put more emphasis on cooperation, inter-dependence, and altruism respectively.

Dennill (2013:65) concluded that an educational programme for divorcing parents may have many benefits for the participating parents as they become more sensitised to their children's needs at the time of divorce. She also states that an educational programme should not replace litigation, mediation, or therapy, but should be offered as a mandatory alternative or an addition to the family at the time of divorce and should lead the process. Her research supports the recommendation of the Law Reform Commission (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) that a divorce educational programme should be mandatory for all divorcing parents in South Africa, regardless of their divorce process, as it may lead

to a more favourable outcome and the parents are more likely to act in the best interests of their children. The contribution of this study is that, for the first time in South Africa, an educational programme is available to assist parents during and after a divorce to be better prepared for what to expect and how to handle the changes in their lives after a divorce. The parents will therefore be empowered to reduce the negative impact that the divorce might have on the children. The divorce educational programme will suit the diverse circumstances in South Africa. It will be presented to the SA Law Reform Commission with a recommendation for mandatory participation. It will equip parents with knowledge and skills to indirectly reduce the negative impact on children and promote their best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005), and Section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996).

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The researcher will aim to answer **and** address the following research questions:

What aspects a divorce educational programme should address according to a literature study and professionals involved in service delivery in the process of divorce? (Article 1)

What would the content of an educational programme for divorcing parents entail to prevent adjustment problems in children in a divorce? (Article 2)

Does the content of the new educational programme enable parents to prevent adjustment problems experienced by their children during the process of divorce? (Article 3)

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 Aim

This study aimed to design, develop and evaluate the content of a divorce educational programme to be followed by divorcing parents in South Africa during divorce proceedings in order to equip parents with the necessary knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

The following objectives can be stated:

5.2 Objective 1:

To do an integrated literature review and a quantitative analysis of the specific themes that should be addressed in an educational programme for divorcing parents (Article 1)

5.3 Objective 2:

To design and develop a divorce educational programme for divorcing parents to equip them to prevent adjustment problems in children (Article 2)

5.4 Objective 3:

To evaluate the content of the newly developed educational programme

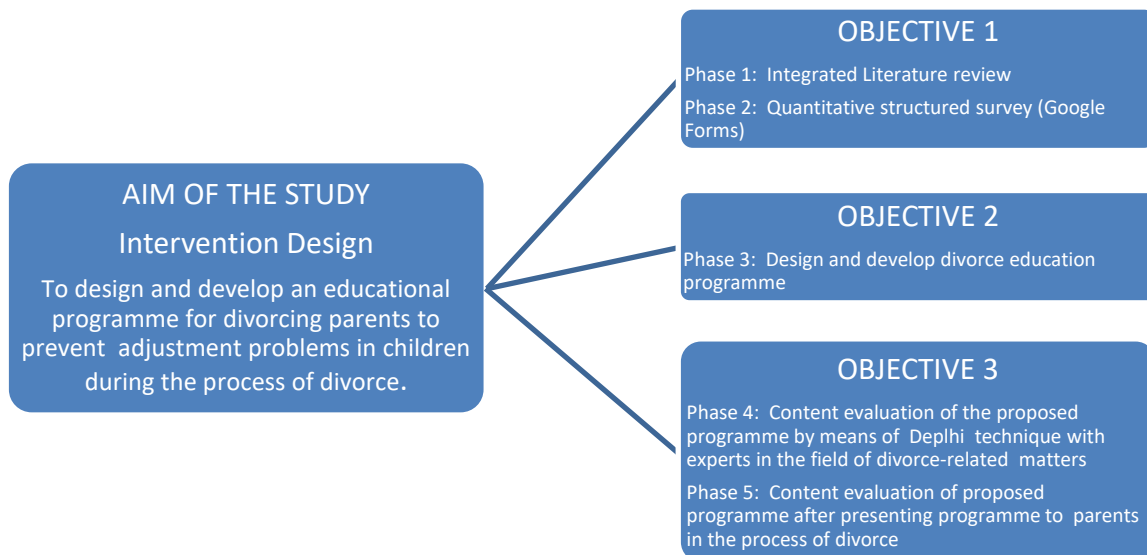


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-1: Schematic overview of the proposed study: Intervention design incorporating a multi-phased multi-method design.

6. RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

An **Intervention Design and Development paradigm (ID & D)** (Fraser & Galinsky 2010:459) were used as the over-arching research design. According to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:459), intervention research is the systematic study of purposive change strategies and is characterised by both the design and development of interventions. The

ID & D was used at meta-level, thus providing the background for planning each phase of the current study.

Due to the variety of methods characteristic of the ID & D process, the researcher utilised an Intervention design incorporating a multi-phased multi-method design to address the various aspects of the research problem and required work towards a solution. According to Morse (2003:190), multi-method research is two or more research methods, each conducted rigorously and complete, in one project. The results are then triangulated to form a comprehensive whole. Fouché and Delport (2011:66) support this statement by stating that multi-method research can build on both qualitative and quantitative approaches and may allow for a more complete in-depth understanding and analysis of a research problem. The research question or problem drives the research programme, but the programme consists of two or more interrelated phases (Morse, 2003:197).

The intervention research model links problem theory with programme content. Within the steps of this overall linear model, new data at any point in the research may cause the researcher to reconceptualise and return to earlier steps or phases in the design and development process. For this study, only the first three steps and Step 5 of the intervention research model according to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:462) were followed.

The steps in the Intervention Research Model according to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:463) appear in Table 1-1.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-1: Steps in Intervention Research

Steps	Actions to be completed	Activities in this study
Step 1, (Phases 1 and 2) Develop problem & programme theories	Develop problem theory of risk, promoted, protective factors Develop programme: theory of malleable mediators Identify intervention level, setting, and agent(s) Develop a theory of change and a logical model	OBJECTIVE 1 Phase 1: An integrated literature review Phase 2: Quantitative Structured Survey
Step 2, (Phase 3)	Develop the first draft and submit for expert review	OBJECTIVE 2

Steps	Actions to be completed	Activities in this study
Specify programme structures & processes	Specify essential programme elements and fidelity criteria Pilot programme and measures (i.e. outcome and fidelity measures) Expand the content to address training and implementation	Phase 3: Develop and design programme according to information gathered during Step 1
Step 3 (Phase 4) Refine & confirm efficacy and evaluate	Maintain high control and evaluate intervention components Estimate effect size and evaluate for moderation and mediation Develop rules for adaption based on moderation and mediation tests, community values and needs, other issues	OBJECTIVE 3 To evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents through qualitative studies Phase 4: Evaluating the content of the proposed programme using the Delphi technique with experts in the field of divorce-related cases Phase 5: The content of the newly developed programme was evaluated by means of a qualitative research approach using a self-constructed questionnaire. The programme was presented to separate groups, consisting of one to four divorcing parents each. Six participants were not able or willing to attend the group presentations due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that they could not manage to arrange alternative care for their children for the duration of the presentation and therefor made use of a “self-study” option.

Steps	Actions to be completed	Activities in this study
		Unfortunately, only one “couple” in the process of divorce participated initially, as attendance was voluntary, but did not complete the programme. Afterward, participants completed a self-constructed evaluation test to evaluate the content of the divorce educational programme.
Step 4 (Phase 5) Evaluate effectiveness in a practice setting	Evaluate intervention under scale conditions in multiple sites Estimate effects under scale, <i>in vivo</i> conditions Estimate effect on efficacy subsets	<i>For this study, Step 4 was not followed, as the effect of the programme will not be evaluated, but only the content.</i>
Step 5 (Phase 6) Disseminate programme findings of the content & materials	Publish findings of the content and content evaluation Publish programme materials Develop training materials and certification.	Phase 6: Dissemination and recommendation were done. The resulting evidence of the evaluation of the intervention will be published and submitted to various role-players in the field for their input. The proposed newly developed training manual for presenters as well as the programme material for the attending parents will be made available to various role-players.

(Fraser & Galinsky, 2010:463)

The abovementioned steps were integrated into the proposed study.

OBJECTIVE 1: Integrated literature review and quantitative survey

STEP 1: Develop problem & programme theories

Phase 1: An integrated literature review

Research approach and design

The integrated literature review was used as a starting point to familiarise the researcher with knowledge regarding the research problem, to identify similar problems, to narrow down the focus of the study and to prevent possible duplication. An integrative literature review assisted the researcher to identify local and international literature about divorce educational programmes by identifying patterns and themes, drawing contrasts and comparisons, finding intervening factors, and building a logical chain of evidence (Amato, 2012: 12-19; Anthony *et al.*, 2014: 249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012: 251-262; Trillo-Padilla *et al.*, 2019: 2-10). The integrated literature review included document analyses that assisted the researcher to understand policies, working documents, as well as existing international divorce educational programmes. The literature review enabled the researcher to determine what the content of programme for divorcing parents could entail.

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:240), an integrated literature review includes theoretical or empirical literature or both. By using a narrative approach to integrate the findings, qualitative or quantitative, a much broader summary of the literature than other reviews are produced. The integrated literature review assisted the researcher to identify and scrutinise existing studies on the topic. According to Whitemore and Knafl (2005:546-553), integrated reviews are the broadest type of research review methods and allowed the researcher to incorporate experimental and non-experimental research to get a better understanding of a phenomenon of concern. In this study, the integrated literature review assisted the researcher to know what has been done nationally and internationally on this specific topic. It also assisted the researcher with topics that should be in an educational programme and have already been identified by other researchers. For this study the framework of Whitemore and Knafl (2005:546-553) was used, namely: problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, data analysis, and presentation.

Population

Literature in the field of social work and psychology as well as the law was studied. The literature of similar international divorce educational programmes enabled the researcher to identify the content of existing programmes as well as possible themes for this study.

Sampling method

Information was gathered from published scientific contributions in books, scientific journal articles, and research projects. Several databases were utilised, namely EBSCO HOST WEB, SA Publications, Juta, LexisNexis, Social Work Abstracts, Google Scholar, and the Ferdinand Postma Library of the North-West University. According to Rubin and Babbie (2005:120) a literature review is important in the formulation phase as well as in the entire designing process and is not completed at any point in the research process. In this study, purposive sampling was combined with a comprehensive search to evaluate and interpret the quality of the existing research reviews.

Proposed sample, sample size, and motivation

According to Rubin and Babbie (2005:123), it is difficult to determine when you have completed the literature review, but they advise that: "you have probably viewed enough literature when you find yourself familiar with the references cited in the most published articles".

Sample inclusion criteria

The integrated literature review included:

- all available books, articles, and minutes of The SA Law Reform Commission in South Africa;
- existing similar international divorce educational programmes that enabled the researcher to identify the content of existing programmes as well as possible themes for this study;
- only published books and journals after 2005 were included, and

- only studies published in English or Afrikaans were included, because the author is not sufficiently conversant in other languages besides these two to critique research papers.

Sample exclusion criteria

International Conference presentations as well as literature published before 2005 were excluded to ensure the relevancy of information. The reason for excluding older information in specifically South Africa is that, during 2005, a new Children's Act (38 of 2005) was adopted. Chapter 1 of the named Act stipulates that the best interests of the child are the paramount concern in all matters affecting the child, as well as promoting the protection, development, and well-being of the child. Before 2005, divorce-related matters were not captured in the Children's Act (38 of 2005), but only in the Divorce Act 70 of 1979.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods

The integrated literature review assisted in determining dimensions and concepts associated with best practices regarding divorce educational programmes. The researcher only made use of computer-accessible databases, the internet, peer-reviewed scholarly books, and articles published in accredited professional journals, not older than 2005, to ensure validity and reliability. Both descriptive and experimental research reports were used as diverse types of literature and that gave different types of information (Botma *et al.*, 2010:66).

Trustworthiness

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:231) qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of findings by employing certain procedures. To ensure trustworthiness of the study, the researcher must establish the truth of the findings, be able to apply the findings to different contexts and groups, be able to replicate the study with the same participants in a similar situation and findings, and in case of replication, the findings must be consistent and free from bias (Botma *et al.*, 2010:232).

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:232) trustworthiness has four epistemological standards attached to it, namely value, applicability, consistency and neutrality as set out in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2: Trustworthiness

Epistemo-logical standards	Credibility	Application
Truth Value	Credibility: Refers to internal validity	Credibility will be ensured when the proposed programme will be refined and the content evaluated in Phase 4 by a group of experts by utilising the Delphi technique and during Phase 5 by divorcing parents who will complete a self-constructed questionnaire after completing the programme.
Consistency	Dependability: Consistency refers to the replication of the study in the same context.	Dependability in Phase 4 and 5 will be ensured by giving a detailed description of how data was collected and coded.
Applicability	Transferability: to determine to what degree the findings can be generalised to the larger population	Transferability will be improved by purposive sampling and a thick and detailed description of the data to ensure a report of good quality.
Neutrality	Confirmability: the research process and results are free from prejudice.	Conformability will be ensured by triangulation with the inclusion of social workers, divorce attorneys, and advisors of the Family Advocates during Phase 2 and 4

Data analysis methods

According to Cooper (1998) “data analysis in research reviews requires that the data from primary sources are ordered, coded, categorised and summarised into a unified and integrated conclusion about the research problem”.

For this study, the researcher made use of themes and sub-themes to construct the mind-map, which lead to the headings and sub-headings. Kruger and Neuman (2006:471) further state that a literature review is not a list of reports with a summary, but it must address the most important ideas, logically link statements of findings, and note the differences or weaknesses identified. To ensure objectivity, one of the study leaders, Prof

Cornelia Wessels, acted as co-coder of themes due to her experience and expertise in the field of research.

The integrated literature review enabled the researcher to identify focus areas and possible content for the proposed programme and enabled the researcher to construct questions for the survey in Phase 2 of Step 1 of the study.

Ethics

Written permission for this research study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University (Addendum 4: NWU-0098-18-S1). These committees or boards review research proposals according to strict guidelines and procedures before research studies are launched. They can be regarded as watchdogs or gatekeepers of society for the sake of research studies, especially to protect vulnerable groups (Strydom, 2011:126-127).

The integrated literature review held no ethical risk to any participants. The researcher implemented a definite review process within a rigorous and systematic manner.

OBJECTIVE 1:

STEP 1:

Phase 2: Quantitative Structured Survey

Research approach and design

During Phase 2, a quantitative approach was used to identify common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents. An electronic questionnaire, Google Forms (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*) was used as this enabled the researcher to reach a range of different respondents effectively. These respondents had to choose options or ascribe priorities among a range of items reflecting different themes for a potential intervention programme.

Population

Respondents for Phase 2 of the study were South African citizens residing in North- West, Gauteng and consisted of registered social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys involved with divorce-related cases on a regular basis.

Sampling method

The participants of Phase 2 of the study were purposively selected following inclusion criteria as set out below.

Proposed sample, sample size, and motivation

According to Strydom (2011:223), sampling is a constant comparison to understand all instances of the case under investigation and refers to the population as individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. It may involve studying the entire population of some group or a subset of a population or it may be a key informant survey to target individuals who are particularly knowledgeable about the issue under investigation (Grinnell & Unrau, 2011:237). Grinnell and Unrau (2011:237) further state that although purposive sampling does not produce a sample that presents the larger population it can provide what is needed in other clearly defined and rather limited groups. Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher to serve the purpose of the study best (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:247). In this phase of the study, the participants were experts from North-West and Gauteng Provinces, with different experiences in divorce-related matters. The size of the population was 40. According to Grinnell and Williams (sited by Strydom, 2011: 225) thirty (30) is a sufficient number to perform basic statistical procedures. Although 30 seems to be a sufficient number, the researcher attempted to involve at least 60 purposively selected participants for this study – 20 from each field of expertise, as mentioned (registered social workers in private practice working with divorce-related cases, divorce attorneys and advisors of the Office of the Family Advocate), to obtain a multi-dimensional view of needed components, minimising the risk of limited opinions. However, the response rate was low and only forty (40) people responded.

Respondents were selected from the North-West and Gauteng Provinces. North-West is a more rural area, as opposed to Gauteng, which is more urban. The two different

geographical areas allowed for variation in inputs. Limited risks were involved, as the participants were not exposed to more than their usual daily experience. There were no cost implications for participants. Respondents did not have to sign a consent form. They gave their consent when they clicked on a button after they read the informed consent form, and then they had access to the survey. Upon completion, they clicked a submit button that returned their Google Form (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*) to the researcher. The completed surveys were completed and returned anonymously and therefore it is not possible to determine how many participants there were from each Province.

The respondents could indirectly benefit from the study if they indicated their interest to receive the research findings after completion of Step 1. Respondents would be able to attend a training session on the programme, after completion and publishing of the study, if they supplied contact details for an invitation. None of the respondents indicated their interest to receive the research findings.

Sample inclusion criteria

According to Denscombe (2010:35), purposive sampling is used to handpick the sample based on relevance to the issue being investigated and the knowledge or experience about the topic of the investigation. Three groups of respondents were to be included in the study:

Registered social workers in private practice working with divorce-related cases involving children

- The respondents had at least three years' experience in working with divorce-related issues.
- All respondents were able to communicate fluently in English, as the survey was in English.
- All respondents had internet access to receive the invitation to participate in the study.

Divorce attorneys

- The respondents should have had at least three years' experience in working with divorce-related cases and should have dealt with at least five cases involving children.
- All respondents were able to communicate fluently in English, as the survey was in English.
- All respondents had internet access to receive the invitation to participate in the study.

Advisors of the Office of the Family Advocate

- The respondents must have been employed there for at least three years and dealt with at least five divorce-related cases involving children.
- All respondents were able to communicate fluently in English, as the survey was in English.

Sample exclusion criteria

Registered social workers in employ of Non Profit Organisations were not able to participate.

Participants with no internet access were not able to participate as all invitations, surveys, and feedback were done via email.

Divorce attorneys

Participants with no internet access were unable to participate as all invitations, surveys, and feedback were done via email.

Process of sample recruitment and informed consent

The researcher made use of Google Forms (*Addendum 6: Quantitative questionnaire*) by sending an email with an attached questionnaire to the purposively selected respondents to complete (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:190)

Respondents for Phase 2 of the study were purposively selected according to their field of expertise and utilizing an electronic contact list with their contact information. The researcher made use of

- SAASWIP's electronic database to identify social workers in private practice working with divorce-related cases, as well as
- a database with the contact information of the attorneys of the Law Society of the Northern Provinces dealing with divorce-related cases, and
- a database with email addresses from the Office of the Family Advocate in the two named provinces.

The researcher compiled an information leaflet to briefly explain the aim, implications, and risks of the study. This was emailed to all participants on the said databases, along with a link to the electronic survey. To comply with ethical principles, participants provided informed consent as part of the questionnaire by reading an informed consent form and clicking a button that provided access to the survey on Google Forms (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*). They had ten days to respond by completing the questionnaire as a token of their willingness to partake in the study.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods

The researcher designed and compiled a quantitative structured survey schedule with Google Forms (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*) to be completed electronically by purposively selected professionals dealing with divorce-related cases. She drafted the questionnaire according to recognised item design principles as set out in research texts, whilst her supervisor evaluated item refinement. The final questionnaire (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*) was submitted to statistical consultation services of the North-West University Potchefstroom Campus for establishing the face validity of the questionnaire. Thereafter it was set up on Google Forms ((Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*). The ethical risk was low, as respondents shared only work-related information and no personal information. Moreover, the survey instrument was not in the form of a scale that requires the establishment of its properties, but in the form of a questionnaire that obtained professional choices regarding possible themes for inclusion

in an intervention. Participants completed the survey at their convenience with no financial implication.

Validity and reliability indices of questionnaires/evaluate/tasks/experiments

A self-developed electronic quantitative structured survey was developed by means of Google Forms (Addendum 6: *Quantitative questionnaire*) with the assistance of the study leader utilising information gathered from the literature review. Questions were drafted by the researcher in consultation with her study supervisor, consistent with the relevant study objective and themes derived from literature. To ensure face validity, the questions were sent for expert evaluation. Prof Suria Ellis, the head of the Statistical Consultation Service at North-West University, finalised and established construct and content validity for the survey instrument (Addendum 6) before it was sent to the participants. She made sure that the questions asked, were the correct ones.

Data analysis methods

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:147), aspects to consider when designing a formal data-analysis plan are the following:

- Entering the data onto an Excel Spreadsheet
- Cleaning the data
- Identifying missing data
- Calculating a variable
- Transforming data
- Exploratory analysis
- Assessing bias in the data set
- Making backups

Once the data was summarised, the researcher could present the results in a comprehensible visual format such as tables or graphs (Botma *et al.*, 2010:148).

Ethics

According to the researcher, the ethical risk during Step 1, Phase 2 was low. Participation was voluntary and respondents were professionals involved with divorce-related cases on a daily basis. By completing the survey, they were not exposed to more than what they were used to. Their informed consent was done by completing and returning the survey. The gathered information was not personal but was work-related. Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality were addressed by allocating a number to each survey/questionnaire instead of identifying particulars. The electronically captured data was stored on a password-protected computer and the hard copies of the questionnaires are stored for five years in a locked cabinet in the office COMPRES. The data will be destroyed after five years.

The participants did not receive remuneration.

OBJECTIVE 2

STEP 2

Phase 3: Design and develop a programme

According to Fraser and Galinsky (2009:64), "Step 2 of intervention research is wholly concerned with the creation and revision of programme materials, such as treatment manuals". They further state that manuals are characterised as guides that spell out programme theory and detailed description of practice content and activities, although they vary significantly in content and length. For this study, the definition of Fraser and Galinsky (2009:66) for a manual was used: "manuals are guides to practice that describe a problem, program theory, practice objectives, and program content".

A programme manual should define a systematic change strategy containing sequenced content that spells out the problem, goals, objectives, and activities (Fraser & Galinsky, 2009:97). The researcher aimed to develop a programme manual to educate divorcing parents on potential problems during the process of divorce to alleviate the trauma experienced by their children in the process.

Research approach and design

The problem and common content themes as identified during Step 1 (Phases 1 and 2), primarily formed the basis for the design and development of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents in the South African context. The design and development of the programme were primarily qualitative as it sought enrichment of programme design context. Developing written materials for a programme, including treatment manuals, is a defining feature of intervention research. Step 2 of intervention research is concerned with the creation and revision of programme materials (Fraser & Galinsky, 2009:64).

According to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:39), before you can start to develop programme theory, you must have a thorough understanding of the problem. Based on a careful review of the research literature (Phase 1) and information from practitioners working with divorce-related cases (Phase 2), these factors formed the basis for the design of the programme components and possible outcomes. In intervention research, programme formulation and programme evaluation are interwoven. The two interact to produce a programme of known dimensions and with known outcomes (Fraser & Galinsky, 2009:70).

Description of procedures/techniques/methods

The information gathered during Phase 1, (Literature Study) and Phase 2 (Empirical Study) were used to identify the themes and sub-themes for the design and development of the programme. These themes could only be identified after completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study.

According to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:98), the key components of an intervention manual/programme are specific information about ways to manage the group process, to deal with the common problems in implementation, or to anticipate the effects of the intervention. Designing an intervention is a creative and interactive process. This process was conducted by the researcher with the assistance of her study supervisors.

According to Fraser and Galinsky (2010:70), in intervention research, the programme formulation and evaluation are interwoven and interact to produce a programme of known dimensions and known outcomes. They further state that although the bulk of the

programme formulation occurs in Step 2, the programme objectives and content derive from programme theory that was developed in Step 1 of the research. The triangulation of information and data from Phase 1 and Phase 2 will contribute to the validity and reliability.

OBJECTIVE 3

STEP 3

Phase 4: Evaluate the content of the programme using the Delphi technique

Research approach and design

Phase 4 was primarily a qualitative approach as the goal was to evaluate the content of the proposed divorce educational programme with the expertise of a panel of experts in the field of divorce-related cases employing the Delphi technique (Botma *et al.*, 2010:253-255). According to Keeney *et al.* (2001:195-200) the Delphi technique is a structured process that utilises a series of questionnaires or rounds to gather and to provide information. The process continues until group consensus is reached. Doing this, according to Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255), assisted the researcher to obtain opinions from experts in the field of divorce, even though they were geographically far from each other.

Population

The population in Phase 4 were experts in the field of divorce-related cases, social workers in private practice and attorneys in the field of divorce related cases. The population was from the North-West (2), Gauteng (2), and Western Cape Provinces (1).

Sampling method

The sample from Phase 4 was purposively selected experts in the field of divorce-related cases. Participants were identified from electronic databases with contact details that were obtained during Phase 2 of this study. According to Keeney *et al.* (2001), participants who know about a particular topic are not necessarily experts. Rather, the participants who are willing to engage in the discussion are most likely those who will be affected by the outcome of the process directly and who will most likely become and stay

involved in the Delphi. Therefore, it was important to find participants who were committed to their field of expertise and who were willing to contribute.

Proposed sample, sample size, and motivation

According to Keeney *et al.* (2001) and Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255), the Delphi technique does not use a random sample representing the target population; it rather employs “experts” in the area in which the researcher is working. Therefore, the researcher had to identify experts in the field of divorce and related matters. The population did not exceed five experts working in the field of divorce-related cases.

Sample inclusion criteria

- Participants had been able to communicate fluently in English, as the communication was in English.
- Participants had internet access to participate in the study, because that was the only way to give their input in the different phases of the Delphi.
- Registered social workers have been in private practice and involved in divorce cases where children were involved.
- Divorce attorneys had experience in working with divorce cases and have dealt with cases involving children.

Sample exclusion criteria

Participants who indicated from the first invitation that they did not have time to take part in the Delphi were excluded.

Process of sample recruitment and informed consent

The researcher designed an information leaflet (Addendum 7) to briefly explain the aim and objectives of the study and invite the proposed participants to partake in the study via email. Participants interested in partaking in the study, contacted the mediators, Ms Elza Duvenage and Ms Anet Hoof, both social workers, within ten days to confirm their interest. The mediators then explained the study and supplied them with the informed

consent form, to be completed, signed and returned via email before the commencement of the Delphi technique (Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255).

No legal authorisation or goodwill permission was needed.

According to Keeney *et al.* (2001), the anonymity of participants gave each panel member an equal chance to present and react to ideas, unbiased by the identities of other participants. Their reactions were given independently, so each opinion carries the same weight and has equal importance in the analysis.

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255), the Delphi technique gives each participant an opportunity to express an opinion to others without feeling pressured by the more influential panel members. Complete anonymity could not be guaranteed using the Delphi technique.

However, the content of discussions was work-related and no personal information was discussed. Therefore, the researcher believes the ethical risk level of participating in a focus group discussion is low.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods

Van Teijlingen *et al.* (2006) and Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255) believe that the Delphi technique is conducted in five phases: The Preparation Phase, Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4. During the Preparation Phase, the researcher chose the participants according to their expertise in divorce-related cases, specifically where children were involved. The Delphi technique entailed that the questionnaires were sent out until consensus is reached. After each round, a summary of the results of the previous round was included and evaluated by the panel members (Keeney *et al.*, 2001). According to Botma (2010:253-255), Phase 1 should consist of a questionnaire that will be open-ended questions. In this way, it enabled the participants to give their opinions independently without being influenced by anyone. Rounds 2 to 4 often take the form of structured questionnaires incorporating feedback to each panel member. After each round, the feedback will be analysed and re-circulated. In doing so, the panel members are more encouraged and according to Keeney *et al.* (2001), they become more involved and motivated to participate. In this way, their active involvement can assist the development

of the new divorce programme. It is important that the panel members, who have agreed to participate, stay involved until the process is completed.

The researcher supplied participants with a copy of the draft programme (Addendum 14) as well as a structured questionnaire (Addendum 9) with open-ended questions in the first phase. The questions were tested by another group of experts before sending it to the panel of experts.

Data analysis methods

The panel of experts were the participants who signed an informed consent form (Addendum 5a) in the Preparation Phase of the Delphi technique (Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255). The data from this study were analysed manually and coded according to Creswell's (2009:186) six steps in the method of data analysis by incorporating the eight steps of the coding process of Tesch (cited by Botma *et al.*, 2010:224).

- Step 1: Organise and prepare data.
- Step 2: Develop a general sense of the data.
- Step 3: Code the data according to the eight steps of Tesch (cited by Botma *et al.*, 2010:224) in Table 1-3:

Table 3: Eight steps of coding according to Tesch

Step	Process
1	Get a sense of the whole by reading all answers.
2	Take one document, read it, and look for underlying meaning, while making notes.
3	Read several, make a list of topics coming to mind, sort into columns.
4	Take a list of topics, return to data. Abbreviate the topics as codes and write codes next to appropriate segments. See if new categories and codes emerge.
5	Find the most descriptive answers and turn them into categories, reducing categories by grouping related categories together.
6	Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetise the codes.
7	Assemble the data material belonging to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.
8	Recode existing data if necessary.

(cited by Botma *et al.*, 2010:224)

(The coding will be done using colour code schemes.)

- Step 4: Describe and identify themes.
- Step 5: Represent findings.
- Step 6: Interpret data with applicable literature.

The transcribed data was saved on a memory stick. After the completion of the research, it was stored in a locked cabinet in the office of COMPRES at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be stored for five years and then erased.

Ethics

The participants were purposively selected voluntary experts in the field of divorce. Beforehand, the participants received an information leaflet specifying the aim of the study as well as possible consequences. They also signed an informed consent form (Addendum 5) before the commencement of the Delphi technique (Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255).

STEP 4

Phase 5: Evaluate the content of the programme by presenting the developed programme to an experimental group of divorcing parents.

Approach and design

The preceding research phases have focused on the development and refinement of intervention components and contents. This phase utilised a qualitative research approach with a self-constructed questionnaire to evaluate the content of the newly designed divorce educational programme.

Ethical Aspects

Research that involves a human participant results in diverse ethical issues. According to Strydom (2011:113) research should be based on mutual trust and data should never be obtained at the expense of human beings. To ensure the best interests of the participants the following ethical issues (Strydom, 2011: 113-130) were addressed:

- Violation of privacy, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality

An independent person explained that participation was voluntary and that data will be dealt with confidentially and anonymously (Strydom, 2011:119). The participants signed a written informed consent form after the aim of the study was explained by an independent person and they were assured that no identifying particulars would be published and data in paper-based format were stored in a locked cabinet in the office of COMPRES at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be stored for 5 years and then be destroyed.

- Trustworthiness

According to Botma *et al.* (2010:232) trustworthiness answers four epistemological standards, namely truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

Truth value refers to the monitoring of data, expanded involvement with participants and triangulation of data. Participants received comprehensive information with regard to the aim of the study (Addendum 11 and 12) to clarify any uncertainty with regard to the research study. Participants will also receive feedback after finalisation of the study.

Consistency reflects whether the findings will be consistent if the study is repeated with the same participants under the same circumstances while applicability refers to which degree research findings can be applied to different groups and contexts. Neutrality ensures freedom from bias and ensures that results are solely the information as received from the participants. The coding and interpretation of the data were done under the supervision of the promotor and was combined with the data received from the integrated literature review and quantitative survey. The feedback from the participants were coded and co-coded by the promotor to ensure neutrality, consistency, truth value and applicability.

Population

The population for this phase consisted of parents that were in the process of divorce at the time of the study, and who could benefit from a parenting type intervention at the time of the study. To render the study feasible, the researcher decided to limit the population

to Potchefstroom in North-West Province and Krugersdorp in Gauteng, as this was not only convenient but also because of the strict rules of the Covid-19 pandemic. The divorcing parents were supposed to attend two separate programme presentations individually to prevent possible further trauma or conflict, due to attending one session together. Seven parents completed the programme successfully.

Sampling method

Voluntary sampling: The participants were invited to partake in the study by distributing an information pamphlet (Addendum 11) and leaflet (Addendum 12) at the offices of professionals who delivers divorce-related services, such as social work organisations, social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys.

Proposed sample, sample size, and motivation

The researcher aimed to recruit between seven and nine couples, from the diverse population of South Africa, in the process of divorce. Two programmes were scheduled to accommodate the parents separately. Each group attending the programme were supposed to consist of one to four individual participants each, as spouses had to attend different groups to prevent conflict.

Recruited participants contacted an independent person to confirm their participation, who explained the study and process and the informed consent forms were signed (Addendum 5b or 5c). Participants received the dates of scheduled programme presentations and could decide which spouse will be attending which presentation according to their schedules. Participants who were not able or willing to attend the programme in person, due to the Covid-19 pandemic or other practical problems, could complete the programme by means of self-study.

Sample inclusion criteria

- Participants had to be in the process of divorce.
- Both parents had to attend the programme separately.
- Participants were parents of at least one child who is between the age of 6 years and 12 years. According to Ericson's stages of development (McLeod, 2017), children in

that stages of development face the task of *industry vs. inferiority* during elementary school. Children start to compare themselves with their peers to see how they measure up. Either they then develop a sense of pride and accomplishment in their schoolwork, sports, social activities, and family life, or they feel inferior and inadequate, because they feel that they do not measure up. If children do not learn to get along with others or have negative experiences at home or with peers, an inferiority complex might develop into adolescence and adulthood (McLeod, 2017).

- Participants were able to communicate in English as the programme was presented in English.
- Participants were from the North-West and Gauteng Provinces.
- Legal, traditional and cultural-specific processes of divorce could be accommodated in the presentation as South African Legislation views the best interest of a child as paramount and not cultural-specific or traditional processes.

Sample exclusion criteria

- Married couples not in the process of divorce were not able to participate in the study.
- Participants who indicated during sampling that they were engaged in high court procedures were excluded as this alternative intervention introduces conflicting, difficult variables.
- Both partners could not attend the same programme presentation together as this threatened the internal validity of the programme due to potential conflict.
- Participants involved in counselling or ongoing mediation interventions at the time of the training programme were excluded. Counselling/mediation are seen as a confounding variable.
- Divorced persons without children were not able to participate in the study, since the intervention focused on the management of child issues during divorce.

- Participants who only had children older than 12 years were, for purposes of this study, not included. This ensured homogeneity in sample characteristics and compliance with measurement requirements.
- Parents with School levels lower than Grade 10 could not be accommodated in the programme.
- Participants were not excluded due to race, age or gender.

Process of sample recruitment and informed consent

- Participants were voluntarily recruited via a pamphlet and information leaflet at the offices of social work organisations, private social work practitioners, and divorce attorneys, in North-West and Gauteng Provinces, working with divorce-related cases.
- Prospective participants, who responded by contacting an independent person, were informed of the aim and objectives of the study, received an informed consent form (Addendum 5b or 5c) via email and could direct any questions they might have had to the independent person, researcher or study leader.
- Prospective participants were invited to attend the programme that was presented at a comfortable group-oriented venue in Potchefstroom. The programme was presented to the participants at the conference centre at the office of NG Welfare, Peter Mokaba Street 104, Potchefstroom. The time and date for attending the sessions were communicated in advance. Participants had seven days to consider participation in the programme. During the first session, an overview of the programme was presented to the participants, and expectations, as well as practical arrangements, were dealt with.
- Krugersdorp participants made use of the self-study option due to Covid-19 restrictions, social distancing and time constraints.
- The participants were required to complete the self-constructed questionnaire to evaluate the content of the programme after the second session.

Risks and benefits analysis

The researcher, who is a qualified social worker, monitored participants throughout the intervention and referred any cases suspected of clinical distress to a qualified therapist from NG Welfare.

All participants who attended the programme were debriefed at the end of the sessions.

Participants received refreshments during the intervention sessions as well as a token of appreciation to the value of R50,00.

Direct benefits

Although the programme/intervention was presented experimentally, great care was taken to ensure its design and content development were consistent with theoretical guidelines and were checked by empirical procedures. Therefore, the risk of failing was considered low. Participants benefited directly from the programme in that their awareness of their functioning, problem-solving capacity and communication skills were enhanced by their participation in the programme.

Indirect benefits

Indirect benefits consisted of post-programme gains, such as future problem solving, that were not measurable in this study, but assumed to be in place.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods

- The new programme developed in this study is characterised by the following:
- The programme has a strong educational orientation.
- The programme is driven by a programme logic model that outlines how the different activities contribute to the outcome.
- Presentation techniques used are based on adult learning principles, participatory, and group work-oriented.
- Participants received a training manual with all content and activities included.

The programme was presented by the researcher, who is not associated with participants, and under the supervision of the study leader, Prof Cornelia Wessels.

Research procedures

Participants completed a self-constructed questionnaire to evaluate the content of the programme after completion of the second session of the programme.

The office is in a safe quiet area and has the necessary facilities and equipment to ensure the comfort, privacy and safety of the participants.

Primary measures

Self-constructed questionnaire: The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher in collaboration with the supervisor and was based on the contents and objectives of the intervention programme. The researcher used a small cognitive testing panel composed of colleagues in the subject group social work to assess the level of the questionnaire as well as the face validity. It was designed to evaluate the content of the programme.

Data analysis methods

This questionnaire enabled the researcher to determine if the content of the programme is relevant and the Intervention succeeded by prevention of adjustment problems in children. The results were analysed and interpreted by the researcher under the supervision of the study leader.

All data in paper-based format were stored in a locked cabinet in the office of COMPRES at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be stored for 5 years and then be destroyed.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The most important limitations of the study were experienced due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The President of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, announced a total lockdown during March 2020, bringing the total operational functioning of South Africa to a halt for the greatest part of 2020. This impacted very negatively on the final stages of the research study. The North-West University was not able to process the necessary ethical clearance to continue with research and this placed a lot of strain on the

recruitment of participants during Phases 4 and 5 of the study as well as the presentation of the newly designed and developed educational programme.

The very strict protocol of social distancing, sanitising, and wearing of masks to be followed due to Covid-19 made it difficult to recruit participants, but even more difficult for ensuring in-person participation. The newly developed programme had to be adapted to give divorcing parents the opportunity to participate through self-study in the safety and comfort of their own homes.

The voluntary sampling and participation in the research study had a negative influence on the research study as both spouses did not necessarily complete the programme placing limitations as only one of the parents received the information to evaluate the content of the programme to prevent adjustment problems in their children during the process of divorce.

Some parents who voluntarily agreed to take part in the research study could however not submit their feedback timeously due to their busy schedules and the fact that they had no alternative care for their children while they had to attend or complete the programme.

The impact of the newly designed divorce educational programme was not evaluated during this study as suggested by Step 4 in the intervention research model (Fraser & Galinsky, 2010:463). The evaluation of the impact of the proposed new developed divorce educational programme should be an independent research study.

STEP 5

Phase 6: Dissemination and recommendation

During Phase 5 of the programme, findings and materials will be disseminated and Objective 3 will be fulfilled when the articles on the educational programme for divorcing parents were published.

The research findings will be published in three articles in accredited journals.

The results of Phases 1 and 2 (**Article 1**) will be made available to the participants who completed the survey by means of Google-forms.

The newly designed educational programme for divorcing parents will be made available to the expert participants of the Delphi technique (Phase 4) after refining the programme (**Article 2**).

The divorcing parents, who attended the presentation of the educational programme to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed divorce educational programme (Phase 5), will receive a short evaluation report with the research findings after completion of the study.

Article 3 will be published after the presentation of the programme, dissemination of the research findings and recommendations.

Training material, guidelines, and certificates will be developed during Phase 6, after the finalisation and publication of the articles concerning to the study.

8. CHOICE AND STRUCTURE OF REPORT

The research report consists of three articles. The structure of the research report can be described as set out in Table 1-4.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-4: Structure of research report

Section	Content	Objective	Step	Phase
A	General Introduction			
B	Article 1: Educational Programme for parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the divorce process	1	1	1&2
	Article 2: Educational Programme for divorcing parents in South Africa	2	2	3
	Article 3: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems	3	3	4&5
C	Dissemination of research findings, conclusion and recommendations		5	6
D	Bibliography			
E	Addenda			

LIST OF REFERENCES

Amato, P.R. 2012. The consequences of divorce for adults and children: an update. University Park. Pennsylvania State University.

Amato, P.R., Kane, J.B. & James, S. 2011. Reconsidering the 'Good Divorce'. *Family Relations*. 60(5):511-524.

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 2017. Children and Divorce no. 1; Updated January 2017. https://www.Aacap.Org/AACAP/FamiliesAnd_Youth/Facts_For_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Divorce-001.Aspx Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

American Psychological Association APA Dictionary. 2020.

<https://www.academia.edu/40596561/American-Psychological-Association-APA-Dictionary> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Anderson, J. 2014. The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce. *The Linacre Quarterly*. 81(4): 378–387. <https://www.Ncbi.Nlm.Nih.Gov/Pmc/Articles/PMC4240051/> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Anthony, C.J., DiPerna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. Divorce, approaches to learning, and children's academic achievement: A longitudinal analysis of mediated and moderated effects. *Journal of School Psychology*, 52:249–261. www.elsevier.com/locate/jschpsyc Date of access: 28 Mar. 2017.

Becher, E. 2020. What is Divorce Education and does it Work? University of Minnesota Extension. <https://www.Extension.Umn.Edu/About-Program/What-Divorce-Education-And-Does-It-Work> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Becher, E., Cronin, S., McCann, E., Olson, K., Powell, S., Marczak, M & Becher, E.H. 2015. Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Program. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 56(4):261-276.

Botma, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F.M. & Wright, S.C.D. 2010. Research in Health Sciences. Cape town: Pearson Education South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Brandon, D.J. 2006. Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 45(1/2). <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. Date of access: 24 Jan 2017.

Cambridge English Business Dictionary. 2020.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/programme> Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. 2016. Determining the best interests of the child. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

Children's Act **see** South Africa.

Connell, E.D.D. 2008. Changes in the wind: Parenting assessment in family dissolution matters. *The Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, 36(1):9-40.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, South Africa. 1996. Government Gazette, 18 December.

<https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Cooper, H. 1998. Synthesizing research: a guide for literature reviews. 3rd ed. Applied social research methods, (2). Sage Publications, Inc. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-07460-000> Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Cresswell, J.W. 2009. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Delport, C.S.L. & Fouché, C.B. 2011. Mixed method research. (*In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 433-448*).

Delport, C.S.L. & Roestenburg, W.J.H. 2011. Quantitative data-collection methods: questionnaires, checklists, structured observation and structured interview schedules. (*In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 171-205*).

Dennill, I. 2013. The evaluation of a Psycho-education and Skills building program at the time of divorce/separation.

https://ujcontent.uj.ac.za/vital/access/manager/Repository/uj:7587?site_name=GlobalView Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Denscombe, M. 2010. Ground rules for social research: guidelines for good practice. 2nd ed. London: Open University Press.

Dictionary.com in Dictionary.com Unabridged. Source location: Random House, Inc.<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/evaluate>. <http://www.dictionary.com/>. Date of access: 15 Feb. 2017.

Divorce Act, 70 of 1979. South Africa. 1979. Government Gazette, 168(6506). 15 June. Pretoria: Government Printers.
https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201503/act-70-1979.pdf Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Fackrell, A., Hawkins, A.J. & Kay, N.M. 2011. How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programs? A meta-analytic study. *Family Court Review*, 49(1):107–119.

Fagan, P.F. & Churchill, A. 2012. The effects of divorce on children. Marriage & religion research institute. Jan 11. 2012.

Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. Steps common to both quantitative and the qualitative process. (*In* De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 101-112).

Fouché, C.B. & Schurink, W. 2011. Qualitative research designs. (*In* De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 307-327).

Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L. & De Vos, A.S. 2011. Quantitative research designs. (*In* De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L., eds. 2011. Research at

grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 142-158).

Fraser, F. & Galinsky, M.G. 2010. Steps in Intervention Research: Designing and Developing Social Programs. *Research on social work Practice*, 20(5):459-466
<http://rswp.sagepub.com> Date of access: 10 Nov. 2016.

Gadaua, S.P. 2012. Where are you on the divorce stress scale? Understanding stress can help you prevent illness. *Psychology Today*
<https://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/contemplating-divorce/2012> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Giles, C. 2017. The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children.
<https://www.livestrong.com/article/152395-divorces-long-term-effects-on-children/> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Gilman, J., Schneider, D. & Shulak, R. 2005. Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids' Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4). <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. Date of access: 25 Jan 2017.

Goldschlog, A. 2009. Children in the middle. Protecting your children during and after divorce. St Barnabas Health Care System. www.instituteforprevention.com. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.

Google Forms. 2018. <https://www.google.com/forms/about>

Greeff, M. 2011. Information collection: Interviewing. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delport, C.S.L., eds. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p 341-375).

Grinnell, R.M. & Williams, M. 1990. *Research in social Work: a primer*. Itasca, IL: Peacock.

Grinnell, R.M. Jr. & Unrau, Y.A. 2011. *Social work research and evaluation*. 9th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Grych, J. H. 2005a. Programs for promoting parenting of residential parents: Moving from efficacy to effectiveness. *Family Court Review*, 43(1):65–80.

Jacobs, N. & Jatte, R. 2010. Investigating the efficiency of CoMeT, a new mediation model for high-conflict separating parents. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 38:16-31.

Keeney, S., Hasson, F. & McKenna, H.P. 2001. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 38:195-200.

Kelly, J.B. 2006. Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights From Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1).
www.FamilyProcess.org.

Kruger, L.W. & Neuman, W.L. 2006. *Social work research methods: qualitative and quantitative applications*. Boston: Pearson Education.

McLeod, S. 2017. *Developmental Psychology*.
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/developmental-psychology.html> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary. 2016. Protocol. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/protocol> Date of access: 18 Jan. 2017.

Morse, J.M. 2003. Principles of mixed methods and multimethod research design – Handbook Mixed Methods. <https://www.researchgate.net/224927643-Principles-of-Mixed-Methods-and-Mul> Date of access: 23 Jan. 2017.

Owen, J. & Rhoades, G.K. 2012. Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes: An initial investigation of the working together program. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38(3):542–555.

Philyaw, D. & Thomas, M.D. 2013. *Co-parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households after Divorce*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.

Pollet, S.L. 2009. A nationwide survey of programs for children of divorcing and separating parents. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):523–543.

- Pollet, S.L. & Lombreglia, M. 2008. A nationwide survey of mandatory parent education. *Family Court Review*, 6:375–408.
- Ramokgopa, I.M. 2001. Developmental Stages of an African Child and Their Psychological Implications: A Comparative Study. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. 2005. Research methods for social work. 5th ed. Australia: Thompson Brookes/Cole.
- Salem, P., Sandler, I. & Wolchik, S. 2013. Taking stock of parent education in the family courts: envisioning a public health model. *Family Court Review*, 1(51):1. Published online 2013 8.doi:131-148.
- Samir, H., Patel, K. & Dayle, J. 2008. Assessment of Family Custody Issues Using Mental Health Evaluations: Implications for Mental Health Counsellors. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, 30(3):189-199.
- Singer, J.B. 2009. Dispute resolution and the post-divorce family: Implications of a paradigm shift. *Family Court Review*, 47:363–370. doi:10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01261.x.
- Smit, M. 2010. Skei is vir 'n kind soos amputasie. Kerkbode. <https://www.mathildasmit.co.za> Date of access: 28 Feb. 2017.
- South Africa. 2005. Children's Act 38 of 2005.
- South Africa. 2015. The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children. *Project 100D*, 31.
- South Africa. 2016. Statistics South Africa: Marriages and divorces 2014. <https://www.statssa.gov.za> Date of access: 18 Feb. 2017.
- South Africa. 2018. Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018. http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

South African History Online. 2012. Customary Marriages in South Africa: Understanding the recognition of customary marriages Act of 1998. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/customary-marriages-south-africa-understanding-recognition-customary-marriages-act-1998> Date of access: 6 Sept. 2020.

Stadelmann, S., Perren, S., Groeben, M. & Von Klitzing, K. 2010. Parental separation and children's behavioral/emotional problems: the impact of parental representations and family conflict. *Family Process*, 49(1):92-108.

Strydom, H. 2011. Sampling in the quantitative paradigm. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 223-235).

Strydom, H. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. Writing the research report. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 277-294).

Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento. 2016. <https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/family/divorce.aspx> Date of access: 2 Nov 2016.

The South African Law Reform Commission **see** South Africa. The South African Law Reform Commission

Trillo-Padilla, F.J., Zaldívar-Basurto, F., & García-García, J. 2019. Familiar Adjustment of The Minors who are Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Minors Immersed in a Divorce Process: An Exploratory Study. *Universitas Psychologica*, 18(2):1-10. <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy18-2.famw> Date of access: 27 Feb. 2017.

United States Census Bureau. 2007. Households and families. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2006/compendia/statab/126ed/population.html> Date of access: 18 Feb. 2017.

United States Census Bureau. 2020. Marriage and Divorce Rates by State. <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2020.

United States. Tribal Law and Policy Institute. 2003. Child Abuse Protocol Development Guide.

Whittemore, R. & Knafl, K. 2005. The integrative review: updated methodology. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 52:546-553. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x
Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

SECTION B: ARTICLES

1. ARTICLE 1

(CARSA: ADDENDUM 1)

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR PARENTS TO PREVENT ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN DURING THE DIVORCE PROCESS

Lisl Roodt
Social Worker/PhD Student
Northwest University, Potchefstroom
PO Box 21087
Noordbrug
2522
lislroodt1@gmail.com

[Prof Cornelia Wessels](#)
Promotor
North-West University, Potchefstroom
cornelia.wessels@nwu.ac.za

[Dr Sufran Smith](#)
Co-Promotor
North-West University, Potchefstroom
Sufran.Smith@nwu.ac.za

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the integrated literature review and quantitative survey was to assist in the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to equip them with knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce within the South African context. It is evident from literature and the researcher's practical experience that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning and poor conflict management during the process of divorce. The fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate, which has a negative impact on the development and emotional well-being of children, is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a positive impact on the community. Globally used divorce educational programmes were reviewed and a local quantitative survey was done in order to determine what a divorce educational programme for South Africa should entail.

KEYWORDS

Best interests of the child, develop, divorcing parents, educational programme, evaluate.

INTRODUCTION

When divorce is mentioned in South Africa, it brings to mind a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economical classes of life. Divorce can be described as an illness of the times and

according to the 2018 statistics release from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018), 25 284 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018 and 14 302 (56,6%) divorces affected children younger than 18 years.

According to Wilkinson and Finkbeiner (2020), the United States has the 6th highest divorce rate in the world and according the US Census Bureau (2020) almost thirty nine percent of all marriages in the United States will end in divorce or separation. Forty-three percent of all children in the United States are being raised without their fathers and half of all children in the United States will witness the ending of their parent's marriage (Wilkinson & Finkbeiner, 2020).

Due to the high incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced by the researcher in practice, and investigation into existing literature (Amato, 2012: 12-19; Anthony, DiPerna & Amato, 2014: 249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012: 251-262; Trillo-Padilla, Zaldívar-Basurto & García-García, 2019: 2-10), it was pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only worldwide, but also in South Africa. Gómez, Martín and Ortega (2017) (as cited in Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2) stress the importance of the relationship between the divorcing parents to promote their family development and the emotional stability of the child. If the divorce is not appropriately solved, it can affect all the members of the family, including the children (Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2). Du Plooy and Van Rensburg (2016: 139) emphasise that the high divorce rate in South Africa requires more research on the skills required to ensure that children adjust successfully to parental divorce.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This article sets out to assist, by means of an integrated literature review and a quantitative analysis, in the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents. The aim of the programme is to equip these parents with specific knowledge, skills, training and education they should have to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

CONCEPTUALISATION

In South Africa, the overall wellbeing of at least 22 000 children are being affected by divorce every year and these children are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with still-married parents (Anderson, 2014: 378; Anthony et al, 2014: 249). These children may experience difficulties like emotional problems, acting out behaviour and poor school achievement during parental separation or divorce especially in high conflict situations (Anderson, 2014: 378, Gilman, Schneider & Shulak, 2005:111; Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2-10).

According to Amato, Kane & James (2011: 512), Anderson (2014: 378-387) and The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2017), children suffer when parents argue frequently, maintain inconsistent rules, and attempt to undermine one another's authority or relationship with children. Gilman et al (2005: 110), Mandemakers & Kalmijn (2013: 187), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2017) and Kahrizeh, Saberi & Bashirganbudi (2020: 2) confirm that children from divorce may suffer short-term depression, anxiety, aggression, social isolation and other behavioural problems at home or school. Variables that appear to lower children's well-being following marital disruption include decline in household income, poor psychological functioning among resident parents, ineffective parenting from resident parents, loss of contact with non-resident parents, continuing conflict between parents and the absence of co-operative co-parenting behaviour (Fagan & Churchill, 2012: 1-11).

It is evident from the researcher's practical experience and literature (Amato et al, 2011: 512; Fagan & Churchill, 2012: 1-13; Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2-10) that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning and poor conflict management. *The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* (2017) stresses the fact that children do better when parents can minimise conflict and cooperate on behalf

of the child. Smit (2010: 1) states that divorce is an ongoing process and not just an incident, and that the lack of proper management of the process often results in misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict between concerning parties. According to Philyaw and Thomas (2013: 4) children are happier, healthier and better adjusted when both their parents play an active role in their lives and their trauma can be lessened when their parents get along. According to the SA Law Reform Commission (2015: 244) the lack of insight of parents is often the result of a lack of correct information. Becher (2020) and Singer (2009: 363-369) confirm that one of the primary methods of family courts to intervene with divorcing parents is to make use of divorce educational programmes. In this way, they improve positive long-term post-divorce outcomes for children, parents and families.

During the mid-1990s, the United States started to take a public health approach to divorcing parents and as of 2008, 46 states offered court-connected divorce educational programmes and 27 states mandated attendance for divorcing parents under certain conditions (Pollet & Lombreglia, 2008: 375-408). In these states, parents must complete a co-parenting education class after they filed for legal separation or divorce before the judge would grant the request. Findings from a meta-analysis indicated that overall, programmes for divorcing or separating parents significantly improve co-parent co-operation and conflict management, parent-child relationships, and child and parent well-being (Fackrell, Hawkins & Kay, 2011).

It is evident from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018) that divorce proceedings in South Africa occur in increasing numbers with detrimental effects on the children involved. It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015: 244) that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and that no coherent procedural family law system is in place. Therefore, a proper evaluation of the family dispute resolution processes was called for by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015: 244). The SA Law Reform Commission (2015: 244) further identified the need to assist families with procedural issues arising from separation, divorce and child welfare.

The researcher concluded from the literature (Anderson, 2014: 378-387; Becher, 2020; Brandon, 2006: 172; Gilman et al, 2005: 111-172; Kelly, 2006: 40; The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2017; Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2-10) that a divorce educational programme for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills, in the process, prevent the negative impact and adjustment problems in children. Research (Brandon, 2006: 172-183; Kelly, 2006: 40) indicates that divorce educational programmes have reported increased parental awareness of their children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their former partner.

The fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate (SA Stats, 2018), impacting negatively on the development and emotional well-being of the children involved (Landsford, 2015: 149; Smit, 2010: 2), is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a substantial impact to improve public health (Salem, Sandler, & Wolchik., 2013: 231-238). Over the past twenty years, many educational programmes have been developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce. The most common denominator of all these programmes is focussed on parents (Gilman et al, 2005: 111). According to Brandon (2006: 172) as well as Fackrell et al (2011: 107-119), it appears that divorce educational programmes can be beneficial to divorcing parents and their children by educating parents about the impact of divorce, separation and conflict on their children, thus improving outcomes for the parents and their families. Du Plooy and Van Rensburg (2016: 147) emphasise that parents should avoid conflict in the presence of children and maintain a civil form of communication. According to Fackrell et al (2011: 107-119), who conducted a meta-analysis of 19 studies that evaluated parent educational programmes, the participants were significantly

better off than those who did not participate on several outcomes including co-parenting conflict, parent-child relationships, child well-being and parent well-being. Brandon (2006: 173) found that divorcing parents, who completed an educational programme, were more co-operative with their ex-spouses on difficult child-related issues, were more willing to allow children to spend time with the other parent and had lower re-litigation rates.

The Office of the Family Advocate concluded during a National Focus Group Forum that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a parent educational programme prior to any divorce order granted (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015: 244) as parents' lack of insight is often a result of a lack of correct information. According to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015: 244), these information or educational programmes should be uniformly implemented across the country to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service. The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will contribute positively towards the communication between different family members and prepare parents for the change that follows divorce, more effective conflict management among parents that will minimise the negative impact of continued conflict between them and enable parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to follow. The researcher will aim to answer the question of what a divorce educational programme should address according to an integrated literature study and professionals involved in service delivery in the process of divorce.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY/METHODS

An integrated literature review was used as a starting point to get familiarised with knowledge regarding the research problem, to identify similar problems, to narrow down the focus of the study and prevent possible duplication. The integrative literature review assisted the researcher to identify local and international literature pertaining to divorce educational programmes by identifying patterns and themes, differentiating and comparing, finding intervening factors and building a logical chain of evidence (Patton, 2002: 455-472). The review included document analyses that assisted with understanding policies, working documents, as well as existing international divorce educational programmes.

To support the integrated literature review, an empirical study was done by means of a self-constructed electronic quantitative survey. The empirical study assisted in identifying common themes and possible content of what a programme for divorcing parents should entail. The survey enabled the researcher to effectively reach a range of different purposively selected respondents consisting of registered social workers in private practice, divorce attorneys and advisors of the Office of the Family Advocate's, who gave their input by choosing options and ascribing priorities amongst a range of items reflecting different themes as identified during the integrated literature review for a potential intervention programme.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT KNOWLEDGE GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

The researcher concluded from the literature (Anderson, 2014: 378-387; Becher, 2020; Brandon, 2006: 172; Gilman et al, 2005: 111: 172; Kelly, 2006: 40; The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: 2017; Trillo-Padilla et al, 2019: 2-10;) that a divorce educational programme for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills, in the process, prevent negative impact and the children from experiencing adjustment problems. Research (Brandon, 2006: 172-183) indicates that divorce educational programmes have reported increased parental awareness of their children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their former partner (Kelly, 2006: 40). Globally, the problem is being addressed by mandatory divorce educational programmes in many states of America, Europe and Australia.

This Article will focus on the content of six different available programmes as well as the opinion of social workers in private practice, attorneys and advisors from the Office of the Family Advocate involved in service delivery in the field of divorce, obtained by means of a quantitative survey. Table 1 gives a summary of some available programmes, the basic aim of each programme and what topics these programmes address.

Table 1: Summary of prerequisites for divorce educational programmes

Name of programme	Nature of programme	Number and duration of sessions	Topics	Mandatory or voluntary attendance
<p>Programme 1</p> <p>Family Transitions Triple P: A group administered parenting programme to minimise the effects of parental divorce on education (Stallman & Matthew, 2014: 33-48)</p>	<p>Assisting parents with extra support to adjust and manage the transition of divorce, teach them problem and conflict resolving skills, and how to correct poor communication skills to ensure better communication with their children, teaching them to cope with divorce.</p>	<p>Five, two hour sessions, group-delivered positive parenting programme</p>	<p>Divorce Coping with emotions (identifying emotions) Coping with emotions (coping strategies) Managing conflict Balancing work, family and play</p>	<p>Voluntary</p>
<p>Programme 2</p> <p>Focus On Kids Programme (Schramm & Calix, 2011: 529-549)</p>	<p>The aim is to help parents facilitate their children's adjustment to divorce/separation To encourage ex-partners to resolve conflicts pertaining to their children directly with each other and without putting children in the middle of their disputes.</p>	<p>45 to 60 minutes</p>	<p>To encourage both parents to remain actively involved in the lives of their children; To provide concrete suggestions of helpful parental behaviours and how to avoid potentially unhealthy parental behaviours; To provide information on how divorce affects children's</p>	<p>Mandatory</p>

Name of programme	Nature of programme	Number and duration of sessions	Topics	Mandatory or voluntary attendance
			<p>socio-emotional adjustment, with some attention to the differing effects on children of various ages; and</p> <p>To provide information on self-help organisations, self-help groups, human service agencies, and other organisations that may be helpful to children and parents as they attempt to adjust to the process of divorce.</p>	
<p>Programme 3 Divorce Parent Education Programme (DPE) (DeLusé & Braver, 2015: 66-78)</p>	<p>The programme is designed to educate adults about the many issues children face when their family situation changes and to train them to help children adjust to divorce or living apart from a parent in a healthy way.</p>	<p>1 or 2 sessions of 2 to 4 hours each</p>	<p>Programme range from information booklet to in-depth 8 to 11 week programme with a focus on opportunity for skill building.</p>	<p>Mandatory within 60 days after filing for a divorce in court (Certificate of completion)</p>
<p>Programme 4 Mandatory Family Information Sessions (FIS) on the use of court resources</p>	<p>The aim of the programme is to give information about the emotional and legal process of separation and divorce, the impact of these processes</p>	<p>A two and a half hour educational programme presented by a social worker/lawyer/mediator team of two persons</p>	<p>Presenters provide information about the emotional and legal process of divorce,</p>	<p>Mandatory and have to attend within 45 days after filing for divorce. (Certificate of completion)</p>

Name of programme	Nature of programme	Number and duration of sessions	Topics	Mandatory or voluntary attendance
by divorcing parents (Ellis & Anderson, 2003: 169-187)	on children, alternatives to litigation and adjudication, the role of lawyers and the court process.		the impact of these processes on children, alternatives to litigation and adjudication, the role of lawyers and the court process.	
Programme 5 Protecting children after divorce (Pollet, 2009: 523-543)	The purpose of tackling themes related to communication between parents, anger management, quality of parent-child relationship	Eleven weekly intervention sessions	divorce in itself, inter-parental conflict parenting styles, discipline	Mandatory (Certificate of completion)
Programme 6 Children In Between: Divorce Education For Parents (Centre for Divorce Education, 2020)	Skills-based programme to help children and parents deal with children's reactions to divorce	Two (2) group sessions of two (2) hours each for a total of four (4) hours of class Attendance of both sessions within the same month is compulsory. (Parents have to attend separate sessions.)	Protective factors to increase parental acceptance of personal responsibility Child problem-solving skills Parental empathy for children's stress Parents' ability to parent-child bonding Clear expectations for the other parent Clear and supportive communication between parents and school Parent-teacher involvement with homework	Mandatory (Certificate of completion)

Name of programme	Nature of programme	Number and duration of sessions	Topics	Mandatory or voluntary attendance
			and school activities Risk factors to decrease child behavioural problems, difficulty concentrating, Child aggressiveness , Health problems Defensive communication , impulsivity, Marital conflict Poor communication between parents Ineffective discipline Poor parent-child relations Lack of parental involvement with children Lack of parental monitoring of homework and schoolwork Academic failure	

The above-mentioned table is a good indication of the information that should be contained in an educational programme for parents.

RESULTS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REVIEWED PROGRAMMES

This integrated literature review provided an overview of the content of a few current divorce educational programmes globally, how many sessions parents need to attend, the duration of the

sessions, whether the programmes are court mandated or voluntary and the aspects it should address to educate parents to prevent adjustment problems. According to DeLusé and Braver (2015: 66-78) the overall aim of most of these programmes is to educate parents about the various potential negative effects separation or divorce and inter parental conflict can have on children. The programmes will be discussed individually before the data retrieved from the quantitative survey will be discussed in order to reach a conclusion.

Programme 1

Family Transitions Triple P: A group administered parenting programme to minimise the effects of parental divorce on education.

This is a 5-session, group-delivered positive parenting programme designed to prevent adverse outcomes for children following parental divorce (Stallman & Matthew, 2014: 33-48). It was designed for parents who experience personal distress from separation or divorce that has a negative effect on or complicates their parenting. The programme assists parents with extra support to adjust and manage the transition of separation or divorce. The programmes focus on:

- problem solving and conflict resolution skills;
- how to cope positively with stress;
- unresolved conflict;
- poor communication skills;
- ways to communicate with children about divorce; and
- teaching ways to cope with separation or divorce.

Parents who attend this course usually have concurrent concerns about their children’s behaviour. Information covered in sessions with parents is explained in Table 2.

Table 2: Programme Schedule for Family Transitions Triple P

SESSION	TOPIC	INFORMATION
1	Divorce, a family transition	During this session, parents learn how to avoid parent traps during separation and divorce, how to talk to their children about separation and divorce, and how to help children manage their emotions.
2	Coping with emotions (1)	Parents learn to identify unhelpful emotions (e.g. stress, anxiety, and anger) and the link between these unhelpful emotions and parenting. Coping skills and relaxation strategies will also be discussed during this session.
3	Coping with emotions (2)	This session teaches parents how thoughts influence emotions and how they can challenge those automatic unhelpful thoughts. They will also learn coping strategies and taking care of themselves.
4	Managing conflict	During this session, the practitioner introduces parents to a model of conflict and explains different conflict response styles. Parents will learn assertive communication skills, how to hold a child-related discussion with their former partner, problem-solving techniques, and develop a parenting plan.
5	Balancing work, family and play	During this session, the practitioner discusses developing a new family identity, social support, and new romantic relationships

Resources parents receive:

- Each family receives a copy of the Family Transitions Triple P Workbook and Relaxation CD (Stallman & Matthew, 2014: 33-48).
- In addition to consultations, the practitioner should allow time for preparing for the sessions and/or supervision.
- Consultation time is 10 hours (two hours per session for five weeks) plus questionnaire scoring and feedback, pre- and post-assessment that comes to a total time of 12 hours per group

The aim is assessment of personal adjustment in parents following divorce:

- Specific strategies for improving personal coping skills and reducing parenting stress, anxiety and anger
- Specific strategies for reducing conflict between parents and improving communication
- Strategies for promoting work, family, and play balance, and gaining appropriate social support
- Helping parents develop independent problem-solving skills

Programme 2

Focus on Kids Programme

The aim of the Focus on Kids programme (Schramm & Calix, 2011: 529-549) is to teach parents how to nurture and support their children through the process of divorce/separation and to help parents to work together effectively as co-parents. The Missouri law requires parents who are divorcing, creating, or modifying a custody order to complete an educational parenting programme. The programme takes about 45-60 minutes to complete.

It is a research-based educational programme for divorcing and separating parents, developed during 1995 by faculty members at the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) at the University of Missouri (Schramm & Calix, 2011: 529-549). The programme is conducted state wide in cooperation with local Judicial Circuit Courts, and is facilitated by regional Human Development Extension Specialists. The overall goal of the programme is to help parents facilitate their children's adjustment to divorce or separation. More specifically, five research-based objectives underlie the Focus on Kids programme curriculum:

- To encourage ex-partners to resolve conflicts pertaining to their children directly with each other and without putting children in the middle of their disputes;
- To encourage both parents to remain actively involved in the lives of their children following divorce or separation (within limits);
- To provide concrete suggestions of helpful parental behaviours and how to avoid potentially unhealthy parental behaviours;
- To provide information on how divorce affects children's socio-emotional adjustment, with some attention to the differing effects on children of various ages; and
- To provide information on self-help organisations, self-help groups, human service agencies, and other organisations that may be helpful to children and parents as they attempt to adjust to the process of divorce.

In the United States, the parents must complete the Focus on Kids programme before they are allowed to attend mediation. After completion of the Focus on Kids programme, parents will receive a certificate of completion, as proof to the court that they have completed the programme.

Programme 3

Divorce Parent Educational Programme (DPE)

This programme is designed to educate adults about the many issues children face when their family situation changes and trains them to help children adjust to divorce or living apart from a parent in a healthy way (DeLusé & Braver, 2015: 66-78).

All parents with children under the age of eighteen (18) years must participate in a parenting educational programme within 60 days after a family case was filed in court. All parties involved in divorce, dissolution of a civil union, annulment, separation, and custody or visitation cases are required by law to participate in a parenting educational programme. The programme is court approved and participants must attend two sessions of two and a half hours each to qualify for a certificate. Partners or couples are not allowed to attend the same sessions at the same time, and no children are allowed to attend the programme with their parents.

Programme 4

Mandatory Family Information Sessions (FIS) on the use of court resources by divorcing parents

The aim of the programme is to provide information about the emotional and legal process of separation and divorce, the impact of these processes on children, alternatives to litigation and adjudication, the role of lawyers and the court process (Ellis & Anderson, 2003: 169-187).

An FIS (Family information session) is a two-and-a-half-hour educational programme presented by a social worker/lawyer/mediator team of two persons. Petitioners and respondents must attend sessions on different evenings. The programme also includes a 55-minute video called *Separate Ways*, shown in segments. Presenters also answer general questions.

Attendance is verified by giving participants a certificate of attendance, as litigants cannot act unless a judge exempts them from attending an FIS for good reason.

This Rule is effective in securing attendance in that almost all parties who must attend an FIS, do so. The rule establishing FIS states that it should be scheduled within 45 days after the respondent received a notice to attend from the petitioner.

Programme 5

Protecting children after divorce

The programme focuses on divorce itself, inter parental conflict, as well as parenting styles and discipline. The programme comprises of eleven weekly intervention sessions with the purpose of tackling themes related to communication between parents, anger management, quality of parent-child relationships and discipline.

Psycho-educational programmes for parents have become the most promising and profitable option on community level, and parents who took part in the programme perceived less symptomatology in their children than before their participation, better functioning of family relationships and an improvement in their own symptomatology.

In particular, the two specific sub-objectives are:

- parental conflict, family communication, perception of family relationships, parental symptomatology and
- children's aggressive and anxiety/depression symptoms (Pollet, 2009: 523-543).

Programme 6

Children In Between: Divorce Education for Parents

According to the Centre for Divorce Education (2020) *Children In Between* is a skills-based programme to help children and parents to deal with children's reactions to divorce. It is based on research that identifies the most common and stressful loyalty conflicts experienced by children of divorce. A thirty-seven (37) minute video for parents is the basis of the programme that teaches

them the necessary skills to avoid their children being put in the middle of their conflict. The group usually consists of 12 to 20 parents. They receive a workbook with exercises, and roleplays during meetings give them the opportunity to practice new skills. The programme may play an important role in reducing parental conflict and teaching parents how to minimise their children's exposure to conflict (Collins & Fetsch, 2012: 1-4).

Parents must attend two (2) group sessions of two (2) hours each for a total of four (4) hours of class. The classes are once a week and parents must attend both sessions within the same month. Parents must attend separate sessions (both parents cannot be in the same class) and must make their own appointments. In order to complete the course, parents must turn in their action plan and homework and attend all four (4) hours of the course. Upon completion of the course, parents will receive a certificate of completion and a copy of the certificate will be forwarded to the court.

The aim of the programme is to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors. The target areas can be explained as follows:

- Parental acceptance of personal responsibility
- Child problem-solving skills
- Parental empathy for children's stress
- Parents' ability to manage anger (Family)
- Parent-child bonding
- Parental cooperation
- Clear expectations for the other parent
- Clear and supportive communication between parents (School)
- Parent-teacher cooperation
- Parent involvement with homework and school activities
- Decrease of Risk Factors
- Child behaviour problems, difficulty concentrating
- Child aggressiveness, health problems
- Defensive communication
- Impulsivity (Family)
- Marital conflict
- Poor communication between parents
- Ineffective discipline
- Poor parent-child relations
- Lack of parental involvement with children
- Lack of parental monitoring of homework and schoolwork
- Academic failure

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF THE INTEGRATED LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the integrated literature review was to establish the prerequisites for a divorce educational programme to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The information gathered from the reviewed divorce educational programmes included in the review, indicated that most of the divorce educational programmes are deemed compulsory and need to be attended within thirty (30) to forty-five (45) days after filing for divorce. The length of the programmes differs from one (1) hour information sessions to eleven (11) weekly sessions of one (1) hour each, including workbooks, roleplays and practicing new skills. Parents have to attend separate sessions and make their own appointments. They will receive a certificate upon completion of the programme. This certificate must be submitted at court as proof before a divorce can be finalised. The size of the groups differs to up to 20 parents per group. Themes addressed during the programmes seem to include the following:

- Identifying and coping with emotions
- Conflict management
- Anger management
- Clear and supportive communication
- Legal process of divorce/litigation/court process
- Parental involvement
- Unhealthy parental behaviour
- Parenting styles
- Discipline
- Risk factors/behaviour in children
- Parent-child relationship
- Children's socio-emotional adjustment, with specific attention to various ages

DISCUSSION OF THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THEMES TO BE ADDRESSED IN AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DIVORCING PARENTS

The quantitative analysis was done by means of a self-constructed electronic survey to identify common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents. This enabled the researcher to reach a range of different purposively selected respondents effectively. These respondents were registered social workers in private practice, divorce attorneys and advisors of the Office of the Family Advocate, who gave their input by choosing options and ascribed priorities amongst a range of items reflecting different themes for a potential intervention programme.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The respondents were South African citizens residing in North-West and Gauteng Provinces. North-West is a more rural area opposed to Gauteng with more urban areas. The two different geographical areas allowed for variation in inputs.

The respondents were purposefully selected in accordance with the inclusion criteria. According to Strydom (2011: 223), sampling is a constant comparison to understand all instances of the case under investigation and refers to population as individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. It may involve studying the entire population of some group or a subset of a population, or a key informant survey to target individuals who are particularly knowledgeable about the issue under investigation (Grinnell & Unrau, 2011: 237). Grinnell and Unrau (2011: 237) further state that, although purposive sampling does not produce a sample that presents the larger population, it can provide what is needed in other clearly defined and rather limited groups. Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher to serve the purpose of the study best (Dudovskiy, 2011; Rubin & Babbie, 2005: 247). In this case, the respondents were experts from North-West and Gauteng, with different experience in divorce-related matters. The researcher attempted to involve at least 60 respondents, purposively selected, 20 registered social workers in private practice from each field of expertise, working with divorce related cases, divorce attorneys, and employees of the Office of the Family Advocate dealing with divorce related cases to obtain a multi-dimensional view of needed components, minimising the risk of limited opinions. Unfortunately, the return rate of the electronic survey was low (40), but according to Grinnell and Williams (as cited by Strydom, 2011: 225) thirty (30) is a sufficient number to perform basic statistical procedures. No employees from the Office of the Family Advocate responded to the invitation to partake in the study.

Limited risk was involved, as the respondents were not exposed to more than their usual daily experience. The participants did not have any expenses. The respondents did not have to sign a consent form. Their consent was given when they read the informed consent form, then "clicked"

a button to confirm their consent, and then gained access to the survey. Upon completion, they “clicked” a submit button to return their Form to the researcher. The researcher used known electronic databases within the public domain for contact information. An information leaflet briefly explaining the aim, implications and risks of the study was compiled and sent to all respondents. They had ten days to respond by completing the questionnaire as a token of their willingness to partake in the study. Table 3 contains information about the research respondents.

Table 3: Profile of research respondents

Designation	Number of respondents	Percentage/rate of participation
Social workers	32	81%
Divorce attorneys	7	16,7%
Missing/unknown	1	2,3%
Total	40	100%

As displayed in Table 3, most of the respondents had more than 8 years’ experience with divorce related cases. Only 13,24% of the respondents were aware of any divorce educational programmes in the rest of the world, although 83,3% of the respondents strongly agreed that children will benefit to a very large extent from parents attending a divorce educational programme. 95,2% is of the opinion that it will be practically possible to implement a divorce educational programme. A total of 78,6% of the respondents strongly agreed that the programme should be made mandatory and 81% indicated that it is extremely important for both parents to attend the programme.

During the quantitative analysis of possible themes to be addressed in an educational programme for parents, the “parent child relationship” was indicated as the most important topic (88,1%) to be addressed. Conflict management (83,3%), communication (78,6%), parental involvement (76,2%), discipline (66,7%) and emotions (65,9%) were the other themes viewed as important. Other matters that were identified were problem solving (63,4), financial matters (45,2%), new life (38,1%) and legal processes (33,3%). The feedback of the respondents clearly indicated that it is considered extremely important to address the emotional impact of divorce during the educational programme for divorcing parents.

Table 4 contains the order of importance, as indicated by the respondents, of content, and Chart 1 displays the information identified by respondents in order of importance.

Table 4: Profile of important identified content/themes for the programme

Possible content/themes	Extremely important	Important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not very important
Emotions	65,9	26,8	0	2,4	4,9
Conflict management	83,3	11,9	0	0	4,8
Communication Skills	78,6	16,7	0	2,4	2,4
Problem-solving skills	63,4	31,7	0	0	4,9
Parent-child relationship	88,1	7,1	0	0	4,8
Parental involvement	76,2	16,7	2,4	0	4,8
Discipline	66,7	26,2	2,4	0	4,8

Legal processes and procedures	33,3	47,6	11,9	2,4	4,8
Financial matters	45,2	35,7,	14,3	2,4	2,4
Starting a new life	38,1	40,5	16,7	2,4	2,4

Chart 1: Importance of content for divorce educational programme

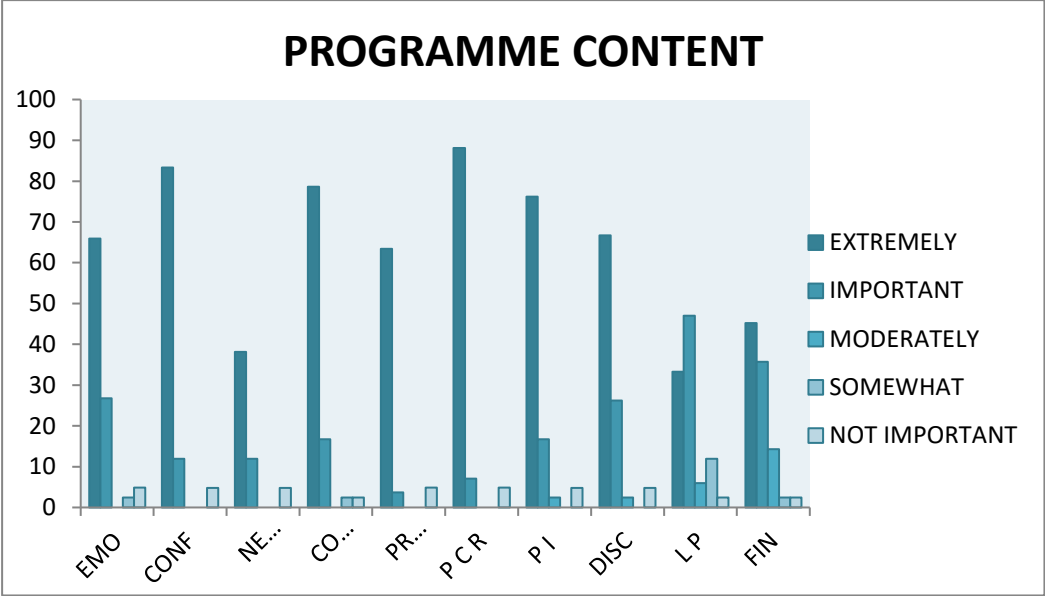
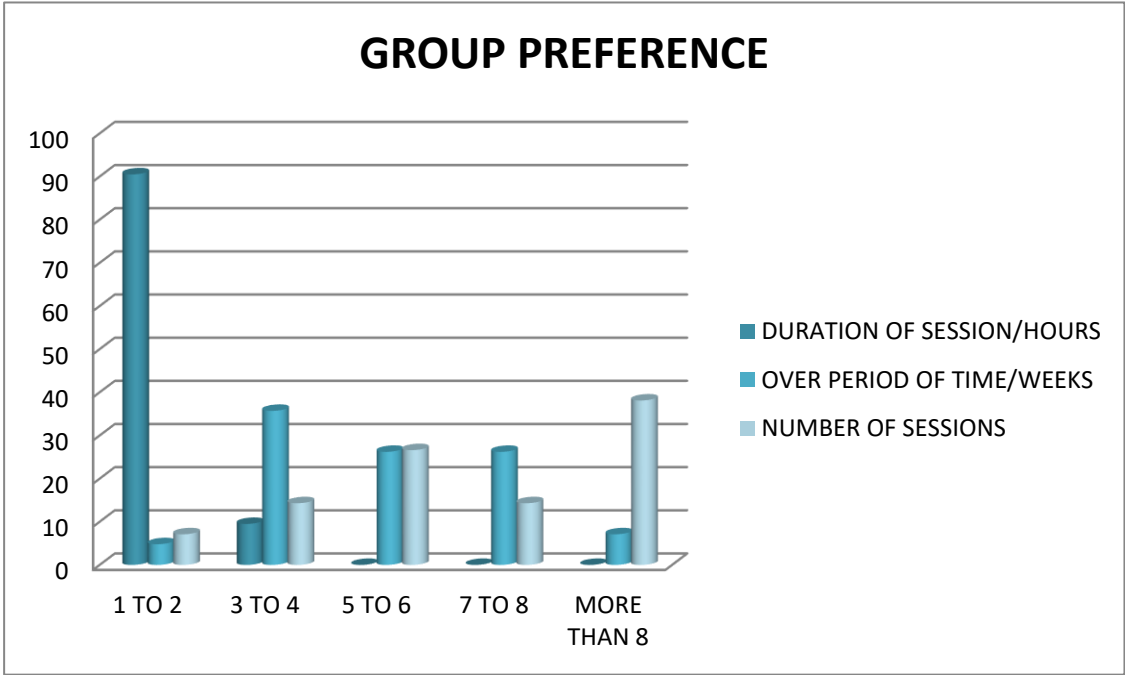


Chart 2 displays the views of respondents with regard to constructing the sessions during the divorce educational programme. A total of 90,5% of the respondents suggested that the sessions should be between one and two hours long. The majority of the respondents (35,7%) suggested that the programme run over a period of three to four weeks and that the programme consists of four (26,6%) to five or more sessions (38,1%).

Chart 2: Data with regard to construction of divorce educational programme



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the integrated literature review and the quantitative survey, the following conclusions and recommendations can be made:

- The gathered information conveyed that many divorce educational programmes have been developed globally over the past twenty years.
- Many of these global divorce educational programmes are mandatory when parents file for divorce and are used with a very good success rate worldwide.
- South Africa has a very high divorce rate affecting thousands of children, but still has no formal divorce educational programme to prevent the negative affect of divorce on children and the adjustment problems of divorce in children.
- South Africa needs a divorce educational programme to educate parents about the transition during divorce, talking to their children about divorce, identifying the emotions they experience and coping with those emotions.
- From the integrated literature review, as well as the survey, the following themes should be addressed in a divorce educational programme:
 - The impact of divorce on the socio-emotional adjustment of children during the process of divorce
 - How parents should deal with their children's reactions to divorce
 - The emotional turmoil of parents during the process of divorce
 - Conflict management, especially between parents
 - Communication skills between divorcees, as well as between parents and their children, to ensure clear supportive communication
 - Problem solving skills, especially children dealing with change
 - The quality of the parent-child relationship
 - The importance of continued parental involvement
 - Parent-child bonding
 - Discipline of children
 - Parent-teacher involvement with homework, activities and academic progress
 - The balance between work, family and play
 - Legal processes and procedures
 - Financial matters
 - Starting a new life by developing a new family identity, a social support system and new romantic relations
- The duration of the sessions, as well as the amount of sessions, will have to be streamlined for the unique circumstances and diverse cultures of South Africa.
- According to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015: 244), these divorce educational programmes should be uniformly implemented across the country to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service.
- Parents should both be encouraged to attend the programme, even if they do not attend the same programme together.
- The programme should be attended before the parents start the mediation process.
- Parents in the process of divorce should complete the programme before the divorce is granted.
- The ideal should be that the programme be made compulsory to ensure that both parties attend.
- The best interests of the children are paramount during the process of divorce.

In order to develop an educational programme for divorcing parents it was necessary to identify common themes by means of the Integrated Literature Study. A quantitative analysis was done by

the author, L Roodt, to prioritise the identified common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents.

This study provided new insight into what a divorce educational programme should entail in order for parents to be better prepared for what to expect and how to handle the changes in their lives during the process of divorce. It is therefore anticipated that a divorce educational programme will be developed and it will equip parents to reduce the negative affect of divorce on their children and promote their children's best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005) and Section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996).

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Amato, P.R. 2012. *The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children: An Update*. University Park, Pennsylvania State University.
- Amato, P.R., Kane, J.B. & James, S. 2011. Reconsidering the 'Good Divorce'. *Family Relations*, 60(5):511-524.
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. January 2017. *Children and Divorce no. 1; Updated January 2017*. Available at: [https://www.Aacap.Org/AACAP/Families And_Youth/Facts_For_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Divorce-001.Aspix](https://www.Aacap.Org/AACAP/Families_And_Youth/Facts_For_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Divorce-001.Aspix) (accessed on: 15 September 2020).
- Anderson, J. 2014. The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce. *The Linacre Quarterly*. November 2014; 81(4):378–387. Available at: <https://www.Ncbi.Nlm.Nih.Gov/Pmc/Articles/PMC4240051/> (accessed on: 15 September 2020).
- Anthony, C.J., DiPerna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. Divorce, Approaches to Learning, and Children's Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mediated and Moderated Effects. *Journal Of School Psychology*, 52:249–261. Available at: www.Elsevier.Com/Locate/Jschpsy. (accessed on: 28 March. 2017).
- Becher, E. 2020. *What is Divorce Education and does it Work?* University of Minnesota Extension. Available at: <https://www.Extension.Umn.Edu/About-Program/What-Divorce-Education-And-Does-It-Work>. (accessed on: 15 September 2020).
- Brandon, D.J. 2006. Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 45(1/2). Available at: <http://www.Haworthpress.Com/Web/JDR>. (accessed on: 24 January 2017).
- Centre for Divorce Education. 2020. *Children in Between Parenting Classes*. Available at: <https://www.Divorce-Education.Com>. (accessed on: 15 September 2020).
- Collins, C.L. & Fetsch, R. 2012. A Review and Critique of 16 Major Parent Education Programs. *Journal of Extension*, 50(4):1-4. Available at: <https://www.joe.org/joe/2012august/a8.php> (accessed on: 25 October 2020).
- DeLusé, S.R. & Braver, S.L. 2015. A Rigorous Quasi-Experimental Design to Evaluate the Causal Effect of a Mandatory Divorce Education Program. *Family Court Review*, 53(1):66-78.
- Du Plooy, K. & Van Rensburg, E. 2016. What do the True Experts Say? Young Adults' Recommendations for Coping With Parental Divorce. *The Social Work Practitioner Researcher*, 28(2):138-156.
- Dudovskiy, J. 2011. *Business Research Methodology*. Available at: <https://research-methodology.net/> (accessed on: 17 September 2020).

- Ellis, D. & Anderson, D. 2003. The Impact of Participation in a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents on the use of Court Resources: An Evaluation Study. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 21: 169-187.
- Fackrell, A., Hawkins, A.J. & Kay, N.M. 2011. How Effective Are Court-Affiliated Divorcing Parents Education Programs? A Meta-Analytic Study. *Family Court Review*, 49(1):107-119.
- Fagan, P. & Churchill, A. 2012. The Effects of Divorce on Children. *Marriage & Religion Research Institute*, 56(5):347-368.
- Gilman, J., Schneider, D. & Shulak, R. 2005. Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kid's Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4):110-172. Available at: <http://haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. (accessed on: 25 January 2017).
- Gómez, O., Martín, L. & Ortega, R. 2017. Conflictividad Parental, Divorcio Yansiedad infantil. *Pensamiento Psicológico*, 15(2):67-78. Available at: <https://Doi.Org/10.11144/Javerianacali.PPSI15-2.Cpda> (accessed on: 14 September 2020).
- Grinnell, R.M. & Unrau, Y.A. 2011. *Social Work Research and Evaluation*. (9th edn.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kahrizeh, M., Saberi, M. & Bashirgonbadi, S. 2020. Effect of Spiritual-Religious Interventions on Anxiety, Depression, and Adjustment to Parental Divorce in Female High School Students. *Health Spiritual Med Ethics*, 7(2):2-8.
- Kelly, J.B. 2006. Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights from Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1):35-52. Available at: www.Familyprocess.Org. (accessed on: 25 January 2017).
- Landsford, J.E. 2015. Parental Divorce and Children's Adjustment. *Perspective on Psychological Science*, 4(2):140-152.
- Mandemakers, J.J. & Kalmijn, M. 2013. Do Mothers' and Fathers' Education Condition the Impact of Parental Divorce on Child Well-Being? *Social Science Research*, 44(2014):187-199.
- Patton, M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. (3rd edn.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Philyaw, D. & Thomas, M.D. 2013. *Co-Parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households After Divorce*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.
- Pollet, S.L. 2009. A Nationwide Survey of Programs for Children of Divorcing and Separating Parents. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):523-543.
- Pollet, S.L. & Lombreglia, M. 2008. A Nationwide Survey of Mandatory Parent Education. *Family Court Review*, 46(2):375-408.

- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. 2005. *Research Methods for Social Work*. (5th edn.). Australia, Thompson Brookes/Cole.
- Salem, P., Sandler, I. & Wolchik, S. 2013. Taking Stock of Parent Education in the Family Courts: Envisioning a Public Health Model. *Family Court Review*, 1(51):231-238.
- Schramm, D.G. & Calix, S. 2011. Focus on Kids: Evaluation of a Research-Based Divorce Education Program. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 52:529–549.
- Singer, J.B. 2009. Dispute Resolution and the Post-Divorce Family: Implications of a Paradigm Shift. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):363–370.
- Smit, M. 2010. Skei is vir 'n Kind soos Amputasie. *Kerkbode*, 3 Sept. 2010. Available at: www.mathildasmit.co.za (accessed on: 28 February 2017).
- South Africa. 2015. The South African Law Reform Commission. Family Dispute Resolution: Care and Contact with Children. *Project 100D*, Issue Paper 31. (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).
- South Africa. 2018. *Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018*. Available at: http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 (accessed on: 14 September 2020).
- Stallman, H.M. & Matthew, R.S. 2014. A Randomized Controlled Trial of Family Transitions Triple P: A Group-Administered Parenting Program to Minimize the Adverse Effects of Parental Divorce on Children. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 55(1):33-48.
- Strydom, H. 2011. Sampling in the quantitative paradigm. (Pp. 222-235). In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. (Eds). *Research at Grassroots Level*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- The South African Law Reform Commission see South Africa. The South African Law Reform Commission
- Trillo-Padilla, F.J., Zaldívar-Basurto, F. & García-García, J. 2019. Familiar Adjustment of The Minors who are Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Minors Immersed in a Divorce Process: An Exploratory Study. *Universitas Psychologica*, 18(2):1-10. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy18-2.famw> (accessed on: 27 February 2017).
- United States Census Bureau. 2020. *Marriage and Divorce Rates by State*. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> (accessed on: 17 September 2020).
- Wilkinson, P.K. & Finkbeiner, S.H. 2020. *Divorce Statistics: Over 115 Studies, Facts and Rates for 2020*. Available at: <https://www.wf-lawyers.com/divorce-statistics-and-facts/> (accessed on: 15 September 2020).

LEGISLATION

Children's Act 38 of 2005. South Africa. 2005. *Government Gazette*, 492(28944). 19 June. Pretoria: Government Printers. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/childrens-act> (accessed on: 25 October 2020).

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, South Africa. 1996. *Government Gazette*, 18 December. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf> (accessed on: 25 October 2020).

Divorce Act, 70 of 1979. South Africa. 1979. *Government Gazette*, 168(6506). 15 June. Pretoria: Government Printers. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201503/act-70-1979.pdf (accessed on: 25 October 2020).

2. ARTICLE 2

(OBITER: ADDENDUM 2)

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DIVORCING PARENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Lisl Roodt

BA (Social Work), M SW (Forensic Practice)

COMPRES, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

Prof Cornelia Wessels

BA (Social Work), MA (Social Work), PhD (Social Work).

COMPRES, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

Dr Sufran Smith

BA (Social Work), MA (Social Work), PhD (Social Work)

COMPRES, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

SUMMARY

Keywords

Best interests of the child, develop, divorcing parents, educational programme, evaluate.

Divorce in South Africa recalls a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economical classes of life and can be described as the disease of the time. It is a serious and

ongoing problem globally. The SA Law Reform Commission¹ argued that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and called for a proper evaluation of the family dispute resolution processes to assist families with issues arising out of separation, divorce, and child welfare. Over the past twenty years, many educational programmes have been developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce and the most common denominator of all these programmes focuses on parents.² The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa could make a positive contribution towards the adjustment of children during the process of divorce. Possible themes and content for a divorce educational programme for parents were concluded during an integrated literature review and quantitative analysis that generated a thorough understanding of the problem.

A programme manual for presenters as well as a manual for attending parents were designed and developed to educate parents on the negative implications of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

1 Introduction

This article will focus on the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The programme aims to educate parents to understand the negative effect and consequences of divorce on children as well as the needs of children during and after divorce, and will help parents to manage the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems.

¹ SA Law Reform Commission “The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children” 2015 *Project 100D* 244.

² Gilman, Schneider and Shulak “Children’s Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids’ Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds” 2005 42 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* (3/4); Anderson “The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce” 2014 *The Linacre Quarterly* Nov 2014 81(4) 378–387; Trillo-Padilla, Zaldívar-Basurto and García-García, 2019 “Familiar Adjustment of The Minors who are Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Minors Immersed in a Divorce Process: An Exploratory Study” *Universitas Psychologica* 18(2) 1-10.

According to the 2018 statistics released by the South African Statistic Services,³ 25 282 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018 and 14 302 (56,6%) affected children younger than 18 years. In countries, such as the United States, around 39% of marriages ends in divorce,⁴ and in 2006 more than 1,1 million (13,75%) children were living with a parent who was divorced or separated.⁵ Due to a high incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced by the researcher in practice, and an investigation into existing literature,⁶ it was pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem – not only globally, but in South Africa, as well.⁷ When we look at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and their best interests must be considered, as well as the adjustment problems that they might experience.

2 Impact of divorce on parents and children

According to Fagan and Churchill⁸ divorce diminishes children's future competence in all five of society's major tasks or institutions namely family, school, religion, marketplace, and government. They further state that the effect of divorce on children ranges from mild to severe, from seemingly small to observably significant, and from short- to long-term. None of the effects applies to each child of every divorced couple, nor has any one child suffered all the effects. There is no way to predict how any child will be affected nor to what extent, but it is possible to predict divorce's societal effects and how children will be affected. In South Africa, the overall wellbeing of at least 22 000 children is being affected by divorce every year and these children are more

³ Statistics South Africa 2018 *Marriages and divorces* 2018.

⁴ United States Census Bureau. 2020 *Marriage and Divorce Rates by State*.

⁵ United States Census Bureau, Households, and families 2007; Owen and Rhoades "Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes" 2012 *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 38(3) 542-555; United States Census Bureau 2020 *Marriage and Divorce Rates by State*.

⁶ Anthony, DiPerna and Amato "Divorce, Approaches to learning, and children's academic achievement" 2014 *52 Journal of school psychology* 249; Fagan and Churchill "The effects of divorce on children 2012 *Marriage and religion research institute* 251-262; Amato The consequences of divorce for adults and children 12-19.

⁷ Statistics South Africa, *Marriages and divorces* 2018.

⁸ Fagan and Churchill *Marriage and religion research institute* 2012 251-262.

likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with parents⁹ who are still married. These children may experience difficulties like emotional problems, acting out behaviour and poor school achievement during parental separation or divorce.¹⁰ However, it must be noted that many parents face the challenges associated with divorce or separation healthily and successfully without high-conflict interactions.¹¹ In about 20% of divorce cases where children are involved, disagreement on custody and visitation arrangements leads to litigation resulting in conflict situations.¹² For some people, divorce might be the most stressful event of their lives and the unknown can cause even greater fear and stress than what they are already used to.¹³ Being aware of these, may help reduce the negative impact of divorce on children and prevent adjustment problems. With children, it may be more likely to have a happy, healthy relationship with both parents if they see their parents without the pressure and stress of an unhappy relationship.¹⁴ According to Amato *et al*,¹⁵ children appear to suffer when parents argue frequently, maintain inconsistent rules, and attempt to undermine one another's authority or relationship with children. Gilman *et al* and Anderson¹⁶ confirm that children from divorce may suffer short-term depression, anxiety, and behavioural problems at home or school. Divorce overall causes a temporary decrease in an individual's quality of life and some might never fully recover.¹⁷ They further state that parental modelling diminishes many children's capacity for stable marriage later in life, though some children may react by doubling their efforts to ensure stability.

⁹ Anthony et al 2014 *Journal of school psychology* 249.

¹⁰ Gilman et al 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 111; Mandemakers and Kalmijn 2013 *Social Science Research* 187-199.

¹¹ Amato, Kane, and James, "Reconsidering the Good Divorce" 2011 *Family Relations* 60(5) 512.

¹² Jacobs and Jatte "Investigating the efficiency of CoMeT, A new mediation model for high- conflict separating parents" 2010 *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 38 16-31.

¹³ Gadaua, SP "Where are you on the divorce stress scale? Understanding stress can help you prevent illness" 2012 *Psychology Today*.

¹⁴ Giles "The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children" 2017

¹⁵ Amato et al 2011 *Family Relations* 512.

¹⁶ Gilman *et al* 2005 110; Anderson, J "The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce" 2014 *The Linacre Quarterly* Nov 2014; 81 (4) 378–387.

¹⁷ Fagan and Churchill 2012 *Marriage & religion research institute* 1.

It is evident from the researcher's practical experience and literature¹⁸ that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning, and poor conflict management. While a divorce can be hard on children, it is often the fighting of the parents that affects the children most directly, and the impact depends on how well the parents can isolate the children from these disruptions.

According to Stadelman *et al*,¹⁹ the ability of divorced parents to establish a supportive, low-conflict parental unit reverberates throughout the family even some 20 years after marital disruption by exerting a strong influence on the quality of relationships within the family system. Smit²⁰ states that divorce is an ongoing process and not just an incident and that the lack of proper management of the process often results in misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict between the parties concerned. According to Fagan and Churchill,²¹ divorce can have a long-lasting effect on children. It is therefore very important for parents and children to be prepared properly and guided through the ongoing process to prevent a lifelong negative impact on children that may result in high numbers of early school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, and criminal offenses.²² According to Philyaw and Thomas,²³ children are happier, healthier, and better adjusted when both their parents play an active role in their lives and their trauma can be lessened when their parents get along. Smit and Landsford²⁴

¹⁸ Amato *et al* *Family Relations* 2011 512; Fagan *et al* 2012 *Marriage and Religion Research Institute* 1-13; Eaton "Negative Effects of Divorce and Possible Intervention Program Development and Improvement" 2018 *The BYU Undergraduate Journal in Psychology* 13: Iss. 1, Article 4 12.

¹⁹ Stadelmann Perren Groeben and Von Klitzing "Parental separation and children's behavioural/emotional problems: the impact of parental representations and family conflict" 2010 49(1) *Family Process* 106.

²⁰ Smit 2010 Kerkbode 3 September 2010.

²¹ Fagan and Churchill 2012 *Marriage & Religion Research Institution* (MARRI). 11 Jan 2012 12; Trillo-Padilla *et al* 2019 *Universitas Psychologica* 18(2) 1-10.

²² Smit 2010 Kerkbode 3 September 2010.

²³ Philyaw and Thomas "Co-parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households after Divorce" (2013) 4.

²⁴ Smit 2010 Kerkbode 3 September 2010; Landsford "Parental Divorce and Children's Adjustment" 2015 *Perspective on Psychological Science* 4(2) 140-152.

are also of the opinion that the psychological effect of divorce further interferes with children's potential to form positive emotional relationships with a spouse and their children later in their lives and states that the main situations that have a negative influence on children during divorce are:

- i Prolonged conflict between the parents
- ii Loss of a parent
- iii Loss of quality parenting
- iv Loss of family unity
- v Loss of parental involvement
- vi Loss of identity
- vii Loss of economic security
- viii Decline in living standards

These losses can manifest on physical and emotional levels, but it is emphasised that effective communication and participation between parents have positive results on children's ability to adapt to their new circumstances following the divorce of their parents.²⁵ According to Goldschlog,²⁶ divorcing families must learn to communicate their feelings without increasing conflict, listen to each other's views, shield their children from exposure to conflict, and stay involved as parents despite separation. According to the SA Law Reform Commission,²⁷ the lack of parents' insights is often the result of a lack of the correct information. Singer²⁸ confirms that one of the primary methods of family courts to intervene with divorcing parents is divorce educational

²⁵ Smit 2010 Kerkbode 3 September 2010 1; Trillo-Padilla *et al* 2019 *Universitas Psychologica* 18(2) 1-10.

²⁶ Goldschlog "Children in the middle. Protecting your children during and after divorce" 2009 *St Barnabas Health Care* 1.

²⁷ SA Law Reform Commission 2015 244.

²⁸ Singer "Dispute resolution and the post-divorce family: Implications of a paradigm shift" 2009 *Family Court Review* 47 363-370.

programmes to promote positive long-term post-divorce outcomes for children and families.

During the mid-1990s, the United States started to implement a public health approach to divorce and as of 2008, 46 states offered court-connected divorce educational programmes and 27 states mandated attendance for divorcing parents under certain conditions.²⁹ In these states, parents are required to complete a co-parenting education class after they file for legal separation or divorce before the judge will grant the request. Findings from a meta-analysis indicated that, overall, programmes for divorcing or separating parents significantly improve co-parent co-operation and conflict management, parent-child relationships, and child and parent well-being.³⁰

It is evident from the South African Statistic Services³¹ that divorce proceedings in South Africa are increasing, with detrimental effects on the children involved. It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission³² that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and that a coherent procedural family law system is not in place. Therefore, a proper evaluation of the family dispute resolution processes was called for by the SA Law Reform Commission.³³ The SA Law Reform Commission³⁴ further identified the need to assist families with procedural issues arising from separation, divorce, and child welfare. It is also the practical experience of the researcher that although mediation seems to have become a better means of communication and tool to resolve issues arising from separation or divorce than litigation, the practical implications of, and implementation of parenting plans after mediation still seem to be problematic after the divorce. The Children's Act, 38 of 2005,³⁵ refers to a parenting plan as a method to assist parents in the manner of exercising their parental responsibilities and rights after separation or divorce. Parenting plans are written agreements drafted and signed by both parents on how

²⁹ Pollet and Lombreglia 2008 *Family Court Review* 6 375–408.

³⁰ Fackrell Hawkins and Kay 2011 *Family Court Review* 49(1) 107–119.

³¹ Statistics South Africa 2018.

³² SA Law Reform Commission 2015 244.

³³ SA Law Reform Commission 2015 244.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Children's Act, 38 of 2005.

they will exercise their respective responsibilities and rights in the best interests of the child after the divorce. A neutral third party usually acts as a mediator. According to the named act, the children must also be consulted during this process. The existence of a parenting plan is, however, not a guarantee that those parents will stick to the plan or that they will have the insight or ability to communicate effectively and manage conflict in such a way that the best interests of the children are promoted in order to prevent adjustment problems during the process of divorce.

The researcher is of the opinion that the high divorce rate in South Africa, as stated by the South African Statistic Services,³⁶ as well as previously discussed psycho-social problems³⁷ resulting from divorce are disturbing and evident of the need for intervention. The researcher concluded from the literature³⁸ that a divorce educational programme for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills, in the process, prevent the negative impact and prevent adjustment problems in the children. The integrated Literature review³⁹ indicated that divorce educational programmes have reported increased parental awareness of their children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication, and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their formal partner.⁴⁰ According to Gilman *et al*,⁴¹ children who maintain warm and loving relationships with their parents and who feel that their parents understand their experience will adapt better during the process of divorce than children who have a less nurturing relationship with their parents. They further state that children living with parents, who resolve their conflicts, will fare better over a period than children living

³⁶ Statistics South Africa 2018.

³⁷ Gilman *et al* 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 110; Brandon "Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Programme for Divorcing Parents" 2006 46(1/2) *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*.

³⁸ Brandon 2006. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 172; Gilman *et al* 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 111; Kelly "Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights From Empirical and Clinical Research" 2006 46(1) *Family Process*.

³⁹ Schramm, Kanter, Brotherson and Krunzer. "An empirically based framework for content selection and management in Divorce Education Programs" 2018 59(3) *Journal of Divorce & remarriage* 195-221.

⁴⁰ Kelly 2006 *Family Process* 40.

⁴¹ Gilman et al 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 109.

amid parental conflict. According to Becher *et al*,⁴² divorce education is a challenge, but Grych⁴³ stresses that teaching skills to help contain and resolve conflict, manage anger, adopt a business attitude and prevent conflictive interaction may reduce the negative impact of stress factors affecting children's mental health and promote better adaptation following divorce.

The fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate⁴⁴ impacting negatively on the development and emotional well-being of the involved children,⁴⁵ is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a substantial effect on the improvement of public health.⁴⁶ Over the past twenty years, many educational programmes have been developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce. The most common denominator of all these programmes is focussed on parents.⁴⁷ According to Brandon and Fackrell *et al*,⁴⁸ it appears that such programmes can be beneficial to divorcing parents and their children by educating parents about the impact of divorce, separation, and conflict on their children. Fackrell *et al*,⁴⁹ who conducted a meta-analysis of 19 studies to evaluate parent educational programmes, showed in several outcomes – including co-parenting conflict, parent-child relationships, child well-being, and parent well-being – that those who participated in a parent educational programme were significantly better off than those who did not.

⁴² Becher "Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Programme" 2015 56(4) *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 261-276.

⁴³ Grych "Programmes for promoting parenting of residential parents: Moving from efficacy to effectiveness" 2005 43(1) *Family Court Review* 99.

⁴⁴ Statistics South Africa 2018.

⁴⁵ Smit 2010 *Kerkbode* 3 September 2010 2.

⁴⁶ Salem, Sandler and Wolchik "Taking stock of parent education in the family courts: envisioning a public health model" 2013 1(51) *Family Court Review* 231-238.

⁴⁷ Gilman et al 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 111.

⁴⁸ Brandon 2006 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 172; Fackrell *et al* "How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programmes? A meta-analytic study" 2011 49(1) *Family Court Review* 107–119.

⁴⁹ Fackrell *et al* "How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programmes? A meta-analytic study" 2011 49(1) *Family Court Review* 107–119.

Brandon⁵⁰ found that divorcing parents, who completed an educational programme, were more co-operative with their ex-spouses on difficult child-related issues, were more willing to allow children to spend time with the other parent and had lower re-litigation rates.

During a National Focus Group Forum⁵¹, the Office of the Family Advocate concluded that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a parent information/educational programme before any divorce order is granted, as parents' lack of insight is often a lack of correct information. The content should educate parents about the advantages and availability of mediation; information about parental alienation; the best interests of the child principle; concepts of care, residency, contact; and so on. According to the National Focus Group Forum,⁵² this information or educational programmes should be uniformly implemented across the country, to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service. Parties will have to attend the session in person and co-parents do not have to attend the programme jointly.⁵³ The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will contribute positively towards the communication between different family members and prepare parents for the change to follow divorce, more effective conflict management among parents to minimise the negative impact of continued conflict between them and enable parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to follow.

Various calls⁵⁴ are made that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend an educational programme to educate parents about various topics before their divorce. The programme will be developed for parents and they will be better educated and prepared on what to expect and how to handle the changes in their lives. It will also equip them to indirectly reduce the negative impact on children

⁵⁰ Brandon 2006 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 173.

⁵¹ SA Law Reform Commission 2015 244.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Schramm, *et al* "An empirical-based framework for content selection and management in Divorce Education Programs" 2018 59(3) *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 195-221.

⁵⁴ SA Law Reform Commission 2015 244.

and promote their best interests in terms of the Children's Act⁵⁵ and section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa⁵⁶ by preventing adjustment problems.

Although a wide variety of divorce educational programmes have been developed internationally and may be available for South African use, none of these programmes have been streamlined for the unique circumstances and diverse cultures of South Africa's "Rainbow Nation". South Africa is home to eleven official languages and a diversity of cultures and religious affiliations like Christianity, Islamism, Hinduism, Judaism, Animism, Buddhism, and various other indigenous cultures and beliefs. What complicates customary marriages is the fact that the marriage is not only concluded between two parties, but polygamy is permissible and the marriage also extends to the respective families.⁵⁷

According to the South African Constitution⁵⁸ persons belonging to a cultural, religious, or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community, to enjoy their culture, practice their religion, use their language, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations or other organs of civil society. The South African Constitution⁵⁹ as well as the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act,⁶⁰ recognises the importance of customary marriages as well as the dissolution thereof. These rights may however not be exercised in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.⁶¹ The South African Constitution⁶² makes it possible to protect individual family members against any harmful or discriminatory family conduct, because it is the supreme law and invalidates "law and conduct" inconsistent with it. The Children's Act, 2005⁶³ also states that the rights of children are paramount over other rights and freedom of parents where parents are free to choose and practice the culture and religion of their choice; it must be restricted when they are against the

⁵⁵ Children's Act 38 of 2005.

⁵⁶ s 28(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996.

⁵⁷ South African History Online, 2019.

⁵⁸ ss 15, 30, 31, 39 and 181 of 108 of 1996.

⁵⁹ 108 of 1996.

⁶⁰ Recognition of Customary Marriage Act 120 of 1998.

⁶¹ 108 of 1996 Chapter 2.

⁶² 108 of 1996.

⁶³ 38 of 2005.

child's best interests. Although South Africa makes provision for the recognition of customary marriages⁶⁴ and the freedom of cultural and religious practices of choice, the best interests of the child always remain paramount.⁶⁵

3 Research design and method

The researcher utilised information gathered during an integrated literature review and a quantitative empirical study to develop an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent the adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The problem and common content themes, as identified during the integrated literature review and empirical study, primarily formed the basis for the design and development of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents in the South African context.

The design and development of the programme were primarily qualitative as it seeks enrichment of programme design context. Developing written material for a programme, including treatment manuals, is a defining feature of intervention research and concerns the creation and revision of programme materials.⁶⁶

According to Fraser *et al*,⁶⁷ you must have a thorough understanding of the problem to develop programme theory. Based on a careful review of the research literature and information from practitioners working with divorce-related cases, these factors formed the basis for the design of the programme components and possible outcomes. In intervention research, programme formulation and programme evaluation are interwoven. The two interact to produce a programme of known dimensions and with known outcomes.⁶⁸ The information gathered during an integrated literature review and

⁶⁴ 120 of 1998.

⁶⁵ s 7 of 38 of 2005.

⁶⁶ Fraser, Richman, Galinsky and Day *Intervention Research: Developing Social Programs* (2009) 64.

⁶⁷ Fraser and Galinsky "Steps in Intervention Research: Designing and Developing Social Programmes" 2010 20(5). *Research on social work Practice* 39.

⁶⁸ Fraser et al *Intervention Research* 70.

the empirical study was used to identify the themes and sub-themes for the design and development of the programme.

According to Fraser *et al*,⁶⁹ the key components of an intervention manual/ programme are specific information about ways to manage the group process, to deal with the common problems in implementation, or to anticipate the effects of the intervention. Designing an intervention is a creative and interactive process and, in this phase, was conducted by the researcher herself, with the assistance of her promoters.

4 Literature review

An integrated literature review was used as a starting point to familiarise the researcher with knowledge regarding the research problem, to identify similar problems, to narrow down the focus of the study, and prevent possible duplication. The integrative literature review assisted the researcher to identify local and international literature about divorce educational programmes by identifying patterns and themes, drawing contrasts and comparisons, finding intervening factors, and building a logical chain of evidence.⁷⁰ The review included document analyses that assisted with the understanding of policies, working documents, as well as existing international divorce educational programmes.

This integrated literature review provided an overview of the content of a few current divorce educational programmes globally, how many sessions parents need to attend, the duration of the sessions, whether the programmes are court-mandated or voluntary, and what aspects it should address to educate parents to prevent adjustment problems. The overall aim of most of these programmes⁷¹ is to educate parents about the various potential negative effects that separation or divorce and interparental conflict can have on children. The programmes are discussed individually before discussing the data retrieved from the quantitative survey to reach a conclusion.

5 Empirical study

⁶⁹ Fraser *et al* Research on social work Practice 98.

⁷⁰ Patton Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (2002) 455-472.

⁷¹ DeLusé and Braver (2015) 66-78.

During the empirical study, the researcher used a qualitative approach to identify common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents. An electronic questionnaire was used as this enabled the researcher to reach a range of different respondents effectively. These respondents chose options and ascribed priorities among a range of items reflecting different themes for a potential intervention/educational programme.

5 1 Process of sample recruitment and informed consent

The respondents for the study were South African citizens residing in North-West or Gauteng Provinces and consisted of registered social workers in private practice, divorce attorneys, and advisors of the Office of the Family Advocate, who are involved with divorce-related cases in South Africa on a regular basis. North-West is a more rural area opposed to Gauteng, which is urban. The difference between the two geographical areas allowed for variation in inputs. Limited risk was involved, as the respondents were not exposed to more than their usual daily experience. There were no cost implications for respondents. Respondents did not have to sign a consent form. They gave their consent when they clicked on a button after they read the informed consent form, and then they had access to the survey. Upon completion, they clicked on a submit button that returned their Google Form to the researcher.

The respondents for the study were **purposively selected**. The researcher attempted to involve at least 60 respondents, purposively selected, 20 from each field of expertise, as mentioned, (registered social workers in private practice working with divorce-related cases, divorce attorneys, and employees of the Office of the Family Advocate dealing with divorce-related cases) to obtain a multi-dimensional view of needed components, minimising the risk of limited opinions. The return rate of the electronic survey, unfortunately, was low (40), but according to Grinnell and Williams,⁷² thirty (30) respondents are a sufficient number to perform basic statistical procedures

The respondents will indirectly benefit from the study by receiving the research findings after dissemination, interpretation, and publication. Interested respondents

⁷² Strydom "Sampling in the quantitative paradigm" in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont, (eds) *Research at Grass Roots*: (2011) 225.

will also be able to attend the training programme after completion of the study, if they supplied contact details for an invitation.

The researcher made use of an electronic structured self-developed questionnaire by sending an e-mail with an attached questionnaire to the purposively selected respondents to complete.⁷³ Respondents of the study were purposively selected according to their field of expertise by means of electronic contact lists containing their contact information. The researcher made use of SAASWIP's electronic database to identify social workers in private practice working with divorce-related cases, as well as a database with the contact information of the attorneys of the Law Society of the Northern Provinces dealing with divorce-related cases. A database with e-mail addresses from the Office of the Family Advocate in the two afore-mentioned provinces.

The researcher compiled an information leaflet briefly explaining the aim, implications, and risks of the study. This was sent to all respondents on the said databases via e-mail, along with a link to the structured survey questionnaire. To comply with ethical principles, respondents provided informed consent as part of the Google Forms questionnaire (Addendum 6) by reading an informed consent form and clicking a button that provided access to the survey. They had ten days to respond by completing the questionnaire as a token of their willingness to partake in the study. Table 1 contains information about the research respondents.

Table 1: Profile of research respondents

Designation	Number of respondents	Percentage/rate of participation
Social workers	32	81%
Attorneys	7	16,7%
Missing answer	1	2,3%
Total	40	100%

⁷³ Delpont and Roestenburg "Qualitative Data-Collection Methods" in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont (eds) *Research at Grass Roots* (2011) 190.

During the quantitative survey the majority of the respondents (64%), as displayed in Chart 1, had more than 8 years' experience with divorce-related cases.

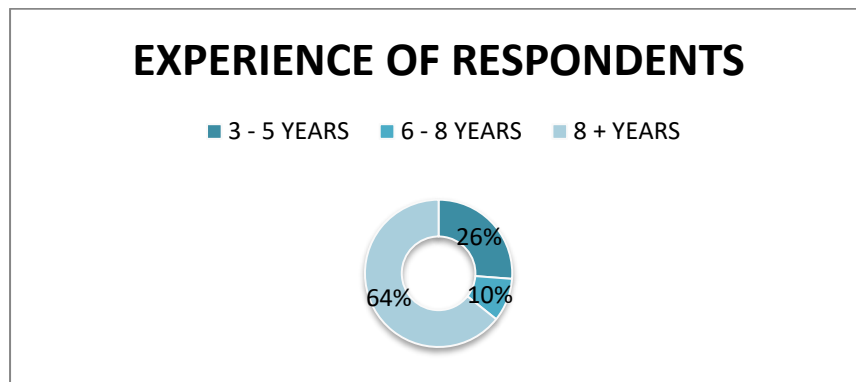


Chart 1: Experience of respondents

Only 13,24 % of respondents were aware of any divorce educational programmes in the rest of the world, although 83,3 % of the respondents strongly agreed that children will benefit to a very large extent from parents attending a divorce educational programme and 95,2% thought that it would be practically possible to implement a divorce educational programme in South Africa.

A total of 78,6 % of the respondents strongly agreed that attendance of the programme should be mandatory and 81% indicated that it is extremely important that both parents attend the programme, although not necessarily together.

5 2 Suggestions for programme content

During the qualitative analysis of possible themes to be addressed during an educational programme for divorcing parents, the “parent-child relationship” (88,1%) was indicated as the most important topic to be addressed. Conflict management (83,3%), communication (78,6%), parental involvement (76,2%), discipline (66,7%) and emotions (65,9%) were the other themes viewed as important. Other matters that were identified were problem-solving (63,4%), financial matters (45,2%), new life (38,1%), and legal processes (33,3%). The feedback of the respondents indicates that the emotional impact of divorce is viewed as extremely important to be addressed

during the educational programme for divorcing parents. Table 2 displays the information identified by the respondents in order of importance.

Table 2: Profile of important identified content

Possible content	Extremely important	Important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not very important
Emotions	65,9	26,8	0	2,4	4,9
Conflict management	83,3	11,9	0	0	4,8
Communication skills	78,6	16,7	0	2,4	2,4
Problem-solving skills	63,4	31,7	0	0	4,9
Parent-child relationship	88,1	7,1	0	0	4,8
Parental involvement	76,2	16,7	2,4	0	4,8
Discipline	66,7	26,2	2,4	0	4,8
Legal processes and procedures	33,3	47,6	11,9	2,4	4,8
Financial matters	45,2	35,7	14,3	2,4	2,4
Starting a new life	38,1	40,5	16,7	2,4	2,4

Chart 2 displays the views of respondents with regard to the construction of the sessions during the divorce educational programme. A total of 90,5 % of the respondents suggested that the sessions should be between one and two hours long. The majority of the respondents (35,7%) suggested that the programme runs over three to four weeks, 26,6% of the respondents suggested that the programme consists of four sessions and 38,1% of the participants suggested five or more sessions.

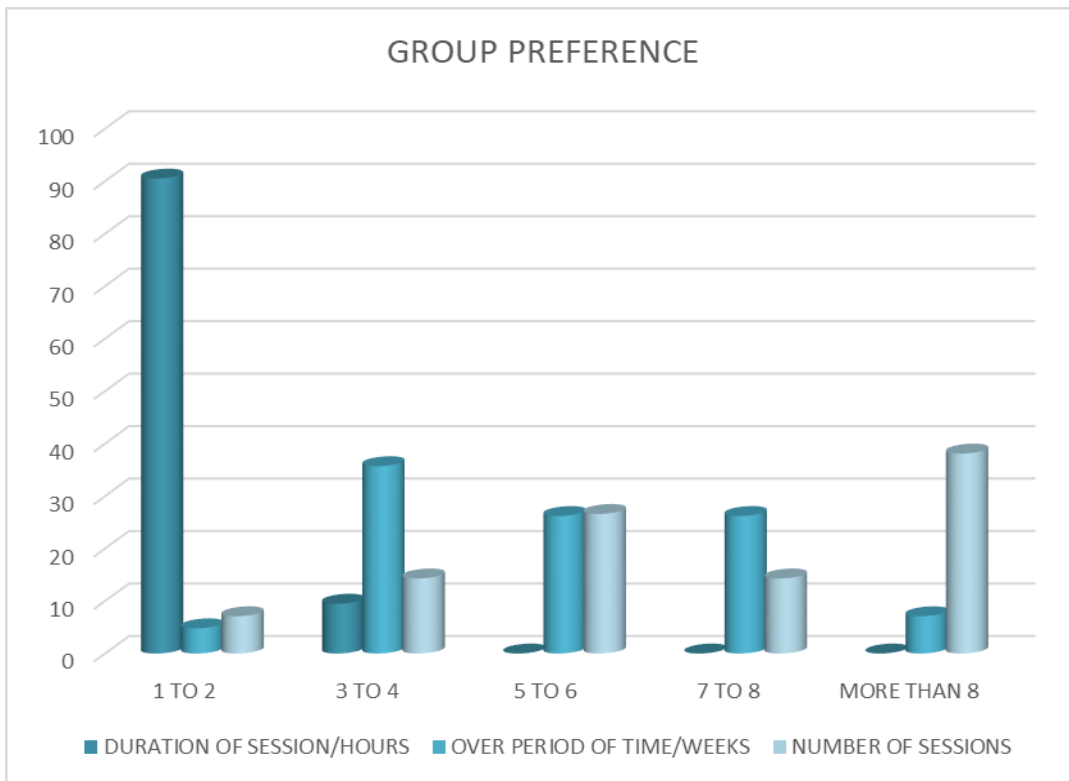


Chart 2: Data with regard to the construction of a divorce educational programme

6 Programme development

According to Fraser *et al*,⁷⁴ intervention research is wholly concerned with the creation and revision of programme materials, such as treatment manuals. They further state that manuals are characterised as guides that spell out programme theory and detailed description of practice content and activities, although they vary significantly in content and length. For this study, the definition of Fraser *et al*,⁷⁵ for a programme manual will be used: “manuals are guides to practice that describe a problem, a program theory, practice objectives, and program content”. The researcher aimed to develop a programme manual to educate divorcing parents on potential problems during the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in their children. The problem and common content themes, as identified during the integrated literature review and empirical study, formed the primary basis for the design and development of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents in the South African context.

⁷⁴ Fraser et al Intervention Research 64.

⁷⁵ Fraser et al Intervention Research 66.

Fraser *et al*,⁷⁶ further state that the key components of an intervention manual/programme are specific information about ways to manage the group process, deal with the common problems in implementation, or to anticipate the effects of the intervention. They further state that the triangulation of information and data contribute to the validity and reliability of the programme.

To design such a programme the researcher did an integrated literature review on existing international and national programmes as well as their content and incorporated the information with information gathered from professionals with divorce-related experience during an empirical study.

This programme will aim to fill a gap in South Africa that was identified by the Office of the Family Advocate during a National Focus Group Forum where the conclusion was that attendance of a parent information/educational programme by divorcing parents in South Africa should be compulsory before any divorce order is granted,⁷⁷ as parents' lack of insight is often a result of a lack of correct information.

The content of the proposed programme will educate parents about the best interests of the child principle; concepts of care, residency, communication, conflict resolution, contact, and so on. According to the National Focus Group Forum,⁷⁸ this educational programme should be uniformly implemented across the country, to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service despite their unique cultural or belief system. Parties will have to attend the session in person and co-parents do not have to attend the programme together. The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will contribute positively towards the communication between different family members and prepare parents on the change to follow divorce, more effective conflict management among parents to minimise the negative impact of continued conflict between them and enable parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to follow.

⁷⁶ Fraser et al Research on social work Practice 98.

⁷⁷ SA Law Reform Commission (2015) 244.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

6 1 Aim of the newly developed programme

The aim of this educational programme is to educate parents with regard to⁷⁹ their children's needs during the process of divorce, as well as the effect of their behaviour on their children. After the parents completed the programme, it is expected that they will.⁸⁰

- i understand that their own emotions, pain, rage, stress, needs, and vulnerability are normal in the process of divorce;
- ii be aware of the divorce process from the child's perspective, including the misconception that "the divorce is my fault";
- iii realise the effect of the loss of extended family, home, school, and friends on the child;
- iv realise that they have to be emotionally available and involved;
- v be able to communicate effectively, and
- vi be able to give reassurance, provide consistency and discipline.

Parents will also understand the serious harm to children from:

- i witnessing parental confrontation and conflict;
- ii prematurely introducing children to dating partners,
- iii bad-mouthing the other parent
- iv returning children late from visits or not having children ready for visits;
- v using children as messengers or informants, and
- vi placing adult burdens on children (e.g. "What would I do without you?").

⁷⁹ Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Department Office of the Chief Justice: Guidelines and procedures for the approval of parent education programmes (2010) 3.

⁸⁰ Massachusetts Guidelines and procedures for the approval of parent education programmes (2010) 4-9.

Parents will be able to demonstrate:

- i knowledge of reflective listening;
- ii knowledge of dispute resolution techniques, including the availability of alternative dispute resolution services;
- iii an appreciation for the need for productive, positive communication skills;
- iv an understanding of the child's right to and need for both parents;
- v an understanding of both parents' responsibility to provide financially for the child;
- vi that they can stay involved as effective parents despite separation, and
- vii that they will refer to the written material and a list of local resources in future.

6 2 Content of the newly developed divorce educational programme

The content of the educational programme was determined from information gathered during an integrated literature review and empirical study. The findings were considered while developing the programme.

The integrated literature review established the prerequisites for a divorce educational programme to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The information gathered from the literature indicated that the majority of divorce educational programmes are deemed compulsory and should be attended within thirty (30) to forty-five (45) days after filing for divorce. The duration of the programmes differs from one (1) hour information sessions to eleven (11) weekly sessions of one (1) hour each, including workbooks, roleplays, and practicing new skills. Parents have to attend separate sessions, make their appointments, and receive a certificate on completion to be handed in at court as evidence before a divorce can be finalised. The size of the groups differs, but there can be up to 20 parents per group. Themes addressed during the programmes seem to include the following:

- i Identifying and coping with emotions
- ii Conflict management

- iii Anger management
- iv Clear and supportive communication
- v The legal process of divorce/litigation/court process
- vi Parental involvement
- vii Unhealthy parental behaviour
- viii Parenting styles
- ix Discipline
- x Risk factors/behaviour in children
- xi Parent-child relationship
- xii Children's socio-emotional adjustment with specific attention to various ages

The gathered information conveyed that many divorce educational programmes have been developed globally over the past twenty years. Many of these divorce educational programmes are mandatory when parents file for divorce and are used with excessive success worldwide. South Africa has a very high divorce rate affecting thousands of children and a formal divorce educational programme will prevent the negative affect of divorce on children and the adjustment problems of divorce in children. The divorce educational programme needs to educate parents about the transition during divorce, talking to their children about divorce, identifying the emotions they experience, and coping with those emotions. Conflict management and effective communication skills will enable parents to have better relationships with their children and ex-partner. Parents also need to learn how to develop a new family identity, social support, and romantic relations. The programme also needs to address the impact of these processes on the children. The duration of the sessions, as well as the number and content of sessions, differ all over the world.

The newly developed Divorce Educational Programme for South Africa will be presented in two sessions of two and a half hours each over two to four weeks,

depending on the schedules of the attending parents. The themes addressed were identified by using an integrated literature review and empirical study.

7 A proposed newly developed educational programme for divorcing parents

7 1 Session 1

7 1 1 Main objective and outcomes

To enable divorcing parents to understand and obtain knowledge of the process of divorce and the negative impact divorce has on children.

Sub-section objectives and outcomes of session 1 will be:

- i To describe and discuss the emotional process of divorce
- ii To describe and discuss the physical process of divorce
- iii To describe and discuss the negative impact the process of divorce has on children

7 1 2 Content

Session 1 is an introduction and informative session and focuses on the different processes of divorce. Attendees will be welcomed and will then introduce themselves to the group. This will serve as an icebreaker and starting point for interaction. An attendance register will be circulated, but attendants will not be requested to provide identifying information if they do not wish to do so.

Attendants will be motivated to participate by asking questions, but will be asked to refrain from emotional outbursts, might any of the information upset them in any way. They will be informed about the practical arrangements of the programme over the two sessions, each of which will be between two and three hours long. All relevant literature will be made available to the attendant in the form of a manual for future reference.

At the end of session 1, the attendants should have the ability and insight to realise that divorce is a process and not an incident and that it has a severe negative impact on children.

Session 1 will address the following themes:

- i The process of divorce and the negative impact it has on children
- ii The reason people get divorced
- iii Effects of divorce on children
- iv Main reasons for the negative influence of divorce on children
- v Different reactions at different stages of development
- vi How parents can help their children
- vii Effects of divorce on parents
- viii The emotional process of divorce
- ix The physical process of divorce
- x Negative factors making divorce worse for children
- xi Ways to cope

7 1 3 Aids

- i Icebreaker necessities
- ii PowerPoint monitor for a slideshow presentation
- iii Flipchart
- iv Whiteboard markers
- v Reference manual with literature regarding session 1
- vi Attendance register

7 2 Session 2

7 2 1 Main objective and outcomes

To enable divorcing parents to manage the process of divorce in order to promote the healthy adjustment of children by identifying the causes and effects of high-conflict situations, healthy communication, problem-solving skills, and what children need to promote healthy adjustments to divorce.

Sub-section objectives and outcomes of session 2 will be:

- i Triggers to conflict
- ii Healthy communication and conflict management
- iii Needs of children during and after divorce

7 2 2 Content

During session 2, attendants will receive information and guidance on how to manage the process of divorce to minimise children's adjustment problems.

Attendants will be welcomed and the practical arrangements, as well as the ground rules, will be discussed.

All relevant literature will be made available to the attendants in the form of a programme manual for future reference (Addendum 14).

At the end of session 2, attendants must be able to manage the process of divorce to promote the healthy adjustment of their children during this process.

Session 2 will address the following themes:

- i Children's needs during the process of divorce
- ii Children's reaction to divorce
- iii What parents should do
- iv The impact of parental behaviour on children

- v Constructive conflict management
- vi Healthy, effective ways to communicate your needs and emotions
- vii Constructive co-parenting
- viii Legal and financial responsibilities

7 2 3 Aids

- i Icebreaker necessities
- ii PowerPoint monitor for a slideshow presentation
- iii Flipchart
- iv Whiteboard markers
- v Reference manual with literature regarding session 2
- vi Attendance register

8 Conclusion

Divorce is a serious and ongoing problem worldwide as well as in South Africa. Children become the victims of their parent's inability to solve their marriage or relationship problems and become part of an ongoing process of traumatic events. Circumstances surrounding divorce or separation have a negative impact on children's development and ability to adapt to their relationships later on in their own lives. The main reasons for the adjustment problems are unresolved conflict, poor communication, a lack of problem-solving skills, a lack of parental involvement, and irresponsible parenting. The literature study confirmed that divorce educational programmes globally had a very positive impact on the emotional well-being of children of divorce. The literature study further confirmed that South Africa is in desperate need of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent the adjustment problems in children during later stages of their lives. After employing an empirical study under social workers in private practice and attorneys with divorce-related experience, it was confirmed that South Africa could benefit from a divorce educational programme and the information gathered supported the global themes to

be addressed during such programme. The educational programme (Addendum 14) will empower parents with knowledge about their own emotions during a divorce, teach them the necessary skills to deal with their divorce, and in the process prevent adjustment problems in their children due to the divorce process.

The programme was developed using an integrated literature review, as well as the results of a quantitative survey completed by social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys. The divorce educational programme includes the presentation of the programme (Addendum 13) as discussed, as well as an information manual for participating parents (Addendum 14) to use as a reference during and after the process of divorce. The researcher concluded that a divorce educational programme for South Africa would empower parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent adjustment problems in their children.

9 Recommendations regarding a divorce educational programme to prevent adjustment problems in children

- i The newly developed divorce educational programme to prevent the adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce should be implemented in South Africa after an impact study on the efficacy was done.
- ii It should be mandatory for parents filing for divorce to attend the divorce educational programme before the finalisation of a divorce.
- iii The mentioned programme should become part of the services provided by the Office of the Family Advocate and mandated non-governmental organisations delivering family care and child protection service.

10 Summary

Divorce is a growing reality worldwide as well as in South Africa, impacting negatively on the lives of thousands of children on an annual basis. Divorce educational programmes are presented very successfully all over the globe, preventing adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. Many of these programmes are compulsory before a divorce can be finalised. South Africa does not have a specific divorce educational programme at present. The researcher thus developed an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent the adjustment problems in

children (Addendum 14). This programme will educate and empower parents with the necessary knowledge to guide and support their children during the process of divorce.

This article focused on the process of designing and developing the divorce educational programme for parents to prevent the adjustment problems in children.

TABLE OF STATUES

Children's Act 38 of 2005

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996

Divorce Act 70 of 1979

Recognition of Customary Marriage Act 120 of 1998

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Amato, PR *The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children: An Update* (2012) Pennsylvania State University: University Park.

Delport, CSL and Roestenburg, WJH *Quantitative data-collection methods: questionnaires, checklists, structured observation and structured interview schedules* in De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouché, CB, and Delport, CSL *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 4ed (2011) Van Schaik Publishers: Pretoria.

Fraser, MW, Richman, JM, Galinsky, MJ and Day SH *Intervention Research: Developing Social Programs* (2009) Oxford University Press: USA.

Patton, MQ *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* 3ed (2002). Sage Publications, Inc.

Philyaw and Thomas *Co-parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households after Divorce* (2013) New Harbinger Publication: Oakland.

Strydom, H *Sampling in the quantitative paradigm* in De Vos, AS, Strydom, H, Fouché, CB and Delport, CSL *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions* 4ed (2011) Van Schaik Publishers: Pretoria.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Amato, PR, Kane, JB and James, S "Reconsidering the Good Divorce" 2011 60(5) *Family Relations* 511-524.

Becher, E "Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Programme" 2015 56(4) *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 261-276.

DeLusé, SR and Braver, SL "A Rigorous Quasi-Experimental Design to Evaluate the Causal Effect of a Mandatory Divorce Education Program" 2015 53(1) *Family Court Review* 66-78.

Fackrell, A, Hawkins, AJ and Kay, NM “How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programmes? A meta-analytic study” 2011 49(1) *Family Court Review* 107–119.

Fraser, MW and Galinsky, MJ. “Steps in Intervention Research: Designing and Developing Social Programs” 2010 20(5) *Research on Social Work Practice* 459-466. doi:10.1177/1049731509358424.

Grych, JH, “Programmes for promoting parenting of residential parents: Moving from efficacy to effectiveness” 2005 43(1) *Family Court Review* 99.

Jacobs, N and Jatte, R “Investigating the Efficiency of Comet, a New Mediation Model for High-Conflict Separating Parents” 2010 38 *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 16-31.

Landsford, JE “Parental Divorce and Children's Adjustment” 2015 4(2) *Perspective on Psychological Science* 140-152.

Mandemakers, JJ and Kalmijn, M. “Do Mothers' and Fathers' Education Condition the Impact of Parental Divorce on Child Well-Being?” 2013 44 *Social Science Research* 187-199.

Owen, J and Rhoades, GK “Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes” 2012 38(3) *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 542-555.

Pollet, SL and Lombreglia, M “A nationwide survey of mandatory parent education” 2008 6 *Family Court Review* 375–408.

SA Law Reform Commission “The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children” 2015 31 *Project 100D* 244 (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4) 244.

Salem, P, Sandler, I and Wolchik, S “Taking stock of parent education in the family courts: envisioning a public health model” 2013 1(51) *Family Court Review* 131-148.

Schramm, DG and Calix, S “Focus on Kids: Evaluation of a Research-Based Divorce Education Program”. 2011 52 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 529–549.

Schramm, DG, Kanter, JB, Brotherson, SE and Krunzer, B. "An empirically based framework for content selection and management in Divorce Education Programs" 2018 59(3) *Journal of Divorce & remarriage* 195-221.

Singer, JB "Dispute resolution and the post-divorce family: Implications of a paradigm shift" 2009 47 *Family Court Review*:363–370 doi:10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01261.x.

Stadelmann, S, Perren, S, Groeben, M and Von Klitzing, K "Parental Separation and Children's Behavioural/Emotional Problems: The Impact of Parental Representations and Family Conflict" 2010 49(1) *Family Process* 92-108.

The South African Law Reform Commission **see** South Africa. The South African Law Reform Commission.

Tribal Law and Policy Institute **see** United States.

United States. Tribal Law and Policy Institute. 2003 Child Abuse Protocol Development Guide.

INTERNET SOURCES

Anderson, J "The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce" *The Linacre Quarterly*. November 2014 81(4):378–387
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4240051/> (accessed 2020-09-15).

Anthony, JC, DiPerna, JC and Amato, PR "Divorce, Approaches to Learning, and Children's Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mediated and Moderated Effects" 2014 54 *Journal Of School Psychology* 249–261. Journal Homepage: <http://www.Elsevier.Com/Locate/Jschpsy> (accessed 2017-03-28).

Brandon, DJ "Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Programme for Divorcing Parents" 2006 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 46(1/2)
<http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR> (accessed 2017-01-24).

Eaton, M "Negative Effects of Divorce and Possible Intervention Program Development and Improvement," 2018 13(1) *Intuition: The BYU Undergraduate Journal in Psychology* 4 <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/intuition/vol13/iss1/4> (accessed 2020-09-14).

Fagan, PF and Churchill, A "The Effects of Divorce on Children" January 2012 *Marriage and Religion Research Institution (MARRI)* 12 <https://marri.us/effects-divorce-children> (accessed 2020-09-15).

Gadaua, SP "Where are you on the divorce stress scale? Understanding stress can help you prevent illness" 2012 *Psychology Today* <https://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/contemplating-divorce/2012> (accessed: 2018-03-24).

Giles, C "The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children" 2017 *Healthfully* <https://www.livestrong.com/article/152395-divorces-long-term-effects-on-children/> (accessed 2018-03-24).

Gilman, J, Schneider, D and Shulak, R "Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids' Turn Intervention Program on 7- to 9-Year-Olds" 2005 *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4) <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. Date of access: 25 Jan 2017.

Goldschlog, A "Children in the Middle. Protecting your children during and after divorce" 2009 *Barnabas Health Care System* www.instituteforprevention.com (accessed 2017-02-16).

Kelly, JB "Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights from Empirical and Clinical Research" 2006 46(1) *Family Process* www.Familyprocess.Org. (accessed 2017-01-25).

Massachusetts "The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Department Office of the Chief Justice: Guidelines and procedures for the approval of parent education programmes" 2010 3. <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/09/01/parent-education-approval-guidelines.pdf> (accessed 2019-03-22).

Smit, M “Skei is vir 'n kind soos amputasie” 2010 *Kerkbode* September 2010
<https://www.mathildasmit.co.za> (accessed 2017-02-28).

South Africa. “The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children” 2015 31 *Project 100D* (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).

South Africa. Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018
http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 (accessed 2020-09-14).

South African History Online “Customary Marriages in South Africa: Understanding the recognition of customary marriages Act of 1998” 2019
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/customary-marriages-south-africa-understanding-recognition-customary-marriages-act-1998> (accessed 2020-09-06).

Statistics South Africa: Marriages and divorces 2016 <https://www.statssa.gov.za>
(accessed 2017-02-18).

Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018
http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=11856&PPN=P0307&sch=7912 (accessed 2020-09-15).

Trillo-Padilla, FJ, Zaldívar-Basurto, F and García-García, J “Familiar Adjustment of the Minors who are Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Minors Immersed in a Divorce Process: An Exploratory Study” 2019 18(2) *Universitas Psychologica* 1-10
<https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy18-2.famw> (accessed 2017-02-27).

United States Census Bureau “Households and families” 2007
<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2006/compendia/statab/126ed/population.html> (accessed 2017-02-18).

United States Census Bureau “Marriage and Divorce Rates by State” 2020.
<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> (accessed 2020-09-17).

3. ARTICLE 3

(THE JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY: ADDENDUM 3)

The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy: Addendum 3

Content evaluation of an Educational Program for Divorcing Parents to Prevent Adjustment Problems in Children

Lisl Roodt, Prof Cornelia Wessels and Dr Sufran Smith

Lisl Roodt
M Social Work
Manager Welfare Services
Child Protection and Family Care Organization
PO Box 21087
Noordbrug
2520
lislroodt1@gmail.com

Prof Cornelia Wessels
Professor in Social Work
North-West University
Private Bag X1290.
Potchefstroom
2520.
Cornelia.Wessels@nwu.ac.za

Dr Sufran Smith
Senior Lecturer in Social Work
North-West University
Private Bag X1290.
Potchefstroom
2520.
Sufran.Smith@nwu.ac.za

Abstract

Divorce in South Africa brings to mind a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economical classes of life and can be described as the illness of all times. Over the past twenty years, many educational programs have been developed globally to minimize the impact of divorce. The researcher designed and developed an educational program for divorcing parents in South Africa. The aim of the program is to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The researcher utilized an integrated literature study, and qualitative design during this study. The content of the proposed program was evaluated by means of the Delphi technique through experts in the field of divorce-related matters as well as parents in the process of divorce. The findings of the content evaluation emphasize the importance of a divorce educational program for South Africa.

Content Evaluation of an Educational Program for Divorcing Parents to Prevent Adjustment Problems in Children

Introduction

The researcher designed and developed an educational program for divorcing parents. In the context of this study, an educational programme is the intended systematic teaching of divorcing parents. The program was designed to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The program primarily focuses on the parent-child relationship, conflict management, communication, parental involvement, discipline, and emotional impact. Other matters that are also addressed include problem-solving, financial matters and the beginning of a new life after divorce. An integrated literature study and feedback from respondents clearly indicated that the emotional impact of divorce is viewed as extremely important to be addressed during an educational program for divorcing parents.

This article will focus on the evaluation of the content of the newly designed program by utilizing the Delphi technique (Botma *et al.* (2010:253-255). with a group of experts in the field of divorce-related cases. The program was also presented to a group of parents in the process of divorce for further content evaluation. The results of the evaluation of the proposed divorce educational program will be discussed during the course of this article as well as the adaptation of the program according to the feedback received from the participants.

Problem Statement

In countries such as the United States, around 39% of marriages end in divorce (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020) and in 2006 more than 1.1 million children (13.75%) were living with a parent who was divorced or separated (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007; Owen & Rhoades, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). According to the 2018 statistics release from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018) 25 282 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018 and resulted in 14 302 (65,6%) affected children younger than eighteen years old. Due to a high

incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced by the researcher in practice and investigation into existing literature (Amato, 2012, p. 12-19; Anthony et al., 2014, p. 249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012, p. 251-262;), it was pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only in the rest of the world, but also in South Africa. When one look at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and it is important that their best interests are looked at during the process of divorce. In South Africa, the overall wellbeing of at least 22 000 children are being affected by divorce every year and these children are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with still-married parents (Anthony et al., 2014, p. 249).

It is evident from the researcher's practical experience and literature (Amato et al., 2011, p. 512; Fagan & Churchill, 2012, p. 1-13) that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning and poor conflict management. Being aware of these factors may help reduce the negative impact of divorce on children and prevent adjustment problems and children may be more likely to have a happy, healthy relationship with both parents if they see their parents without the pressure and stress of an unhappy relationship (Giles, 2017).

According to Stadelmann et al. (2010, p. 106) the ability of divorced parents to establish a supportive, low-conflict parental unit reverberates throughout the family even some 20 years after marital disruption by exerting a strong influence on the quality of relationships within the family system. It is therefore very important for parents and children to be prepared properly and guided through the ongoing process to prevent a lifelong negative impact on children (Smit, 2010, p.2).

According to the SA Law Reform Commission (2015, p. 244) the lack of insight of parents are often the result of a lack of the correct information. According to Singer (2009, p. 363-369), one of the primary methods of family courts to intervene with divorcing parents is divorce

educational programs to promote positive long term post-divorce outcomes for children and families. During the mid-1990s, the United States started to implement a public health approach to divorce and as of 2008, 46 states offered court-connected divorce educational programs and 27 states mandated attendance for divorcing parents under certain conditions (Pollet & Lombreglia, 2008, p. 523-543). In these states, parents are required to complete a co-parenting education class after they file for legal separation or divorce before the judge will grant the request. Findings from a meta-analysis indicated that overall, programs for divorcing or separating parents significantly improve co-parent, co-operation and conflict management, parent-child relationships, and child and parent well-being (Fackrel et al., 2011).

It is evident from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018) that divorce proceedings in South Africa occur in increasing numbers with detrimental effects on the children involved. It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015, p. 244) that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and that there is no coherent procedural family law system in place.

According to the researcher, the high divorce rate in South Africa (SA Stats, 2018) and previously discussed psychosocial problems (Brandon, 2006, p. 172 and Gilman et al., 2005, p. 111) resulting from divorce are disturbing and evident of the need for intervention. The researcher concluded from the literature (Brandon, 2006, p. 172; Gilman et al., 2005, p. 111-172; Kelly, 2006, p.40) that a divorce educational program for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills, in the process, prevent the negative impact and prevent adjustment problems in the children.

During a National Focus Group Forum, the Office of the Family Advocate concluded that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a parent information/educational program prior to any divorce order granted (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015, p. 244), as parents' lack of insight is often a result of a lack of correct information. The

content should educate parents about the advantages and availability of mediation; information about parental alienation; the best interests of the child principle; concepts of care, residency, contact; and so on., According to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015, p. 244), these information or educational programs should be uniformly implemented across the country to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service. Parties will have to attend the session in person and co-parents do not have to attend the program jointly. The attendance of a proper educational program for divorcing parents in South Africa can make a positive contribution towards the communication between family members. It will also prepare parents on the changes to follow divorce, more effective conflict management among parents to minimize the negative impact of continued conflict between them, and enable parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to follow.

Considering the abovementioned information, the researcher developed an educational program for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed educational program for divorcing parents through qualitative studies.

Research Methodology

For this research, the Delphi technique was utilized to find consensus among a panel of experts in the field of divorce-related matters. This comprised of two steps. Step 1 was the evaluation of the proposed program by means of the Delphi technique with experts in the field of divorce-related cases, utilizing self-constructed questionnaires to validate or reject items until consensus was reached. Step 2 of the study entailed the evaluation of the content by means of a self-constructed questionnaire after presenting the program to divorcing parents.

Step 1: The evaluation of the proposed program by means of the Delphi technique

Step 1 was primarily a qualitative approach as the goal was to evaluate the content and validity of the proposed divorce educational program with a panel of experts in the field of divorce-related cases by means of the Delphi technique. According to Keeney et al. (2001), the Delphi technique is a structured process that utilizes a series of questionnaires or rounds to gather and to provide information. The process continues until group consensus is reached. Doing this, according to Botma et al. (2010, p. 254), assisted the researcher in getting opinions from experts in the field of divorce despite the fact that they were geographically far apart from each other and agreed and shared the same sentiments on the content of a divorce education program.

Population The population in Step 1 consisted of social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys specializing in the field of divorce. The population was from North-West, Gauteng, and Western Cape Provinces.

Sampling method The sample from Step 1 was purposively selected experts in the field of divorce-related cases. Participants were identified from electronic databases with contact details. They were committed to their field of expertise and willing to contribute towards to the study.

Proposed sample, sample size and motivation According to Keeney et al. (2001), the Delphi technique does not use a random sample to represent the target population, but rather employs “experts” in the area in which the researcher is working. Therefore, the researcher had to define an expert in the field of divorce and related matters. As mentioned earlier, the population was five experts working in the field of divorce-related cases.

Sample inclusion criteria Participants had to be able to communicate fluently in English, as the communication was in English. They had to have internet access to participate in the study, because that was the only way to give their input in the different phases of the Delphi

technique. The registered social workers had to be in private practice and must have had experience with divorce cases involving children. Divorce attorneys had to be experienced in divorce cases and must have dealt with cases involving children.

Sample exclusion criteria Participants who indicated from the first invitation that they did not have the time to take part in the Delphi were excluded.

Process of sample recruitment and informed consent The researcher designed an information leaflet that briefly explained the aim and objectives of the study and invited the proposed participants to partake in the study via e-mail. Participants interested in partaking in the study contacted the mediators, Ms. Elza Duvenage and Ms. Anet Hoof, both social workers, within ten days to confirm their interest. The mediators explained the study and supplied them with the informed consent form, which had to be completed, signed, and returned via e-mail before commencement of the Delphi technique. No legal authorization or goodwill permission was needed. According to Keeney et al. (2001), anonymity of participants will provide an equal chance for each panel member to present and react to ideas unbiased to the identities of other participants. Their reactions will be given independently to ensure that opinions carry the same weight and have equal importance in the analysis. According to Botma et al. (2010), the Delphi technique is a method to establish consensus among experts on a topic of interest and provides participants with an opportunity to express an opinion without feeling pressured by more influential panel members. Complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed when using the Delphi technique. The content of discussions was work-related and no personal information was discussed. Therefore, the ethical risk level of participation was low.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods The Delphi technique was conducted in five phases (Van Teijlingen et al., 2006). During the preparation phase, the researcher chose the participants according to their expertise in divorce-related cases where children were involved. Phase 1 (Botma, 2010, p. 253) consisted of a questionnaire (Addendum 9) with open-ended questions to be completed after the proposed program manuals (Addendum 13 and 14) were

studied. The questionnaires were returned via email. After each round the feedback were analyzed and a summary was re-circulated for evaluation by the panel members (Keeney et al., 2001). This enabled the participants to give their opinions independently without being influenced by any of the other participants.

Ethical Aspects Research involving a human participant results in diverse ethical issues. According to Strydom (2011:113) research should be based on mutual trust and data should never be obtained at the expense of human beings. To ensure the best interests of the participants the ethical issues of violation of privacy, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality (Strydom, 2011: 113-130) were addressed. An independent person explained that participation was voluntary and that data will be dealt with confidentially and anonymously (Strydom, 2011:119). The participants signed a written informed consent form after an independent person explained the aim of the study and they were assured that no identifying particulars would be published. Data in paper-based format were stored in a locked cabinet in the office of COMPRES at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be stored for five years, and then be destroyed.

Trustworthiness According to Botma *et al.* (2010:232) trustworthiness answers four epistemological standards, namely truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. Truth value refers to the monitoring of data, expanded involvement with participants and triangulation of data. Participants received comprehensive information with regard to the aim of the study (Addendum 7 and 8) to clarify any uncertainty with regard to the research study. Participants will also receive feedback after finalization of the study. Consistency reflects whether the findings will be consistent if the study is repeated with the same participants under the same circumstances while applicability refers to which degree research findings can be applied to different groups and contexts. Neutrality ensures freedom from bias and ensures that results are solely the information as received from the participants. The coding and

interpretation of the data were done under the supervision of the promotor and was combined with the data received from the integrated literature review and quantitative survey. The feedback from the participants were coded and co-coded by the promotor to ensure neutrality, consistency, truth value and applicability. The researcher supplied participants with a copy of the draft program as well as a structured questionnaire with open-ended questions in the first phase.

Data analysis methods According to Schrunink et al. (2011, p. 397) data analysis is the process to give structure and meaning to a collection of data. The collected data from this study were analyzed manually and coded by incorporating the eight steps of the coding process of Tesch (cited by Botma et al., 2010, p. 224) as set out in Table 1.

Table 1

Eight steps of the coding process of Tesch

Step	Process
1	The feedback was read and the researcher made notes with regard to possible themes in the feedback from the experts.
2	One questionnaire was read and the researcher checked for underlying meaning and made notes.
3	The researcher then read the rest of the responses and made a list of the same themes of suggestions/commentary coming to attention, separating it into columns, grouping the same suggestions together.
4	The researcher made a list of the suggestions and returned to the data. Each theme or topic had a code. The codes were written next to appropriate segments to see if new categories and codes emerge.
5	The researcher found the most descriptive answers and turned them into categories, reducing categories by grouping related categories together.
6	The researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetized the codes.
7	The researcher assembled the data material belonging to each category in one place and performed a preliminary analysis.
8	Data that was not sorted during the above-mentioned process was recoded.

(The coding was done using color-code schemes.)

The data was saved on a memory stick and stored in a locked cabinet in the office of COMPRES at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be stored for five years and then be destroyed by erasing it.

Ethics The participants were purposively selected voluntary experts in the field of divorce. The participants received an information leaflet specifying the aim of the study as well as possible consequences beforehand. They signed an informed consent form before commencement of the Delphi technique.

Discussion of Data Gathered from Qualitative Approach by means of the Delphi technique

During the qualitative analysis, the researcher utilized the Delphi technique to acquire the necessary data from experts in the field of divorce-related matters.

Round 1

The researcher required feedback on the newly designed and developed divorce educational program to prevent adjustment problems in children. Table 2 gives a summary of the feedback from the expert participants as well as the proposed changes to the newly designed divorce educational program.

Table 2

Summarized Feedback and Proposed Changes to the Newly Designed Divorce Educational Program

Question	Summary of feedback	Changes to program
What is your opinion on the relevancy on the themes that the program proposes to address?	The themes are relevant and the most important themes were covered.	No changes were made to the themes.
Are there other themes that you would want to address in such a program?	No other themes were suggested, except adding a list of contact details of professionals for further reference, assistance, and support with regard to divorce-related issues.	A list of experts in the field of divorce, e.g. therapists, social workers in private practice, non-governmental welfare organizations, Law Clinic and Child Justice Centre, psychologists and play therapists were added.
Do you think the information in the program is sufficient? Please give your input.	The majority of participants agreed that the information is relevant and sufficient.	No changes were made with regard to the amount of information in the program.
Do you think adequate sessions were suggested?	40 % of participants agreed that two sessions are	No extra sessions were added to the program, as the participants

Please motivate your answer.	<p>sufficient, as participants do not have ample time available, especially during the process of divorce and because they need to find alternative care for their children while attending the program.</p> <p>60 % of the participants were of the opinion that there might be a need for more sessions due to the emotional impact, complex information, and possible lengthy discussions.</p>	<p>who argued for more than two sessions primarily based their requests on emotional discussions/impact.</p> <p>The program, however, was designed as an educational program and not a therapeutic program. Parents will not attend a session simultaneously and personal information will not be discussed.</p>
How long do you think a session should be and why?	<p>The majority of the participants recommended a two to three hour presentation of the program per session.</p> <p>One participant suggested that the program be presented over three five-hour sessions and another suggested four sessions of 90 minutes each.</p>	<p>Participants who were also concerned about the emotional impact and possible complex personal discussions during sessions suggested the longer sessions. The presentation time of each session was extended with half an hour with an extra 15-minute tea break (to prevent participants from losing focus and/or interest) because the program is of an informative and not a therapeutic nature and parents do not have a lot of spare time.</p>
Would you suggest any changes to the proposed program?	<p>The majority of participants had no other suggestions for change to the program except the earlier suggestions of number and length of the sessions, which were addressed. Another suggestion for change was the possibility of adding more information regarding the legal process of divorce.</p>	<p>The legal process of divorce contains many technicalities and differs from case to case. It is also a considerable specialized field and can be presented as a program on its own. It was not included in the divorce educational program, as the aim of the program is to educate the parents on the negative impact of their behavior on their children, and not about legal processes and technicalities.</p>
Do you want to make any recommendations about themes that are not included	<p>The majority of the participants replied with no suggestions.</p>	<p>Because this is only an educational program, no extra detail on communication was</p>

in the proposed program? If so, please do so and motivate why you think it is necessary.

There was, however, a suggestion for more focus on communication, as well as the possibility of involving the children with the parents or in a separate program. The suggestion of a contact list for continued professional services were also mentioned again.

included. The main objective of the program is to make parents aware of their negative behavior, but the necessary referrals will be done via the included contact list, should parents feel the need for intensive professional help to address their possible shortcomings.

A few programs are available globally for children caught in the middle of a divorce. However, this is a separate study and design, and therefore cannot be included in this divorce educational program for parents.

Feedback from experts during round 1 Some participants submitted their answers as bullet points whereas others wrote longer narratives. The researcher grouped all responses by main ideas and then rephrased main ideas to capture the essence of each unique idea.

The participants were of the opinion that the themes of the proposed program are relevant, that the most important themes were covered and that the amount of information is relevant and sufficient. The only suggestion was that a contact list of professionals rendering divorce support services should be added to the program manual. Forty percent (40%) of participants agreed that those two sessions will be sufficient, as parents do **not** have a lot of time at their disposal, especially during the process of divorce and the fact that they need to find alternative care for their children while attending the program. Sixty percent (60%) of participants were of the opinion that there might be a need for more sessions due to the emotional impact, complex information, and possible of lengthy discussions. The majority of the expert participants recommended a two to three-hour presentation of the program per session. One participant suggested that the program be presented over three five-hour sessions and another suggested four sessions of 90 minutes each. The majority of participants had no other

suggestions for change to the program, except earlier suggestions of number and length of the sessions, which were addressed. Another suggestion for change was the possibility to add more information regarding the legal processes of divorce. The majority of the participants replied with no suggestions for change to the program.

There was however, a suggestion for more focus on communication as well as the possibility of involving the children with the parents or in a separate program. The same participant also mentioned a contact list for continued professional services again.

Changes made to the program after round 1 No changes were made to the themes of the program as there were no suggestions to alter the current content. A list with contact details of supporting experts in the field of divorce were added to the program manual. No changes were made with regard to the amount of information in the program. No extra sessions were added to the program as the requests of the participants who argued for more than two sessions were primarily based on emotional discussions/impact.

The program, however, was designed as an educational program and not a therapeutic program. Parents will not attend the session simultaneously and no personal information will be discussed. The longer sessions were suggested by participants who were concerned about the emotional impact and complex personal discussions the group might have. The presentation time of each session was extended with half an hour with an extra 15-minute tea break (to prevent participants from losing focus and/or interest), because the program is of an informative and not a therapeutic nature and parents do not have a lot of spare time. The legal process of divorce contains many technicalities and differs from case to case. It is also a considerable specialized field and can be presented as a program on its own. It was not included in the divorce education program, as the aim of the program is to educate the parents on the negative impact of their behavior on their children, and not about the legal processes and technicalities. Because this is an educational program only, no extra detail on communication

was included. The aim of the program is to make parents aware of their negative behavior, but the necessary referrals will be done via the included contact list, should parents need intensive professional help to address their possible shortcomings.

Globally there are a number of programs for children caught in the middle of a divorce. This however, is a separate study and design and cannot be included in this divorce educational program for parents.

Round 2

After the suggested changes were made to the program, the adjusted Program Manual together with a self-constructed questionnaire were sent to the participants of Round 1 for a second round on the changes to the program (Addendum 9). No further feedback was received from any of the expert participants.

Round 3

After a period of 10 days, the researcher sent another questionnaire to request feedback and/or any other suggestions regarding the amendment of the program. The researcher received only one response stating, “the program is perfect”.

Step 2: The Evaluation of the Content of the Newly Designed Divorce Education Program by means of Qualitative Research Approach

The aim of the Educational Program for Divorcing Parents was for parents to understand and obtain knowledge on the process of divorce and prevent adjustment problems in children.

Approach and Design

This phase utilized a qualitative research approach. According to Fouchè and Schrunink (2011, p. 327), the qualitative design is a flexible design and does not provide the researcher with a systematic plan or fixed recipe to follow. The aim of this phase was to evaluate the content of the newly designed educational program for divorcing parents.

Population The population for this phase consisted of seven parents, in the process of divorce at the time of the study, who could benefit from a parenting type intervention at the

time of study. In order to render the study feasible, the researcher chose the population to be limited to Potchefstroom in North-West and Krugersdorp in Gauteng, as this was convenient and practical. The divorcing parents/couples were supposed to attend two separate program presentations individually to prevent further trauma or conflict.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on social gatherings, the program was adapted to enable voluntary divorcing parents/participants to study the information in the comfort and safety of their own homes.

Sampling method Voluntary sampling was utilized. The participants were invited to partake in the study by distributing information leaflets and pamphlets at the offices of professionals who deliver divorce-related services, such as social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys. Participants in the process of divorce came forward voluntarily.

Proposed sample, sample size, and motivation The researcher aimed to recruit between seven and nine couples in the process of divorce. Two program presentations were scheduled to accommodate the parents/couples separately. Recruited voluntary participants contacted an independent person to confirm their participation. Participants received the dates of scheduled program presentations and could decide according to their schedules which spouse would attend which presentation. Unfortunately, because participation was voluntary, only six female and one male parent participated in the study. Participants who, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, were not able or willing to attend the program in person completed the program by means of self-study. They completed a self-constructed questionnaire afterwards to evaluate the content of the program.

Sample inclusion criteria The participants must have been in the process of divorce and both parents were supposed to complete the program separately. Participants must have been parents of at least one child who is between the age of 6 years and 12 years, as they, according to Ericson's stages of development, face the task of *industry vs. inferiority* during elementary

school. Children then begin to compare themselves with their peers to see how they measure up. Either they develop a sense of pride and accomplishment in their schoolwork, sports, social activities, and family life, or they feel inferior and inadequate because they feel that they do not measure up. If children do not learn to get along with others or have negative experiences at home or with peers, an inferiority complex might develop into adolescence and adulthood (McLeod, 2017).

Participants had to be able to communicate in English, as the program was available in English only. Participants had to live in North-West or Gauteng Provinces. Both legal and traditional or culturally specific processes of divorce were accommodated.

Sample exclusion criteria Participants who indicated during sampling that they were engaged in high-court procedures were excluded as this alternative intervention introduces rival, confounding variables. Under normal circumstances, both partners would not have been able to attend the same program simultaneously, as this would have threatened the internal validity of the program due to potential conflict. Due to special circumstances with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, partners were able to complete the program in the comfort and safety of their own homes. Participants involved in counselling or ongoing mediation interventions at the stage of the training program were excluded. Counselling/mediation are seen as a confounding variable. Parents with school levels lower than Grade 10 could not be accommodated in the program. Participants were not excluded due to race, age or gender.

Process of sample recruitment and informed consent Participants were recruited via pamphlets and information leaflets at the offices of social work organizations, private social work practitioners, and divorce attorneys in North-West and Gauteng Provinces, working with divorce-related cases. Prospective voluntary participants who responded by contacting the independent person who informed them of the aim and objectives of the study, received an informed consent form via email and could direct any questions they might have had to the

independent person or researcher. Prospective participants were invited to attend the program that was presented at a comfortable group-oriented venue in Potchefstroom. The program was presented at the conference center at the office of the NG Welfare, 104 Peter Mokaba Street, Potchefstroom. The time and date for attending the sessions were communicated in advance. During the first session, an overview of the program was presented to the participants, and expectations, as well as practical arrangements, were dealt with. The participants were required to complete the self-constructed questionnaire to evaluate the content of the program after the second session.

Risks and benefits analysis The researcher, who is a qualified social worker, monitored participants throughout the intervention and referred any cases, suspected of clinical distress, to a qualified therapist at the NG Welfare, who were on standby for the duration of the intervention. All participants who completed the program were debriefed at the end of the intervention. The researcher was responsible for this activity.

Participants received refreshments during the intervention sessions as well as a token of appreciation to the value of R50.00. Participants not residing in Potchefstroom or Krugersdorp were remunerated for their transportation costs.

Direct benefits Although the program/intervention was presented experimentally, great care was taken to ensure its design and content development were consistent with theoretical guidelines and were checked by empirical procedures. Therefore, the risk of failing was considered low. Participants benefited directly from the program in that their functioning problem-solving capacity and communication were enhanced by their participation in the program.

Indirect benefits The indirect benefits for the participants consisted of post program gains such as future problem solving that were not measurable in this study, but assumed to be in place.

Description of procedures/techniques/methods The new program/intervention developed in this study was characterized by the following:

- The program has a strong educational orientation.
- A program logic model that outlines how the different activities contribute to the outcome drives the program.
- The presentation techniques are based on adult learning principles, participatory, and group work-oriented.
- Participants received a training manual with all content and activities included.

The program was presented by the researcher, who is not associated with participants, and under the supervision of the promotor, Prof Cornelia Wessels. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the program manual was adapted and participants, who were not able or willing to attend in person, were able to study the information in the comfort and safety of their own homes.

Primary measures A questionnaire was constructed by the researcher in collaboration with the supervisor and was based on the contents and objectives of the intervention program. The researcher used a small cognitive testing panel composed of colleagues in the subject group social work to assess the level and validity of the self-constructed questionnaire. The self-constructed questionnaire reflected the contents of the new intervention program. It was designed to establish the extent to which participants found the content of the program suitable.

Data analysis methods The data from this study were analyzed manually and interpreted by the researcher under the supervision of the promoter. It was coded according to Creswell's (2009, p. 186) six steps in the method of data analysis by incorporating the eight steps of the coding process of Tesch (cited by Botma et al., 2010, p. 224). All data on paper-based format was stored in a locked cabinet in the office of the researcher while analyzing the data and is currently at COMPRES at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data will be

stored for five years, and then be destroyed. Electronic data is stored on a password-protected computer in the office of the promotor where only the researchers can access it.

Discussion of Data Gathered from Divorcing Spouses by means of a Qualitative Research Approach

The participating divorcing parents evaluated the program content by means of a self-constructed questionnaire (Addendum 15a or 15b) by the researcher after they completed the newly designed divorce educational program. Table 3 summarizes the feedback from the divorcing parents after they evaluated the content of the new proposed divorce educational program.

Table 3

Summarized Feedback from Divorcing Parents after Content Evaluation of the Divorce Educational Program

Questions	Summary of feedback
Do you think South African children will benefit from a divorce education program for parents?	All participants (100%) responded that children will benefit from the new proposed developed educational program. They summarized that the program gives parents a better perspective on the impact of their divorce on their children’s lives. After attending the program parents were able to make more informed decisions to support their children. They also realized that parents should not send emotional messages via their children.
Are you of the opinion that the attendance of a divorce educational program	All participants (100%) were of the opinion that the attendance of the newly developed educational program for divorcing parents should be made compulsory. This will ensure the involvement of all parties in the program, as parents tend to forget their own role and responsibility in the divorce and they

should be made compulsory?

often blame the other party for all the problems in their failed marriage. According to the participants, informed parents will be able to make better decisions and ensure that their children feel loved and supported by both parents, and be able to adapt better to their new circumstances. The program should be made compulsory to ensure that both parents complete the program.

Are you of the opinion that you benefitted from the information?

All participants (100%) agreed that they benefitted from attending the program. They viewed knowledge as power. They were made aware of their own, as well as the physical and emotional needs of their children. By formulating their feelings, they could make better sense of the situation and could explore possible alternative solutions. They also suggested that the extended families of both parents should be made aware of the information conveyed by means of the divorce educational program.

In your opinion, what is the most important thing for you to remember during the process of divorce?

After completion of the program participants realized that divorce is an ongoing process and that their actions will have an everlasting effect on their children. They understood that their own emotions and feelings will diminish over time, but their behavior will have a permanent effect on their children.

In your opinion, what has the worst and most direct negative impact

All participants agreed that the loss of a parent or separation from a parent has the worst negative impact on their children. They agreed that children long for the other parent and feel guilty when they spend more time with one parent than the other. They

on a child during a divorce?

feel that they have to choose between parents. The parents also realized that the conflict between them causes their children to lose quality of life.

In your opinion, what are the most important needs of your child during the process of divorce?

Participants agreed that children need reassurance of the love and support of both parents. They viewed communication as very important and stressed the importance of stability and consistency in routine, rules and discipline at the different homes to ensure security.

Please rank the order of importance of the topics addressed during the divorce education program.

The participants ranked the importance of the topics or themes that should be addressed during the presentation of the divorce educational program as follows:

One (1) being the most important and ten (9) being the least important.

1. Parent-child relationship
2. Emotions
3. Parental involvement
4. Communication
5. Problem solving
6. Conflict/anger management
7. Discipline
8. Financial matters
9. Starting a new life

It is clear that the parents value their relationship with their children as the most important aspect during the process of divorce. Finances and the start of a new life were ranked the

lowest on their list of priorities to be addressed during a program for divorcing parents.

If it is possible to attend the program in person, in your opinion, how many sessions will be appropriate and practically possible for divorcing parents to attend, over what period, and how long should a session last?

The majority of the participants agreed that the program should consist of two sessions with duration of one to two hours each, and the second session should be presented within two weeks of the first one.

In your opinion, what else should be part of a divorce education program for parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce?

Participants suggested that the program should have more statistical data on divorce and the negative impact on children as well as a possible program for extended family members to ensure that children stay connected to the extended families of both parents.

They further suggested that the parent-child-interaction should be addressed in a separate program.

The feedback from the content evaluation of the participating parents in the process of divorce confirmed the importance of the compulsory attendance of a divorce educational program for divorcing parents in South Africa. They further suggested that the program should consist of two sessions with duration of one to two hours each, and the second session should

be presented within two weeks of the first one. The participants confirmed that the divorce educational program made them aware of the possible long-term impact of their negative behavior on the adjustment of their children during the process of divorce.

Conclusion

Divorce is a serious and ongoing problem all over the world, South Africa included. Over the past twenty years, many divorce educational programs were developed globally to minimize the impact of divorce, but no such programs are available in South Africa. When one look at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and it is important to look at their best interests. The aim of this article was to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed educational program for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. From both the Delphi technique and the qualitative research design the following conclusions were drawn:

- The researcher found that the experts who evaluated the program viewed the program as highly relevant, covering a sufficient amount of information.
- The expert reviewers as well as the parents were of the opinion that the proposed number of sessions should not be more than two sessions.
- They also suggested that the sessions should be two to three hours long when the program is presented in person.
- The experts further suggested that a contact list of professionals to assist divorcing parents with difficult matters should be added as an addendum to the program manual.
- They further suggested that more attention should be given to the legal implications, but due to the technicalities and specialty with regard to legal matters, it could not be included in this program.
- The researcher found that the adjustment of the proposed divorce education program, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, also provided the opportunity for parents to participate in the

program by means of self-study. This enabled parents to complete the program in the comfort and safety of their own home and at their own convenience.

- Parents who completed the program and participated in the content evaluation confirmed that the information conveyed were relevant and will have a positive effect on the adjustment of their children, as understanding their own behavior, emotions and feelings in the process of divorce will enable them to prevent adjustment problems in their children.
- They are of the opinion that the program should be made compulsory for all parents in the process of divorce, as the fact that the program was attended voluntary resulted in only one of the divorcing spouses/parents completing the program. The fact that only one of the parents attended the program limited the impact of the program, as only one of the parents received the information on how their behavior will lead to adjustment problems in their children.

Recommendations

The relevant entities such as the Law Reform Commission and the Office of the Family Advocate must review the newly developed program and acknowledge the lack of support programs for divorcing parents as well as the importance of an educational program for divorcing parents.

The content of the proposed program should be evaluated and the attendance of the divorce educational program must be made compulsory. Divorce orders must not be granted unless the court receives proof of divorcing parents' attendance of the program.

Employees of local Designated Non-Governmental Child and Family Care Organizations should be trained to present the Educational Program for Divorcing parents in order to prevent adjustment problems in children, ensuring that their best interests are served in terms of the Children's Act, 35 of 2005.

Summary

The main aim of this article was to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed divorce educational program for parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The aim was successfully met as the educational program was viewed as relevant, well-researched, and covering sufficient information. The program will provide divorcing parents with the necessary information to realize the negative impact of divorce on their children and what they, as parents, can do to prevent adjustment problems in their children.

REFERENCE LIST

- Amato, P.R. (2012). *The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children: An Update*. University Park; Pennsylvania State University.
- Anthony, C.J., Diperna, J.C., & Amato, P.R. (2014). Divorce, Approaches to Learning, and Children's Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mediated and Moderated Effects. *Journal Of School Psychology, 52*(3):249-261. <https://www.Elsevier.Com/Locate/Jschpsy>. Date of access: 28 Mar. 2017.
- Botma, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F.M., & Wright, S.C.D. (2010). *Research in Health Sciences*. Cape Town: Pearson Education South Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Brandon, D.J. (2006). Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 45*(1/2). <http://www.Haworthpress.Com/Web/JDR>. Date of access: 24 Jan. 2017.
- Cresswell, J.W. (2009). *Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research* (3rd ed). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Fackrell, A. Hawkins, A.J., & Kay, N.M. (2011). How Effective are Court-Affiliated Divorcing Parents Education Programs? A Meta-Analytic Study. *Family Court Review, 49*(1):107-119.
- Fagan, P., & Churchill, A. (2012). The Effects of Divorce on Children. *Marriage & Religion Research Institute, 56*(5):347-368.
- Fouché, C.B. & Schurink, W. (2011). Qualitative research designs. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L., eds. 2011. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 307-327).

- Giles, C. "The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children." (2017). *Healthfully*
<https://www.livestrong.com/article/152395-divorces-long-term-effects-on-children/>
Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.
- Gilman, J., Schneider, D., & Shulak, R. (2005). Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids' Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4):109-126.
- Keeney, S., Hasson, F., & McKenna, H.P. (2001). *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 38:195-200.
- Kelly, J.B. (2006). Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights from Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1):35-52.
<https://www.Familyprocess.Org>. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- McLeod, S. (2017). *Developmental Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/developmental-psychology.html> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.
- Owen, J., & Rhoades, G.K. "Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes." (2012) *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38(3):542-555.
- Pollet, S.L., & Lombreglia, M. (2008). A Nationwide Survey of Mandatory Parent Education. *Family Court Review*, 46(2):375-408.
- Schurink, W., Fouché, C.B. & De Vos, A.S. (2011). Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. *Research at Grass Roots: for the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers).
- Singer, J.B. (2009). Dispute Resolution and the Post-Divorce Family: Implications of a Paradigm Shift. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):363-370.

- Smit, M. (2010). Skei is vir 'n kind soos amputasie. *Kerkbode*, 3 Sept. 2010. <https://www.mathildasmit.co.za> Date of access: 28 Feb. 2017.
- South Africa. (2005). Children's Act 38 of 2005. Government Gazette, 492(28944). 19 June. Pretoria: Government Printers. <https://www.gov.za/documents/childrens-act> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.
- South Africa. (2015). The South African Law Reform Commission. Family Dispute Resolution: Care and Contact with Children. *Project 100D*, Issue Paper 31. (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).
- South Africa. (2018). Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018. http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.
- Stadelmann, S., Perren, S., Groeben, M., & Von Klitzing, K. (2010). "Parental Separation and Children's Behavioural/Emotional Problems: The Impact of Parental Representations and Family Conflict". *Family Process* 49(1):92-108.
- Strydom, H. (2011). Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human science professions" (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B., Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 223-235).
- United States Census Bureau. (2007). Households and families. <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2006/compendia/statab/126ed/population.html> Date of access: 18 Feb. 2017.
- United States Census Bureau. (2020). Marriage and Divorce Rates by State. <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2020.

Van Teijlingen, E., Pitchforth, E., Bishop, C., & Russel, E. (2006). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

SECTION C: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

When divorce is mentioned, it brings to mind a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economic classes of life. Divorce has been described as the illness of the times with detrimental effects on every child. In the greater part of the United States of America, Europe, and Australia divorce educational programmes are presented with a very good success rate. Many children are being affected by divorce annually in South Africa as well. The research was conducted due to the lack of a suitable educational programme for divorcing South African parents. The research entailed the design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The research was conducted according to the steps in an intervention research model. Step 1 was the development of problem and programme theories and was done in two phases. Phase 1 was an integrated literature review, a study of international and national literature to be familiarised with knowledge and to determine what the content of programmes for divorcing parents should entail. Step 2 was a quantitative survey utilising a self-constructed questionnaire and google forms to identify possible content by practitioners involved in divorce-related cases. Step 2 also specified programme structures and processes and utilised Phase 3 to design and develop the programme. During Step 3 (Phase 4) the programme was refined and the content was evaluated, which entailed feedback from experts involved with divorce-related cases as well as parents in the process of divorce. Step 4 (Phase 5: Evaluation of effectiveness) was not utilised for this research study. During Step 5 (Phase 6) the research results were disseminated and the content of the programme were evaluated to make the necessary recommendations.

The programme will enable divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in their children during the process of divorce. Despite the high divorce rate in South Africa, there is currently not an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in their children. Similar programmes are mandated in most of the states in the United States of America.

Divorces cannot be finalised unless both parents attended a divorce educational programme. This programme will equip parents with the knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in their children. The programme consists of a Programme Manual for presenters as well as a Programme Manual for parents. The manual consists of the objectives, aims, contents, and references and a list of contact details of professionals to support parents in case of any further divorce-related queries.

This research report includes the following:

Section A: General Introduction

Section B: Articles

Article 1: Educational programme for parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the divorce process

Article 2: Educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa

Article 3: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

Section C: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The researcher will summarise the findings of the study, draw conclusions, and make recommendations. The findings and conclusions will also be tested against the aims and objectives of the study.

Section D: An Integrated List of References

Section E: Consists of Various Addenda

2. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The research findings and conclusions are summarised in the concluding section of this research and each article will be discussed separately. The following research questions are answered:

- What aspects should a divorce educational programme address according to a literature study and professionals involved in service delivery in the process of divorce?
- What would the content of an educational programme for divorcing parents entail to prevent adjustment problems in children in a divorce?
- Does the content of the new educational programme enable parents to prevent adjustment problems experienced by their children during the process of divorce?

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aim

This study aimed to design, develop and evaluate the content of a divorce educational programme to be followed by divorcing parents in South Africa during divorce proceedings to equip parents with the necessary knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

The following objectives can be stated:

3.2 Objective 1:

To do an integrated literature review and a quantitative analysis of the specific themes that should be addressed in an educational programme for divorcing parents (Article 1)

3.3 Objective 2:

To design and develop a divorce educational programme for divorcing parents to equip parents to prevent the negative impact of divorce on children and adjustment problems in children (Article 2)

3.4 Objective 3:

To evaluate the content of the new educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children.

SECTION A: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Due to a high incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced by the researcher in practice, and an investigation into existing literature (Amato, 2012:12-19; Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:251-262;), it was pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only in the rest of the world, but in South Africa as well. In countries, such as the United States, around 39% of marriages end in divorce (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). In 2006 more than 1,1 million children (13,75%) lived with a parent who was divorced or separated (Owen & Rhoades, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). According to the South African Statistics release (SA Stats, 2018), 25 282 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018, which resulted in 14 302 (56,6%) children younger than 18 years being affected.

When one looks at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and their best interests as well as the trauma that they might experience must be looked at.. In South Africa, the overall well-being of at least 22 000 children is being affected by divorce every year and these children are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with parents who are still married (Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249). These children may experience difficulties like emotional problems, acting-out behaviour, and poor school achievement during parental separation or divorce (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111). Being aware of these may help to reduce the negative impact of divorce on children and prevent adjustment problems, and children may be more likely to have a happy, healthy relationship with both parents if they see their parents without the pressure and stress of an unhappy relationship (Giles, 2017)..

Variables that appear to lower children's well-being following the marital disruption include declines in household income, poor psychological functioning among resident parents, ineffective parenting from resident parents, loss of contact with non-resident parents, continuing conflict between parents, and the absence of co-operative co-parenting behaviour (Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-11).

It is evident from the researcher's practical experience and literature (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512; Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-13) that children of divorce become the victims of their parent's inability to deal with their differences, their

lack of logical reasoning, and poor conflict management. While a divorce can be hard on children, it is often the parents' fighting that affects the children most directly, and the impact depends on how well the parents can isolate the children from these disruptions.

Smit (2010:1) states that divorce is an ongoing process and not just an incident and that the lack of proper management of the process often results in confusion and unnecessary conflict between concerning parties. It is therefore very important for parents and children to be prepared properly and guided through the ongoing process to prevent a lifelong negative impact on children that may result in high numbers of early school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, and criminal transgressions (Smit, 2010:2).

According to Goldschlog (2009:1) and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2017), children do better when divorcing families learn to communicate their feelings without increasing conflict, listen to each other's views and stay involved as parents despite separation. According to the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244), the lack of parents' insights is often the result of a lack of the correct information. According to Singer (2009:363-369), one of the primary methods of family courts to intervene with divorcing parents is divorce educational programmes to promote positive long-term post-divorce outcomes for children and families.

It is evident from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018) that divorce proceedings in South Africa are increasing with detrimental effects on the children involved. It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244) that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and that a coherent procedural family law system is not in place. They further identified the need to assist families with procedural issues arising from separation, divorce, and child welfare. It is also the practical experience of the researcher that although mediation seems to have become a better means of communication and tool to resolve issues arising from separation/divorce rather than litigation, the practical implications, and implementation of parenting plans after mediation still seem to be problematic after the divorce.

The researcher believes that the high divorce rate in South Africa (SA Stats, 2018), as well as previously discussed psychosocial problems (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111;

Brandon, 2006:172) resulting from divorce are disturbing and evident of the need for intervention. The researcher concluded from the literature (Anderson, 2014:378-387; Becher, 2020; Brandon, 2006:172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111-172; Kelly, 2006:40; American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2017; Trillo-Padilla *et al.*, 2019:2-10) that a divorce educational programme for parents could promote their communication and parenting skills, in the process, prevent the negative impact and adjustment problems in the children (Brandon, 2006:172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111-172; Kelly, 2006:40). Research (Brandon, 2006:172-183; Kelly, 2006:40) indicates that divorce educational programmes have reported increased parental awareness of their children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours, that place children in the middle of disputes, better communication, and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their former partner (Kelly, 2006:40). According to Becher *et al.* (2015:261-264) and Fackrell *et al.* (2011:107-119), divorce education is a challenge, but Grych (2005:99) stresses that teaching skills to help contain and resolve conflict, manage anger, adopt a business attitude and prevent conflictive interaction may reduce the negative impact of stress factors affecting children's mental health and promote better adaptation following divorce.

The fact that South Africa has a high divorce rate (SA Stats, 2018) impacting negatively on the development and emotional well-being of the involved children (Smit, 2010:2), is a clear indication that a proper and relevant programme for divorcing parents in South Africa is a researchable problem. The high incidence of divorce and its effects on multiple problem outcomes means that reducing the risk associated with divorce can have a substantial effect on the improvement of the well-being of the community (Salem *et al.*, 2013:231-238). Over the past twenty years, many educational programmes have been developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce. The most common denominator of all these programmes is focussed on parents (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111). According to Brandon (2006:172), it appears that such programmes can be beneficial to divorcing parents and their children if the parents are educated about the impact of divorce, separation, and conflict on their children. Brandon (2006:173) found that divorcing parents, who completed an educational programme, were more co-operative with their ex-spouses on difficult child-related issues, were more willing to allow children to spend time with the other parent, and had lower re-litigation rates.

The Office of the Family Advocate concluded during a National Focus Group Forum that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a parent information/educational programme before any divorce order is granted (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) as parents' lack of insight is often a result of a lack of correct information. The content should educate parents about the advantages and availability of mediation; information about parental alienation and the best interests of the child principle. This information or educational programmes should, according to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244), be uniformly implemented across the country, to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service. The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will make a positive contribution towards the communication between family members and prepare parents for the change that follows divorce. It will also contribute towards more effective conflict management among parents to minimise the negative impact of continuing conflict between them and enable parents to educate and prepare their children for the changes to follow.

Contribution of the study

Various calls from the Office of the Family Advocate (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) was made that it should be compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a programme to educate them about various topics before their divorce. This will empower parents to act in such a way that their children's best interests will be promoted. According to Becher (2020) and Singer (2009:363-369), divorce cases can be managed more effectively when family courts intervene by parents attending divorce educational programmes.

The contribution of this study is that, for the first time in South Africa, a proposed newly designed educational programme is available to assist parents during and after a divorce to be better prepared for what is to come and to handle the changes in their lives after a divorce. The parents will therefore be empowered to reduce the negative impact that the divorce might have on the children. The divorce educational programme will suit the diverse circumstances in South Africa. It will be presented to the SA Law Reform Commission with a recommendation for mandatory participation. It will equip parents with knowledge and skills to reduce the negative impact on

children indirectly and promote their best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005) and Section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa (SA, 1996).

SECTION B: ARTICLES

Article 1

Educational programme for parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the divorce process

Research methodology

The researcher utilised an integrated literature review as well as a quantitative survey to determine what the content of a divorce educational programme should entail.

Integrated Literature Review

The researcher only made use of computer-accessible databases, the Internet, peer-reviewed scholarly books, and articles published in accredited professional journals, not older than 2005, to ensure validity and reliability. Both descriptive and experimental research reports used as diverse types of literature, gave different types of information (Botma *et al.*, 2010:66).

The integrated literature review enabled the researcher to identify focus areas and possible content for the proposed programme and enabled the researcher to construct questions for the survey in Phase 2 of Step 1 of the study.

Quantitative Survey

Phase 2, used a quantitative approach to identify common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents. An electronic questionnaire was used as this enabled the researcher to reach a range of different respondents effectively. These respondents had to choose options or ascribe priorities amongst a range of items reflecting different themes for a potential intervention programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

From the integrated literature review and the quantitative survey, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

- The gathered information conveyed that many divorce educational programmes have been developed globally over the past twenty years.
- Many of these global divorce educational programmes are mandatory when parents file for divorce and are used with a very good success rate worldwide.
- South Africa has a very high divorce rate affecting thousands of children, but still has no formal divorce educational programme to prevent the negative effect of divorce on children and the adjustment problems of divorce for children.
- Although South Africa has a very diverse population who is widely accommodated by legislation, the best interest of the child remains paramount and the basic requirements for a divorce educational programme will remain very much the same despite different cultural and belief systems.
- South Africa needs a divorce educational programme to educate parents about the transition during divorce, talking to their children about divorce, identifying the emotions they experience, and coping with those emotions.
- From the integrated literature review as well as the survey, the following themes should be addressed in a divorce educational programme:
 - The impact of divorce on the socio-emotional adjustment of children during the process of divorce
 - How parents should deal with their children's reactions to divorce
 - The emotional turmoil of parents during the process of divorce
 - Conflict management, especially between parents
 - Communication skills between divorcees, as well as between parents and their children, to ensure clear supportive communication

- Problem-solving skills, especially children dealing with change
- The quality of the parent-child relationship
- The importance of continued parental involvement
- Parent-child bonding
- Discipline of children
- Parent-teacher involvement with homework, activities, and academic progress
- The balance between work, family, and play
- Legal processes and procedures
- Financial matters
- Starting a new life by developing a new family identity, a social support system, and new romantic relations
- According to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015: 244), divorce educational programmes should be uniformly implemented across the country to ensure that all persons receive equal service and quality of service.
- Parents should both be encouraged to attend the programme, even if they do not attend the same programme together.
- The programme should be attended before the parents start the mediation process.
- Parents in the process of divorce should complete the programme before the divorce is granted.
- The ideal should be that the programme is made compulsory to ensure that both parties attend.
- The best interests of the children are paramount during the process of divorce.

The development of an educational programme for divorcing parents necessitated the identification of common themes through the Integrated Literature Study. A quantitative analysis was done by the author, L Roodt, to prioritise the identified common themes and possible content by practitioners involved in service delivery to divorcing parents.

This study provided new insight into what the content a divorce educational programme should entail for parents to be better prepared for what is to come and to handle the changes in their lives during the process of divorce. It is therefore anticipated that the efficacy of the newly developed divorce educational programme should be tested. The implementation of a divorce educational programme will equip parents to reduce the negative effect of divorce on their children and promote their children's best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005) and Section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996).

Article 2

Educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa

Research methodology

The researcher utilised information gathered during an integrated literature review and a quantitative empirical study to develop an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent the adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. The problem and common content themes, as identified during the integrated literature review and empirical study, primarily formed the basis for the design and development of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents in the South African context.

The design and development of the programme were primarily qualitative, as it sought enrichment of programme design context. Developing written material for a programme, including treatment manuals, is a defining feature of intervention research and concerns the creation and revision of programme materials (Fraser *et al*, 2009:64). The researcher aimed to develop a programme manual to educate divorcing parents on potential problems during the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in their children. This educational programme aims to educate parents about

their children's needs during the process of divorce, as well as the effect of their behaviour on their children. After the parents completed the programme, it was expected that they will (Massachusetts, 2010:3-9) understand their own emotions in the process of divorce and be more aware of the effect their divorce has on their children. They also realised the importance of emotional availability, effective communication, and consistency.

Parents also understood the serious harm to children from witnessing parental confrontation and conflict, bad-mouthing each other and introducing new dating partners to children.

Parents were able to demonstrate knowledge of reflective listening, dispute resolution techniques, and the need for productive, positive communication skills. Parents also understood their responsibility to provide financially, the importance of their involvement in their children's lives, and that children have a right to and a need for both parents.

Conclusions

Divorce is a serious and ongoing problem in the rest of the world, as well as in South Africa. Children become the victims of their parent's inability to solve their marriage or relationship problems and become part of an ongoing process of traumatic events. Circumstances surrounding divorce or separation have a negative impact on children's development and ability to adapt to their relationships later on in their own lives. The main reasons for the adjustment problems are unresolved conflict, poor communication, a lack of problem-solving skills, a lack of parental involvement, and irresponsible parenting. The literature study confirmed that divorce educational programmes globally had a very positive impact on the emotional well-being of children of divorce. The literature study further confirmed that South Africa is in desperate need of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during later stages of their lives. After employing an empirical study under social workers in private practice and attorneys with divorce-related experience, it was confirmed that South Africa could benefit from a divorce educational programme and the information gathered supported the global themes to be addressed during such programme. The educational programme will empower

parents with knowledge about their own emotions during a divorce, teach them the necessary skills to deal with their divorce, and in the process prevent adjustment problems in their children due to the divorce process.

The programme was developed using an integrated literature review, as well as the results of a quantitative survey completed by social workers in private practice and divorce attorneys. The divorce educational programme includes the presentation of the programme as discussed, as well as an information manual for participating parents to use as a reference guide during and after the process of divorce. The researcher concluded that a divorce educational programme for South Africa would empower parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent adjustment problems in their children.

Recommendations

The newly developed divorce educational programme should be implemented in South Africa, after the efficacy was tested, and parents' attendance thereof should be made mandatory. Divorce orders should not be granted unless the court receives proof of divorcing parents' attendance of the programme. The proposed programme should become part of the services provided by the Office of the Family Advocate and mandated non-governmental organisations delivering family care and child protection services.

Article 3

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

Research methodology

The objective of this article was to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents through qualitative studies. For this research, the Delphi technique was utilised to find consensus among a panel of experts in the field of divorce-related matters. This comprised of two steps. Step 1 was the evaluation of the proposed programme through the Delphi technique with experts in the field of divorce-related cases utilising self-constructed questionnaires to

validate or reject items until consensus was reached. Step 2 of the study, entailed the evaluation of the content by presenting the programme to parents and the completion of a self-constructed questionnaire after completion of the programme.

Conclusions

Divorce is a serious and ongoing problem all over the world, South Africa included. Over the past twenty years, many divorce educational programmes were developed globally to minimise the impact of divorce, but no such programme is available in South Africa. When one looks at the numbers it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and it is important to look at their best interests. This article aimed to evaluate the content of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. From both the Delphi technique and the qualitative research design the following conclusions were drawn:

- The researcher found that the experts who evaluated the programme viewed the programme as highly relevant covering a sufficient amount of information.
- The expert reviewers as well as the parents were of the opinion that the proposed number of sessions should not be more than two sessions.
- They also suggested that the sessions should be two to three hours long when the programme is presented in person.
- The experts further suggested that a contact list of professionals to assist divorcing parents with difficult matters should be added as an addendum to the programme manual and it was added to the programme (Addendum 14).
- They further suggested that more attention should be given to the legal implications, but due to the technicalities and specialty with regards to legal matters, it could not be included in this programme.
- The researcher found that the adjustment of the proposed divorce educational programme, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, also provided the opportunity for parents to participate in the programme through self-study. This enabled parents

to complete the programme in the comfort and safety of their own home and at their convenience.

- Parents who completed the programme and participated in the content evaluation confirmed that the information conveyed was relevant and will indirectly have a positive effect on the adjustment of their children, as understanding their behaviour, emotions, and feelings in the process of divorce will enable them to prevent adjustment problems in their children.
- They believe that the programme should be made compulsory for all parents in the process of divorce as the fact that the programme was attended voluntarily resulted in only one of the divorcing spouses completing the programme.

Recommendations

The relevant entities such as the SA Law Reform Commission and the Office of the Family Advocate must review the newly developed programme and acknowledge the lack of support programmes for divorcing parents as well as the importance of an educational programme for divorcing parents.

The proposed programme should be evaluated and the efficacy tested before the attendance of the divorce educational programme must be made compulsory. Divorce orders must not be granted unless the court receives proof of divorcing parents' attendance of the program.

Employees of local Designated Non-Governmental Child and Family Care Organizations should be trained to present the Educational Programme for Divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children, ensuring that their best interests are served in terms of the Children's Act (35 of 2005).

4. TESTING THE CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

This research study was based on the following theoretical argument:

The attendance of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will make a positive contribution towards the communication between family members and prepare parents for the changes to follow divorce, ensuring more

effective conflict management and enabling parents to educate and prepare their children on changes to come.

The researcher developed the programme by taking the needs, as expressed by the family advocate during the National Focus Group Forum and the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244) into account. The programme will equip parents with knowledge and skills to indirectly reduce the negative impact on children and promote their best interests in terms of the Children's Act (38 of 2005), and Section 28(2) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996).

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following general recommendations are made:

- Due to conflict and differences during the process of divorce, both spouses of participating parents were not able or willing to participate in the research study. It is unlikely that both parents will attend an educational programme if it is not mandated by the court. For the programme to effectively prevent the long-term adjustment problems of children (Amato *et al*, 2011:512; Anthony, *et al.*, 2014:249 and Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1-13) during the process of divorce the attendance of the programme should be made compulsory to finalise a divorce.
- That the findings of this research study as well as the newly developed divorce educational programme be presented to the Office of the Family Advocate as well as the SA Law Reform Commission for evaluation, with specific reference to their expressed need during 2015 (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) to assist families with issues arising from divorce and child welfare. The objectives of the South African Law Reform Commission (SA Law Reform Comm., 2020) are to:

“do research with reference to all branches of the law in order to make recommendations to Government for the development, improvement, modernisation or reform of the law. The Commission investigates matters appearing on a programme approved by the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development. Reports and other documents published by the Commission are made available on the Commission's website for general information”.

- The Commission should publish the research findings on their website for general information to parties concerned with divorce-related cases.
- It should also be presented to the presiding officers and judges of divorce courts in the areas where the programme was presented to divorcing parents, namely Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, for referral of divorcing parents to attend the programme.
- The findings should be presented to the attorneys and social workers in private practice who participated in the research. They should be able to refer divorcing parents to attend the programme as soon as they file for divorce. The attendance of the programme will educate parents on the negative influence their behaviour has on their children before they start mediation or litigation.
- The researcher should train social workers at designated Non-Governmental Child and Family Care Organisations in the mentioned areas to present the programme to divorcing parents to ensure that attorneys, social workers, and the courts have a point of reference to refer parents to attend the Divorce Educational Programme as soon as they file for divorce.
- According to the findings of the study, it is recommended that the programme be mandated for all divorcing parents in South Africa to ensure the best interests of all children in the process of divorce.
- The courts in the above-mentioned areas should be used as a “pilot project”.
- To measure the effect or impact of the content of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents, an independent research study, as suggested by Step 4 in the intervention research model (Fraser & Galinsky, 2010:463) should be conducted.
- During the research study, it became evident that parents in the process of divorce also have to deal with time constraints and difficulty to arrange alternative childcare for the duration of the programme. To ensure that parents complete the divorce educational programme the possibility of an on-line version of the divorce educational programme for South Africa should also be investigated.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

At the National Focus Group Forum, the Office of the Family Advocate (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) debated the following:

“whether all parties seeking a divorce order, or an order determining care and contact arrangements, should be compelled to attend a parent information programme. After deliberations, the Office of the Family Advocate concluded that when a party serves summons for an order of divorce, or a notice of motion applying for care and contact arrangements to be determined, prior to any order being granted, irrespective of whether parties have concluded a parenting plan or not, it should be compulsory for parties to attend a parent information/education programme. The service should be developed, coordinated, and managed by the Office of the Family Advocate. Because the programme is mandatory and given the capacity constraints of the Office of the Family Advocate, the presentation of the programme should be outsourced to NGOs and other community organisations or offices. Only once parents have attended the programme should they be allowed to proceed with the next step, and this will depend on whether or not they have reached agreement on a parenting plan...The mandatory information or education programme for parents should be funded by the State. No provisions regarding funding need to be provided in the new legislation, as funding for early intervention and development is discussed in chapter 8 (sections 143 and 144) of the Children’s Act (38 of 2005). The provisions and programmes that the State has to fund are very broad in this chapter, and information or education programmes would, to all intents and purposes, fall into this category...All parents should attend this session and there should be no “escape” clause for parents to rely on.”

The contribution of this study is that an educational programme for divorcing parents was designed and developed to educate parents during the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in children. The parents will therefore be empowered to reduce the negative impact that a divorce might have on the adjustment of their children during the process of divorce.

The study also addressed the expressed need from the Office of the Family Advocate as well as the Law Reform Commission (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244) for a Divorce Educational Programme.

Article 1 will be submitted for publication to Child Abuse Research in South Africa (CARSA), Article 2 for publication at OBITER, and Article 3 for publication to The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (JMFT).

LIST OF REFERENCES

Amato, P.R. 2012. The consequences of divorce for adults and children: an update. University Park: Pennsylvania State University.

Anthony, C.J., DiPerna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. Divorce, approaches to learning, and children's academic achievement: a longitudinal analysis of mediated and moderated effects. *Journal of School Psychology*, 52:249–261.

<https://www.elsevier.com/locate/jeschpsyc> Date of access: 28 Mrt. 2017.

Becher, E. 2020. What is Divorce Education and does it work? University of Minnesota: Extension. <https://www.Extension.Umn.Edu/About-Program/What-Divorce-Education-And-Does-It-Work> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Botma, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F.M. & Wright, S.C.D. 2010. Research in Health Sciences. Cape town: Pearson Education South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Brandon, D.J. 2006. Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 45(1/2) <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR> Date of access: 24 Jan. 2017.

Fackrell, A., Hawkins, A.J. & Kay, N.M. 2011. How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programs? A meta-analytic study. *Family Court Review*, 49(1):107–119.

Fagan, P.F. & Churchill, A. 2012. The effects of divorce on children. *Marriage & religion research institute. (MARRI)* 12, 56(5): 347-368. <https://marri.us/effects-divorce-children> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Fraser, F. & Galinsky, M.G. 2010. Steps in Intervention Research: Designing and Developing Social Programs. *Research on social work Practice*, 20(5):459-466 <http://rswp.sagepub.com> Date of access: 10 Nov. 2016.

Giles, C. 2017. The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children. <https://www.livestrong.com/article/152395-divorces-long-term-effects-on-children/> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

- Gilman, J., Schneider, D. & Shulak, R. 2005. Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids' Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4) <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR> Date of access: 25 Jan 2017.
- Goldschlog, A. 2009. Children in the middle. Protecting your children during and after divorce. St Barnabas Health Care System. <https://www.instituteforprevention.com> Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Grych, J.H. 2005a. Programs for promoting parenting of residential parents: Moving from efficacy to effectiveness. *Family Court Review*, 43(1):65–80.
- Kelly, J.B. 2006. Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights From Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1). <https://www.FamilyProcess.org> Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Massachusetts. 2010. "The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Department Office of the Chief Justice: Guidelines and procedures for the approval of parent education programmes." <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/09/01/parent-education-approval-guidelines.pdf> Date of access: 22 Sept. 2019.
- Owen, J. & Rhoades, G.K. 2012. Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes: an initial investigation of the working together program. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38(3):542–555.
- Philyaw, D. & Thomas, M.D. 2013. Co-parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households after Divorce. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.
- Pollet, S.L. 2009. A nationwide survey of programs for children of divorcing and separating parents. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):523–543.
- Pollet, S.L. & Lombreglia, M. 2008. A nationwide survey of mandatory parent education. *Family Court Review*, 46(2):375–408.
- Salem, P., Sandler, I. & Wolchik, S. 2013. Taking stock of parent education in the family courts: envisioning a public health model. *Family Court Review*, 1(51):1. doi:131-148.

Singer, J.B. 2009. Dispute resolution and the post-divorce family: Implications of a paradigm shift. *Family Court Review*, 47:363–370. doi:10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01261.x.

Smit, M. 2010. Skei is vir 'n kind soos amputasie. *Kerkbode*. 3 Sept. 2010. www.mathildasmit.co.za Date of access: 28 Feb. 2017.

South Africa. 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act no. 108 of 1996). *Government Gazette*, 18 Dec. <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

South Africa. 2005. Children's Act, 2005 (Act no. 38 of 2005). *Government Gazette*, 28944, 492 19 June. Pretoria: Government Printers <https://www.gov.za/documents/childrens-act> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

South Africa. 2018. *Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018*. http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

South Africa. 2020. *The South African Law Reform Commission*. <https://www.justice.gov.za/salrc/index.htm> Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

South Africa. 2015. The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children. Project 100D, Issue Paper 31. (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).

Stadelmann, S., Perren, S., Groeben, M. & Von Klitzing, K. 2010. Parental separation and children's behavioural/emotional problems: the impact of parental representations and family conflict. *Family Process*, 49(1):92-108.

United States Census Bureau. 2020. *Marriage and Divorce Rates by State*. <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2020.

SECTION D: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amato, P.R. 2012. The consequences of divorce for adults and children: an update. University Park: Pennsylvania State University.

Amato, P.R., Kane, J.B. & James, S. 2011. Reconsidering the 'Good Divorce'. *Family Relations*, 60(5):511-524.

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 2017. Children and Divorce no. 1; Updated January. https://www.Aacap.Org/AACAP/Families-And_Youth/Facts_For_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Divorce-001.aspx Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Anderson, J. 2014. The Impact of Family Structure on the Health of Children: Effects of Divorce. *The Linacre Quarterly*, 81(4):378–387. <https://Www.Ncbi.Nlm.Nih.Gov/Pmc/Articles/PMC4240051> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Anthony, C.J., DiPerna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. Divorce, approaches to learning, and children's academic achievement: a longitudinal analysis of mediated and moderated effects. *Journal of School Psychology*, 52:249–261. <https://www.elsevier.com/locate/jschpsyc> Date of access: 28 Mrt. 2017.

Aracena, M., Gómez, E., Undurraga, C., Leiva, L., Marinkovic, K. & Molina, Y. 2016. Validity and Reliability of the Parenting Index Short Form (PSI-SF) applied to a Chilean Sample. *J Child Fam Stud*, 25:3554-3654

Becher, E. 2020. What is Divorce Education and does it work? University of Minnesota: Extension. <https://www.Extension.Umn.Edu/About-Program/What-Divorce-Education-And-Does-It-Work> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Becher, E., Cronin, S., McCann, E., Olson, K., Powell, S., Marczak, M & Becher, E.H. 2015. Parents Forever: Evaluation of an Online Divorce Education Program. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 56(4):261-276.

Botma, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F.M. & Wright, S.C.D. 2010. Research in Health Sciences. Cape town: Pearson Education South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Brandon, D.J. 2006. Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 45(1/2) <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR> Date of access: 24 Jan. 2017.

Centre for Divorce Education. 2020. Children in Between Parenting Classes. <https://www.Divorce-Education.com> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. 2016. Determining the best interests of the child. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.

Children's Act 38 of 2005. South Africa. 2005. Government Gazette, 492(28944). 19 June. Pretoria: Government Printers. <https://www.gov.za/documents/childrens-act> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Collins, C.L. & Fetsch, R. 2012. A Review and Critique of 16 Major Parent Education Programs. *Journal of Extension*, 50(4):1-4. <https://www.joe.org/joe/2012august/a8.php> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Connell, E.D.D. 2008. Changes in the wind: Parenting assessment in family dissolution matters. *The Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, 36(1)9-40.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, South Africa. 1996. Government Gazette, 18 December. <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Cooper, H. 1998. Synthesizing research: A guide for literature reviews. 3rd ed. Applied social research methods Vol. 2, Sage Publications Inc. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-07460-000> Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Cresswell, J.W. 2009. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Delpont, C.S.L. & Fouché, C.B. 2011. Mixed method research. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the

social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 433-448).

Delport, C.S.L. & Roestenburg, W.J.H. 2011. Quantitative data-collection methods: questionnaires, checlists, structured observation and structured interview schedules. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 171-205).

DeLusé, S.R. & Braver, S.L. 2015. A rigorous quasi-experimental design to evaluate the causal effect of a mandatory divorce education program. *Family Court Review*, 53(1):66-78.

Dennill, I. 2013. The evaluation of a Psycho-education and Skills building program at the time of divorce/separation.

https://ujcontent.uj.ac.za/vital/access/manager/Repository/uj:7587?site_name=GlobalView Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Denscombe, M. 2010. Ground rules for social research: guidelines for good practice. 2nd ed. London: Open University Press.

Denscombe, M. 2010. The good research guide: for small scale social research projects. 4th ed. London: Open University Press.

Dictionary.com (In Dictionary.com Unabridged. Source location: Random House, Inc.) <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/evaluate>. Date of access: 15 Feb. 2017.

Divorce Act, 70 of 1979. South Africa. 1979. Government Gazette, 168(6506). 15 June. Pretoria: Government Printers.

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201503/act-70-1979.pdf Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

Du Plooy, K. & Van Rensburg, E. 2016. What do the true experts say? Young adults' recommendations for coping with parental divorce. *The Social Work Practitioner Researcher*, 28(2):138-156.

- Dudovskiy, J. 2011. Business Research Methodology. <https://research-methodology.net/> Date of Access:17 Sept. 2020.
- Eaton, M. 2018. Negative effects of divorce and possible intervention program development and improvement. *Intuition: The BYU Undergraduate Journal in Psychology* 4 13(1) <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/intuition/vol13/iss1/4> Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.
- Ellis, D. & Anderson, D. 2003. The impact of participation in a parent education program for divorcing parents on the use of court resources: an evaluation study. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 21:169-187.
- Fackrell, A., Hawkins, A.J. & Kay, N.M. 2011. How effective are court-affiliated divorcing parents education programs? A meta-analytic study. *Family Court Review*, 49(1):107–119.
- Fagan, P.F. & Churchill, A. 2012. The effects of divorce on children. *Marriage & religion research institute. (MARRI)* 12, 56(5): 347-368. <https://marri.us/effects-divorce-children> Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.
- Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. Steps common to both quantitative and the qualitative process. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. 2011. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 101-112).
- Fouché, C.B. & Schurink, W. 2011. Qualitative research designs. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. 2011. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 307-327).
- Fouché, C.B., Delpont, C.S.L. & De Vos, A.S. 2011. Quantitative research designs. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. 2011. Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 142-158).

Fraser, F. & Galinsky, M.G. 2010. Steps in intervention research: designing and developing social programs. *Research on social work practice*, 20(5):459-466
<http://rswp.sagepub.com> Date of access:10 Nov. 2016.

Fraser, M.W., Richman, J.M., Galinsky, M.J. & Day S.H. 2009. *Intervention Research: Developing Social Programs*. Oxford University Press: USA.

Gadaua, S.P. 2012. Where are you on the divorce stress scale? Understanding stress can help you prevent illness. *Psychology Today*,
<https://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/contemplating-divorce/2012> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Giles, C. 2017. The Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children.
<https://www.livestrong.com/article/152395-divorces-long-term-effects-on-children/>
Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Gilman, J., Schneider, D. & Shulak, R. 2005. Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kids' Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4) <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JDR> Date of access: 25 Jan 2017.

Goldschlog, A. 2009. Children in the middle. Protecting your children during and after divorce. St Barnabas Health Care System.
<https://www.instituteforprevention.com> Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.

Gómez, O., Martín, L. & Ortega, R. 2017. Conflictividad Parental, Divorcio Yansiedadinfantil. *Pensamiento Psicológico*, 15(2):67-78.
<https://Doi.Org/10.11144/Javerianacali.PPSI15-2.Cpda> Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

Greeff, M. 2011. Information collection: Interviewing. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 341-375).

Grinnell, R.M. & Williams, M. 1990. *Research in social Work: a primer*. Itasca, IL: Peacock.

Grinnell, R.M. Jr. & Unrau, Y.A. 2011. *Social work research and evaluation*. 9th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Grych, J.H. 2005a. Programs for promoting parenting of residential parents: Moving from efficacy to effectiveness. *Family Court Review*, 43(1):65–80.

Jacobs, N. & Jatte, R. 2010. Investigating the efficiency of CoMeT, a new mediation model for high-conflict separating parents. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 38:16-31.

Jacobs, N. & Jatte, R. 2010. Investigating the efficiency of CoMeT, a new mediation model for high-conflict separating parents. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 38:16-31.

Kahrizeh, M., Saberi, M. & Bashirgonbadi, S. 2020. Effect of Spiritual-Religious Interventions on Anxiety, Depression, and Adjustment to Parental Divorce in Female High School Students. *Health Spiritual Med Ethics*; 7(2):2-8.

Kahrizeh, M., Saberi, M. & Bashirgonbadi, S. 2020. Effect of Spiritual-Religious Interventions on Anxiety, Depression, and Adjustment to Parental Divorce in Female High School Students. *Health Spiritual Med Ethics*; 7(2):2-8.

Keeney, S., Hasson, F. & McKenna, H.P. 2001. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 38:195-200.

Keeney, S., Hasson, F. & McKenna, H.P. 2001. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 38:195-200.

Kelly, J.B. 2006. Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights From Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1).
<https://www.FamilyProcess.org> Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.

Massachusetts. 2010. "The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Department Office of the Chief Justice: Guidelines and procedures for the approval of parent education programmes." <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/09/01/parent-education-approval-guidelines.pdf> Date of access: 22 Sept. 2019.

McCubbin, L.D., McCuban, H.I. & Sievers, J.A., eds. 2012. Family Well-being: Stress, coping resilience - Assessment measurements for research and practice. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press.

McLeod, S. 2017. Developmental Psychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/developmental-psychology.html> Date of access: 24 Mar. 2018.

Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary. 2016. Protocol. <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/protocol> Date of access: 18 Jan. 2017.

Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary. 2016. Trauma. <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/protocol> Date of access: 18 Jan. 2017.

Morse, J.M. 2003. Principles of mixed methods and multimethod research design. (In Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C., eds. Handbook of mixed methods in social and behaviour research. Thousand oaks, CA: SAGE).

Morse, J.M. 2003. Principles of mixed methods and multimethod research design. Handbook of mixed methods in social and behaviour research. <https://www.researchgate.net/224927643-Principles-of-Mixed-Methods-and-Mul> Date of access: 23 Jan. 2017.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network. 2010. Early childhood trauma. <http://nctsn.org/trauma-types/early-childhood-trauma> Date of access: 18 Jan. 2017.

New Children's Act 38 of 2005

New English Usage Dictionary. 2001. Revised 6th ed. Northlands: Nolwazi Educational Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Owen, J. & Rhoades, G.K. 2012. Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes: an initial investigation of the working together program. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38(3):542–555.

Patton, M.Q. 2002. Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods. 3rd ed. Sage Publications, Inc.

- Philyaw, D. & Thomas, M.D. 2013. Co-parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households after Divorce. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.
- Pollet, S.L. 2009. A nationwide survey of programs for children of divorcing and separating parents. *Family Court Review*, 47(3):523–543.
- Pollet, S.L. & Lombreglia, M. 2008. A nationwide survey of mandatory parent education. *Family Court Review*, 46(2):375–408.
- Ramokgopa, I.M. 2001. Developmental Stages of an African Child and Their Psychological Implications: A Comparative Study. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University.
- Rapp, C.A., & Goscha, R.J. 2004. The Principles of Effective Case Management of Mental Health Services. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 27(4):319-333.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2975/27.2004.319.333>
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. 2005. Research methods for social work. 5th ed. Australia: Thompson Brookes/Cole.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. 2005. Research methods for social work. 6th ed. California: Thompson Brookes/Cole.
- Salem, P., Sandler, I. & Wolchik, S. 2013. Taking stock of parent education in the family courts: envisioning a public health model. *Family Court Review*, 1(51):1. doi:131-148.
- Samir, H., Patel, K. & Dayle, J. 2008. Assessment of family custody issues using mental health evaluations: implications for mental health counsellors. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, 30(3):189-199.
- Schramm, D.G. & Calix, S. 2011. Focus on Kids: evaluation of a research-based divorce education program. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 52:529–549.
- Schurink, W., Fouché, C.B. & De Vos, A.S. 2011. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. Research at Grass Roots: for the social sciences and human service professions. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers).

Shenton, A.K. 2004. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2004):63–75.

Sigal, A., Sandler, I., Wolchik, S. & Braver, S. 2012. Do parent education programs promote healthy post-divorce parenting? Critical distinctions and a review of the evidence. *Family Court Review*, 49(1):120-139 doi: 10.1111/j.1744-1617.2010.01357.x.

Singer, J.B. 2009. Dispute resolution and the post-divorce family: Implications of a paradigm shift. *Family Court Review*, 47:363–370. doi:10.1111/j.1744-1617.2009.01261.x.

Smit, M. 2010. Skei is vir 'n kind soos amputasie. *Kerkbode*, <https://www.mathildasmit.co.za> Date of access: 28 Feb. 2017.

South Africa. 1979. Divorce Act, 1979 (Act no. 70 of 1979). *Government Gazette*, 6506, 168. 15 June. Pretoria: Government Printers https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201503/act-70-1979.pdf. Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

South Africa. 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act no. 108 of 1996). *Government Gazette*, 18 Dec. <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/a108-96.pdf> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

South Africa. 2005. Children's Act, 2005 (Act no. 38 of 2005). *Government Gazette*, 28944, 492 19 June. Pretoria: Government Printers <https://www.gov.za/documents/childrens-act> Date of access: 25 Oct. 2020.

South Africa. 2015. The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children. *Project 100D*, 31. (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).

South Africa. 2018. *Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018*. http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

South Africa. 2020. *The South African Law Reform Commission*.
<https://www.justice.gov.za/salrc/index.htm>_ Date of access: 15 Nov. 2020.

South African History Online. 2012. Customary Marriages in South Africa: Understanding the recognition of customary marriages Act of 1998.
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/customary-marriages-south-africa-understanding-recognition-customary-marriages-act-1998> Date of access: 6 Sept. 2020.

Stadelmann, S., Perren, S., Groeben, M. & Von Klitzing, K. 2010. Parental separation and children's behavioural/emotional problems: the impact of parental representations and family conflict. *Family Process*, 49(1):92-108.

Stallman, H.M. & Matthew, R.S. 2014. A randomized controlled trial of family transitions triple p: a group-administered parenting program to minimize the adverse effects of parental divorce on children. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 55(1):33-48.

Statistics South Africa: Marriages and divorces 2016 <https://www.statssa.gov.za>
Date of access: 18 Feb. 2017.

Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018
http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=11856&PPN=P0307&sch=7912 Date of access: 15 Sept. 2020.

Strydom, H. 2011. Sampling in the quantitative paradigm. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 223-235).

Strydom, H. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. Writing the research report. (In De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. p. 277-294).

Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L., eds. *Research at Grassroots Level*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento. 2016.

<https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/family/divorce.aspx> Date of access: 2 Nov 2016.

Taylor, D., Purswell, K., Lindo, N., Jayne, K. & Fernando, D. 2011. The impact of child parent relationship therapy on child behaviour and parent-child relationships: An examination of parental divorce. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 20(3):124–137.

The Children's institute. 2016. Children of Divorce Intervention Program (CODIP) file:///E:/PHD/egskedingsprogramme/Children%20of%20Divorce%20Intervention%20Program%20%28CODIP%29%20_%20Children's%20Institute.htm Date of access: 2 Nov. 2016.

The South African Law Reform Commission **see** South Africa. The South African Law Reform Commission.

The South African Law Reform Commission **see** South Africa. The South African Law Reform Commission

Thyer, B.A. 2001. The handbook of social research methods. London: SAGE.

Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. & Smart, P. 2003. Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14(3):207-222.

Tribal Law and Policy Institute **see** United States.

Trillo-Padilla, F.J., Zaldívar-Basurto, F., & García-García, J. 2019. Familiar Adjustment of The Minors who are Victims of Gender-Based Violence and Minors Immersed in a Divorce Process: An Exploratory Study. *Universitas Psychologica*, 18(2):1-10. <https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy18-2.famw> Date of access: 27 Feb. 2017.

United States Census Bureau. 2020. *Marriage and Divorce Rates by State*. <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2020.

United States. Tribal Law and Policy Institute. 2003. Child Abuse Protocol Development Guide.

Van Teijlingen, E., Pitchforth, E., Bishop, C. & Russel, E. 2006. Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Whittemore, R. & Knafl, K. 2005. The integrative review: updated methodology. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 52:546-553. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x
Date of access: 8 Nov. 2020.

Wilkinson, P.K. & Finkbeiner, S.H. 2020. Divorce Statistics: Over 115 Studies, Facts and Rates for 2020. <https://www.wf-lawyers.com/divorce-statistics-and-facts/>
Date of access:15 Sept. 2020.

SECTION E: CONSISTS OF ADDENDA

ADDENDUM 1: CARSA GUIDELINES TO AUTHORS

1 EDITORIAL POLICY

Child Abuse Research a South African Journal (CARSA) has been published biannually since 2000. *CARSA* is an accredited journal approved by the South African Department of Education and Higher Training and it was SAPSE accredited in 2003 for articles published in the journal from 2004 onwards. This means that CARSA is a peer reviewed, fully accredited, professional journal and academics at higher education institutions receive credits if their articles are published in CARSA.

An article contribution to the editor(s) will only be considered provided it has been edited and is **ready for processing**, namely: language edited, stylistically polished and carefully proofread and to follow the technical format and referencing guidelines as provided below. Manuscripts not following the journal style, referencing technique, technical format and language edited will be returned to author(s) for correction and re-submission before being sent out for refereeing. In submitting an article author(s) acknowledge that it is their own original work and that all content sourced from other authors and/or publications have been fully recognised and referenced according to the guidelines for authors.

Review and refereeing of submitted articles

According to the Policy and Procedures for Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions, research output is defined as *“textual output where research is understood as original, systematic investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and understanding”* (Ministry of Education, 2003: 3). Therefore, an uncritical synthesis of literature without contributing any new insight to existing knowledge falls outside the scope of this definition. Furthermore, *“peer evaluation of the research is considered a fundamental prerequisite of all recognised output and is the mechanism of ensuring and thus enhancing quality”* (Ministry of Education, 2003: 3-4).

The Journal also subscribes to and follows the peer review principles and guidelines as outlined in the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAF) document: *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review for South African Scholarly Journals* (Assaf, 2008).

Accordingly the Editorial Team will carefully examine submitted article manuscripts with a view to the selection of appropriate peer reviewers (who should be scholars who have not previously co-published extensively with the author(s), who are for this and other reasons free of known bias in relation to the subject matter, the author(s) and/or their institutions, and who can cover, from a position of authority and peer expertise, the topic(s) dealt with in the article concerned, i.e. are recognised experts in a specific specialist field in the disciplines served by this journal.

The Editor(s) will submit article contributions to referees (in a double blind review process) for evaluation and may alter or amend the manuscript in the interests of stylistic consistency, grammatical correctness or coherence. The refereeing process is always anonymous and the identity of referees will remain confidential. It remains the prerogative of the editors to accept or reject for publication any submission and their decisions are final. They will not enter into any debate or correspondence regarding any decision made. Evaluators agreeing to referee articles are requested to provide, where possible, critical and constructive feedback on the work of their peers. They are requested to make a recommendation based on the following:

- i Accept for publication in its present form;
- ii Accept with minor revisions as indicated; or
- iii Resubmit with major revisions in accordance with critical and constructive feedback provided;
- iv Reject (unlikely to be accepted even after revision). In this instance it would be senseless to provide feedback and the decision of the editors would be final.

Apart from scientific shortcomings or inconsistencies, the following evaluative criteria are considered:

- The theme is academically significant (timely, important, in need of addressing);
- The theme contributes to an existing (professional) body of knowledge (knowledge useful);
- Author(s)’ goals and objectives are clearly stated;
- The article addresses (unpacks) themes logically, consistently and convincingly;
- The article demonstrates an adequate understanding of the literature in the field;
- The research design is built on adequate understanding, evidence, informational input;
- The interpretative potential of the data has been realised;
- The article demonstrates a critical self-awareness of the author’s own perspectives and interests;

- Holistically, the article is properly integrated and clearly expresses its case measured against the technical language of the field (theory, data and critical perspectives are well structured and the presentation is clear);
- Conclusions are clearly stated and adequately tie together the elements of the article
- The standard of writing (including spelling and grammar) is satisfactory;
- The **APA CARSA** adapted reference technique is consistently applied throughout the article ;
- Sources consulted are sufficiently acknowledged (included in a list of references) and consistently cited to:
 - supply academically sound **evidence** on which the author’s observations, statements, and/or conclusions are based;
 - enable readers to **consult** original sources themselves (precisely stating where and/or under which circumstances); and
 - **acknowledge** the authors (source) from whom information was taken.

Effective and detailed source referencing is of paramount importance. Articles will be scrutinised and checked for bibliographic references and any proven evidence of plagiarism (including self-plagiarism where more than one-third of previously published work by the author(s) is being used in the author(s)’ submitted article) will result in non-publication.

The authors bear full responsibility for the accuracy of the factual content of their contributions and indemnify SAPSAC or its agent against any loss, damage, cost, liability or expense, including legal and professional fees arising out of legal action against SAPSAC or its agent with reference to actual or alleged infringement of copyright or the intellectual property rights of any natural or legal person. Copyright of all published material is vested in SAPSAC. Please note that the views and opinions expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the editor or SAPSAC and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of SAPSAC. Authors are solely responsible for the content of their articles.

Manuscripts for publication or enquiries pertaining to CARSA should be directed to: The Editor-in-Chief: Prof M Ovens ovensm@unisa.ac.za

2 GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Referencing guidelines

Notes: References and citations should be prepared in accordance with the *CARSA* adapted APA format (see below examples of various reference listing types). The **‘in-text’ referencing format is followed by the Journal** with full source referencing information listed under the heading: **LIST OF REFERENCES** (uppercase), which list to be placed **at the end of your article**. All sources in the List of References must be listed alphabetically by author(s)’ surname(s), according to the following examples. Please note the **indenting of the second and additional lines of a reference listing when longer than one line**. Use of full stops in listing: Generally each separate piece of information is **standardly followed by a full stop**. A comma only used if part of that one piece of information. Exception being the use of the colon [:] – and not a dash [-] or semi-colon [;] – in a split article or book title and after the place of publication before the name of the publisher.

List of references [examples]

African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Organisation of African Unity (OAU). 1999. *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*. Available at: http://www.childinfo.org/files/fmc_African_Charterontherightsandwelfareofthechild.pdf (accessed on: 14 January 2005). [alternately the term: retrieved from: ... can be used in place of the term: accessed].

Alberts, C. & Meyer, J.C. 1998. The relationship between Marcia’s ego identity status and selected variables in an African context. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 20(4): 277-288.

Ammaniti, M., Van Ijzendoorn, M.H., Speranza, A.M. & Tambelli, R. 2000. Internal working models of attachment during late childhood: An exploration of stability and change. *Attachment and Human Development*, 2(3): 328-346.

Anon. 2005. Worry over training of police units. *Eastern Province Herald*, 26 August: 3.

- Arndt, H. 1989. *Children and juveniles in prisons of South Africa*. Heidelberg: Sached/Ravan.
- Babbie, E. 1990. *Survey research methods*. (2nd edn.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Dos Reis, K.M. 2007. *The influence of gangsterism on the morale of educators on the Cape Flats, Western Cape*. Unpublished MEd dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town.
- Gallinetti, J. Muntingh, L. & Skelton, A. 2004. Child justice concepts. (Pp. 24-38). In J. Sloth-Nielsen. (Ed.). *Child justice in Africa: A guide to good practice*. Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.
- Leedy, P.D. & Omrod, J.E. 2005. *Practical research: Planning and design*. (8th edn.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Mashaba, S. 2008. State intensifies war against drug abuse. *Sowetan*, 23 June: 5. Available at: <http://www.sowetan.co.za/PrintArticle.aspx?ID=1147429> (accessed on: 25 June 2008).
- Moffett, H. 2006. 'These women, they force us to rape them': Rape as narrative of social control in post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(1): 129-135.
- South African Police Service (SAPS). 2004. *Annual Report 2002/3*. Available at: <http://www.saps.gov.za/areport03/part6.htm> (accessed on: 19 November 2004).
- Strydom, H. & Venter, L. 2002. Sampling and sampling methods. (Pp. 56-67). In A.S. de Vos, H. Strydom, C.B. Fouche & C.S.L. Delpont. (Eds). *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Interviews

- Byleveld, P. 2003. Superintendent and Commander of the Serious Violent Crime Unit, Johannesburg, South African Police Service, Johannesburg. Personal interview, 26 March.

Legislation

- Criminal Procedure Amendment Act 65 of 2008. Department of Justice, South Africa. 2008. *Government Gazette*, 524(31911). 18 February. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Correctional Matters Amendment Act 5 of 2011. South Africa. 2011. *Government Gazette*, 551(34315). 25 May. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 (as amended by the Judicial Matters Second Amendment Act 55 of 2003 and the Jurisdiction of Regional Courts Amendment Act 31 of 2008). South Africa. 1998/2003/2008. Available at: [http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/1998-116.pdf.s6\(1a\):5](http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/acts/1998-116.pdf.s6(1a):5)
- Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005. Chapter 15. UK. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/15/pdfs/ukpga_20050015_en.pdf.
- Crime and Misconduct Act 2001. Queensland, Australia. Available at: <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/legislnv/current/c/crimcandmisa01.pdf>.
- Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (USA Patriot Act). Public Law 107-56, 107th Congress. 26 October. USA. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107pub156/pdf/PLAW-107pub156.pdf>.

Case Law

- Holomisa v Argus Newspapers Ltd* [1996] 1 All SA 478 (W)
- S v Makwanyane and another* 1995 (6) BCLR 665 (CC)
- S v Soci* 1986 (2) SA 14 (A)

International Case Law

- Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. 1997. *Haitian Center for Human Rights v. United States*, Case 10.675, Report No. 51/96. Doc. OEA/Ser.L/V/II.95 Doc. 7 rev. 13 March.
- International Court of Justice (ICJ). (1949). *Corfu Channel Case (United Kingdom v Albania)*. Judgment 9 April. Available at: <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?p1=3&p2=3&case=1>.
- European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), 2010. *Medvedyev a.o.v. France*, (Appl. No. 3394/03), Judgment of 10 July 2008, confirmed by the Grand Chamber in its judgment of 29 March 2010.
- European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). 2011a. *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece*, Application No. 30696/09. Grand Chamber Judgment 21 January. Available at: <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/>

search.aspx?i=001-103050#{"itemid": ["001-103050"]}

European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), 2012a. *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*. Judgment 23 February. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4f4507942.html>.

European Court of Justice (ECJ). 2012. *European Parliament v Council of the European Union*, 5 September. Case C 355/10 (2012).

US Supreme Court. 1993. *Sale, Acting Commissioner, INS v. Haitian Centers Council*, 113 S. Ct. 2549. 21 June. Available at: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/92-344.ZO.html>

Notes on examples

List of References: Sources in general

The sources in the list of references must be listed in **alphabetical order** according to the surnames of the authors. They are not numbered.

Note that all the details of a source are given in the language of the source itself. If you were to use a German book, for instance, its title would be in German [with the English translation after it in square brackets] and the place of publication might be München, not Munich.

If multiple entries for the same author, i.e. different publications/articles etc. then the author must be listed by date (oldest first) of the publication/article. If there are two or more from the same year they are indicated (again first in the year by month). For example: Jones, A. 2004a; Jones, A. 2004b; and Jones, A. 2004c... etc. In the text such additions of a, b, c, ... would then also occur in the text reference accordingly. For example:... (Jones, 2004c: 12).

If authors surnames are the same then the author listed first is the one with the first alphabetic initial, e.g. Brown, B. comes before Brown, D.

Source references in the text

These are indicated by the surname(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication, as well as the page number from where the reference is cited/sourced. For example:... (Nkosi, 2005: 4) or Nkosi (2005: 4). If you are referencing generally some information (ideas, concepts interpretations) drawn from a publication and paraphrased them, i.e. there is no specific page number or numbers, this can be referenced as: (cf Parsons, 2011: 34-41). It would not be acceptable merely to list this reference as (Parsons, 2011) with no page numbers. A reader must be able to go to the Parsons' publication and see where you obtained the general information being referred to, even if from a number of consecutive pages. If the information is general information extracted from a whole publication then the reference does not need to have page numbers indicated.

Comma or not after author(s) name(s) in bracket

It is your choice of whether to insert a comma or not after an author(s) name in the bracketed reference. However, whichever style you choose to implement it must be applied consistently throughout your submitted article. Accordingly it can be either as follows:

... (Moffett, 2006: 129). Or: (Moffett 2006: 129).

Secondary referencing

For example: ...Morrison (1998) (as cited in Prinsloo, 2001: 7)... This is generally not acceptable in academic terms. Author(s) should go to the primary source, i.e. Morrison (1998), and reference the information used directly from the relevant page numbers in the Morrison publication. However, sometimes in a newspaper or journal article a specific person is quoted. In other words, such person does not have a primary publication from which the information is being quoted but was interviewed by the writer. In such circumstances the person so quoted can be referenced accordingly by name as, for example, ...National Police Commissioner Selebi (as cited in Mashaba, 2008) said that the SAPS must fight drug dealers on the streets....

Three or more authors for one publication: Use of 'et al.'

In the text the first time three or more authors are cited in the text then all authors' names to be indicated in the reference. Thereafter only the first author name and the term 'et al.' to be used. For example: (Ammaniti et al, 2000: 12) ('et al.' is not used in the List of References).

The term 'et al.', although a Latin term which means 'and others', is no longer italicised.

Also if there are only two authors both authors surnames are used for every in-text reference to them and not et al, in place of the second author's name.

No author identified

If no author is identified the appellation: Anon. must be used. In newspaper articles cited if there is no author listed for the particular article, then the news source should then be put as the author. For example: SAPA, Reuters or AFP. In the List of References a month date is always added after the newspaper title, e.g. 6 July (year date comes after author), followed by the newspaper page number (if available) where the cited article appeared.

Author(s) initials followed by date of publication

All multiple initials are separated by full stops, but without any spaces in-between. Date of publication follows author(s)'s surname and initials and date is itself followed by a full stop (Note: Alternate option: Date in bracket. You can place the year date in brackets, but this is your choice. Remember, whichever choice you make to apply it consistently throughout.)

Titles of article, chapter or document, place of publication and publisher's name

Titles of article, chapter, document being referenced only has the first letter of the first word (unless a Proper Noun) as a capital (uppercase). This rule also applies to the first word after a colon in the title. However, all words in the title of a journal (except pronouns) have the first letter as a capital. Only book, journal and newspaper titles (not chapters or article titles) are *italicised*.

Place of publication is followed by a colon and then the publisher's name. Note: Little known places of publication: Sometimes the place of publication is not a well-known city/town, so either the country or state is inserted after it. For example: Cullompton, Devon, UK; Baton Rouge, FL; Seven Oaks, CA; Aberdeen, Scotland. The acronym for the American states is usually given in such cases. FL = Florida; CA = California. Sometimes because a city or town occurs in two or more countries, which country it occurs would also be provided. For example: Albany, NY, USA and Albany, UK.

Publishers: You only need to give the publishers name and not for instance 'Pty Ltd', or 'Inc.' or 'Books' or even 'Publishers' (There are a few exceptions to this rule, namely Oxford University Publishers but 'Publishers' would not be added to a publishing company, since that is their only business. For example it would only be 'Sage' and not 'Sage Publishers').

Volume and edition numbers

The volume and/or edition numbers are not part of the Journal title, i.e. are therefore not italicised. Note the volume number is followed by issue/edition number in brackets followed by a colon and the journal page numbers of the specific article. No use is made of the abbreviations: Vol. or No. Journal titles are not abbreviated or given acronyms when referenced in the text for the first time. For example: SAJJC is written out as: *South African Journal of Criminal Justice*, the first time it is used as a reference in the text (and in the List of References) with the acronym in brackets after the full title (when used first time in the text), and thereafter you can use the acronym in the subsequent reference listings to this journal in the text.

Chapter in a publication

Please note the specific listing for a chapter in a publication, as well as the insertion after the chapter title of the page numbers in which it appears in the publication. If only one editor for the publication this is indicated in brackets after the editor's surname (which has a full stop before the bracket) as: (Ed.). ...while multiple editors will be the abbreviation: (Eds). Note editor(s) initials come before their surname in the listing of a chapter. Note no full stop after the abbreviation 'Eds' and the cap 'E' in both usages and a full stop after the last bracket.

The chapter title is followed by the page numbers of the chapter in the publication. The page numbers must also be indicated in brackets immediately after the chapter title and preceded by the letters: 'Pp.'. The page numbers bracket is then closed by a full stop; hence the 'In' (in which publication the chapter appears) has a capital letter.

If a publication has a number of editions the specific edition consulted must be listed. In the example above note the edition number is not written out as 'eighth' but as 8th. Also that it is in brackets after the title full stop, as well as the closing bracket is followed by another full stop. Also 'edition' is abbreviated as 'edn.' to distinguish it from the abbreviation for 'editor' which is 'ed.'

No date or place of publication

If the date of the publication is unknown, the abbreviation of the Latin expression '*sine anno*' (without a year): sa, is used in square brackets. If the place of publication is unknown, the abbreviation of the Latin expression '*sine loco*' (without place): sl, is used in square brackets, for example:

According to Smith ([sa]: 12) there are...

.. in that regard (Smith [sa]: 9)..

Note: In the list of reference sources, the 'S' of both *sine anno* and *sine loco* is capitalised (upper case) because it introduces a new element of the entry. In the in-text reference, however, the 's' is written with a small letter (lower case).

Referencing information from the internet

This is treated exactly the same as if it is a publication. In other words, look for an author. Sometimes this is merely the organisation on whose website such information has been found. Then try and establish a date for when the downloaded document was placed on the website or the report (often if in pdf format) published. If the date of the publication is unknown, then use the abbreviation 'sa' and no place of publication indicated then the abbreviation 'sl' (as above example). You must indicate a title for the document – this can be the first heading of the document. Then a publisher, usually the website organisation, e.g. Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA). No place of publication (sl) needs to be inserted unless indicated in the report/document downloaded.

Then the use of the terms: 'Available at: ' followed by the URL web address for the downloaded document. This is followed (in brackets) with the terms: '(accessed on: ' or alternately the term 'retrieved on: ' (again your choice of which of these two terms to use. Also your choice whether 'at' and 'on' added to either 'Available' or 'accessed' respectively. Note: colon use after 'at' and 'on'); followed by the date when such internet document was downloaded. The date should be written out as 6 March 2012 (required date format to be: dd-mm-yy) but the format 06/03/2012 can also be used. Whichever form used that should be applied throughout the article.

Note that 'Available' has a cap but 'accessed' lower case used – and that there is no full stop after the URL web address before the bracket (accessed on: ...). But if you choose to drop the brackets for: (accessed on: ... then a CAP 'A' and a full stop after the web address to be inserted.

Wikipedia references are not a primary source for referencing and are not academically acceptable in this journal's articles.

Referencing of legislative Acts

Note how legislative Acts are listed (under their own sub-heading: Legislation) with the provision of as much detail as possible. For example: **Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998**. [the name of the Act to identify the exact piece of legislation (and add in brackets if there have been Amendment Act(s) to the original piece of legislation, i.e. the specific version consulted and quoted from; followed by the country of origin of this particular Act] **South Africa. 1998**. [date of Act's promulgation] *Government Gazette*, [which is italicised – treated as a journal publication] **524(31911)**. [the GG volume and issue no] **Pretoria**: [place of publication] **Government Printers** [as the publishers/printers]. **18 February** [date of GG and/or date Act assented to by the State President]. All this information is available on the actual published Act document in the *Government Gazette*. If the Act is available in pdf on a government department website this URL can be added after the listing as above.

When referencing a piece of legislation (Act) in-text the following format to be followed:

... (Domestic Violence Act (DVA), 1998: s6(1a): 5).

Note the following: The use of the name of the specific Act; first time use the acronym can be placed in brackets, thereafter the acronym can be used in the reference brackets; it is not necessary to insert the number of the Act in the reference; if the piece of information used can be identified by section (s); paragraph (1a), and a page number, then such should be inserted in the reference paragraph. The country of origin is not to be used as the identifier (author) of the reference.

South African Case Law

Case law (cases and judgments) are usually reported in various so-called (South African) Law Reports. For example:

All SA = All South African Law Reports; BCLR = Butterworths Constitutional Law Reports; SA = South African Law Reports, etc.

The examples above, if you were referencing information from them, would be listed in your List of References, as exactly as they appear above (under the heading: Case Law in your List of References and listed alphabetically). However, in your in-text referencing they would appear as follows (shortened): ...(*Holomisa v Argus Newspapers Ltd* [1996]) (If you have a page number from the court records – usually the judgement/decision document as appearing in the specific Law Report, then it can be inserted as part of your reference.)

Note the following: The names of the litigants in the examples of cases are *italicised*. Only first respondents surname is given. Other parties to the case are indicated as ‘and another’ or ‘and others’. The date of the above *Holomisa...* example is in square brackets – only to indicate that 1996 was when the case was first lodged in court and also indicates that [1996] is not the date – which might be a few years after – when the case was finalised and judgement given. Specific sections of a case are referred to with reference to either the page(s), for example 263H, where it is indicated in the reported volume, or a paragraph(s) of the judgment (as has become customary for judges in their judgements nowadays). The paragraph is identified by way of square brackets, for example [137]. The letters after the date indicate in which Law Report (e.g. Butterworths Constitutional Law Reports = BCLR) the case was reported, followed by page numbers of that specific Law Report edition followed in brackets by the Court Division in which the case was heard. The reference to the court is in the letter or letters in the last parenthesis of the citation.

International Case Law

With the digitisation of much of international (Europe, UK and USA) case law the tendency in listing such international cases has been towards more detailed referencing so that researchers can better track and find such international case law. The examples provided are from USA and Europe as preferred referencing examples to be used in this journal for international case law referencing. For example in text referencing as follows:

... the subsequent decision of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the *Haitian Center for Human Rights v. United States* case (Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, 1997)...[or] the Refugee Convention and article 33 fall short of applying on the high seas, (US Supreme Court, 1993: 2549) the subsequent decision of...

Use of footnotes/endnotes

The journal style does not use references in footnotes. But, if necessary, content references in the form of footnotes/endnotes may be used to provide additional information or explanation but all source referencing follows the ‘in-text’ referencing style.

Technical and formatting requirements

Articles that are submitted for consideration should adhere to the following minimum standards and technical and formatting requirements before submission:

- 1 An **electronic copy** (computer disk or document sent by e-mail (to the Editor-in-Chief) in MS Word (or Word compatible software programme) may be submitted. If not e-mailed, the file name of the manuscript must be specified on the accompanying computer disk.
- 2 **Length:** Contributions must be submitted in English and should preferably not exceed **20** typed A4 pages (electronically minimum word count should not be less than **7 000** words (approx. **15** pages) or exceed **10 000** words of text (approx. **20** pages)
- 3 The **title** of the article (in uppercase) and the **author’s full first name and surname**, designation, institutional affiliation, address & contact email should appear on the first page.
- 4 A **summary/abstract** of approximately 150-300 words on the first page of the submitted article must also be included. The abstract to be **italicised**.
- 5 **Keywords:** Directly below the abstract paragraph insert **Keywords** (maximum of **TEN (10)** – approximately **TWO (2)** lines.
- 6 If **funding** has been received from your University/Organisation or external funders for the research on which this article is based, such support funding can be acknowledged in the first footnote.

- 7 **Line spacing:** The document should be typed in A4 format using SINGLE (1) line spacing and ‘normal margins’ selected. No double spacing between words or after full stops and commas. Only single spacing throughout text. No line space to be inserted between paragraphs except between a paragraph and a heading.
- 8 **Paragraph indenting.** All paragraphs first line to be indented **except for first paragraph after a heading.** Please do not use the automated ‘space after a paragraph’ or ‘space before a paragraph’ function in MSWord.
- 9 **Font: Times New Roman 12.**
- 10 **Page numbers:** are also TNR 12 font and centred in the footer section of each page.
- 11 **Spelling:** Please make use (choose this as your default option) of the UK spellcheck and NOT the USA one. For example replace the ‘z’ in organization (US spelling) with an ‘s’ = organisation (UK spelling).
- 12 **Use of quotes and italics:** Long quotes are placed in a separate paragraph and must be indented from both sides, (see below for short quotes usage) as in the following example:
 Quotes that are 45 words long or longer (three lines and more) should be indented from both sides (of the paragraph) as in this example. If the quote is shorter, then it needs to be imbedded in the text of a paragraph and set in between double quotation marks, i.e. “inverted commas”. Quotes from published information are generally **not italicised**. However, actual words of interviewed respondents are recommended to be italicised. Field note comments by the researcher on the respondent’s responses (in the italicised responses) are not italicised but are placed in square brackets [...], note not round brackets (...). For example:... “*I did not commit the crime but the policeman [sic.] they abuse us foreigners because me I was just sitting down with my friends and just talking stories, suddenly police came and arrest us.*” An additional use of italics is all non-English words, for e.g. ...Another participant said: “*Ek sal dit nooit vergeet nie*” (I will never forget it) (note the provision of an English translation after such use). All indented quotes need to end with the precise source reference placed in brackets and closed with a full stop (*Acta Editor*, 2013: 7).
- 13 **Single quotation marks:** Single inverted commas are only used when you want to emphasise a term or a common saying especially when it is not a direct use of words from another author. e.g. ‘Zero Tolerance’ or ... a ‘live-and-let-die’ approach. Single quotation marks are also used for a quote within a quote. For example: “It was patently obvious from the research that police officers use of force was not following the regulations. As indicated by one interviewee: *‘they shoot wildly in a crime situation’*. This indicated that they needed to be trained to follow the set rules (Mistry, 2003: 6).
- 14 **Text justification:** Text is always full justified (squared), except for article title, author(s) name and the heading: *ABSTRACT* – all of which are centred – on the first page of the article. One further exception being the numerals in a table that are column centred.
- 15 **Headings and sub-headings:** All headings and sub-headings must be bold. There is no use of numbering or underlining of headings in this journal. Only three levels of headings’ format to be used, namely:
 - a Main headings which are: UPPERCASE (CAPS);
 - b 2nd level, i.e. sub-heading, only the first letter of the first word in the heading is a CAP unless it is a proper noun, for example: **Crime in Cape Town’s informal settlements**
 - c 3rd level sub-sub-heading is indicated in bold and italicised with the same CAPS convention for 2nd level heading. For example: ***Crime findings from the Crossroads informal settlement.*** All headings do not have a full stop at the end.
 Note that there is no line spacing between a heading or sub-heading and the immediate following paragraph, a line spacing is inserted only before a heading and the preceding paragraph.
- 16 **Use of dates in text** – as follows: 11 September 2001 and not September 11, 2001. Also no use of abbreviations as in 1st, 2nd or 3rd just 1, 2, 3 etc. In the text do not use the date format of 11-09-2001 or 11/09/2011.
- 17 **Use of tables, figures, graphs and diagrams in text:** These render the layout difficult and should be used sparingly. All diagrams and tables must be numbered sequentially and referred to in the text, e.g. In Table 2 the falling statistics for the crime of murder can be discerned over the period 2000/01

to 2005/06. The use of such diagrams or tables must have a heading (also to be made bold) before the table or diagram and not after it. For e.g.:

Table 2: Statistics on violent crimes during 2000-2006


Crimes	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Murder	21 758	21 405	21 553	19 824	18 793	18 545
Attempted murder	28 128	31 293	35 861	30 076	24 576	20 553
Assault GBH	275 289	264 012	266 321	260 082	249 369	276 942
Robbery aggravating	113 716	116 736	126 905	133 658	126 789	119 726
Total	438 891	433 446	450 640	443 640	419 527	435 766

ADDENDUM 2: OBITER – STYLISTIC GUIDELINES

Faculty of Law
Defining tomorrow

Obiter
Stylistic Guidelines
Prepared by Lynn Biggs, Hilda Fisher
and Adriaan van der Walt

Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University
for tomorrow



The collage features several images: a close-up of a wooden gavel on a document; a courtroom scene with a judge and lawyers; a smiling woman in a suit giving a thumbs up; two students looking at a book; and a row of red law books.



Abbreviations/Acronyms

- no abbreviations used in the text
- abbreviations used in footnotes only
- acronyms can be used in text

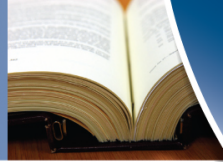
The Labour Relations Act (LRA) was promulgated ...

- abbreviations and acronyms are without punctuation
- use of abbreviations/acronyms must be consistent
- accepted abbreviations in footnotes:
 - for a section – s 138(5)(b) [in text – section 138(5)(b)]
 - for sections – ss 138-139 [in text – sections 138-139]
 - for paragraph – par [31]
 - for chapter - ch



Punctuation

- where words appear in brackets, punctuation marks (full stops, commas, colons etc) must always be placed after the final bracket
- but if a complete sentence within a paragraph appears in brackets, full stop must be placed in front of the last bracket
- all footnotes end with a full stop
- references to footnote numbers should appear after punctuation and quotation marks
 - for example "1, 2, 3"
 - and not "1", "2", "3"



Quotations and quotation marks

- direct quotations should be used sparingly and be as brief as possible
- must correspond **exactly** with the original text
- when complete sentence quoted, the quotation must appear as a separate paragraph with a 1cm indent on either side, in smaller font, and single spacing
- changes or additions to quotations placed in square brackets []
- should not start with ellipses (...), but may end with (...)
- not typed in italics
- double quotation marks and single quotation marks for quotes within a quotation



- **Italics**

- words from any language other than that in which assignment is written, should be in italics

- **Capital letters**

- headings, capital only for the 1st word
- words like section, applicant, court and respondent do not start with capitals
- but Labour Court, High Court, Industrial Court, Labour Appeal Court and Act start with capitals



- **Headings and numbers**

- use should be made of subtitles in order to subdivide assignment into logical units
- not indented and no full stops between numerals
 - 1
 - 2
 - 2 1
 - 2 1 1
 - 2 1 2
- if further subdivision necessary then lower case Roman numerals are preferable e.g. (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)



Page references

- reference to pages in footnotes only and not in text
- in footnotes – only the number of the page and not a “p” preceding the number, for example 519
- references to consecutive pages for example 325-334
- reference to a footnote above

See fn 15 above.

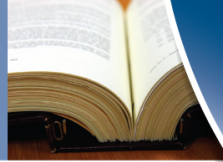
- reference to a footnote below

See fn 47 below.



Books

- surname(s) of authors without initials
- first reference:
- subsequent references:
- capital letters are used for all nouns in titles
- book titles in italics
- year of publication in brackets ()
- followed by relevant page number – no preceding “p”
- edition number is only used in first reference:



Books (continued)

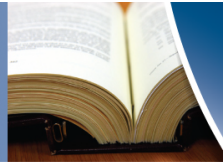
- first reference where there is more than two authors:

Basson, Christianson, Garbers, le Roux, Mischke and Strydom
Essential Labour Law (1998) 80-88.

- subsequent references:

Basson *et al* *Essential Labour Law* 80-88.

- *et al* is in italics
- two authors separated by "and" in text and footnotes



Books (continued)

- use a shortened title for the book in subsequent references where possible; first reference:

Grogan *Employment Rights in South Africa* (2010) 12.

- Subsequent reference – shortened title and no reference to year:

Grogan *Employment Rights* 15.



Books (continued)

- (ed) or (eds) to follow after surnames of editor/s if a collective work:

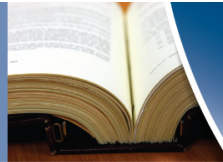
Smith and Swart (eds) *Human Rights in South Africa* (2007) 212.

- reference can be made to a specific author who has contributed to a collective work which has 1 or more editors:

Nair "The Right to Equality" in Smith and Swart (eds) *Human Rights in South Africa* (2007) 212.

- Subsequent reference:

Nair in Smith and Swart (eds) *Human Rights in SA* 212.



Loose-leaf publications

- Author, title of section in double quotation marks, title of loose leaf publication in *italics*, date and page:

Dean "Performers' Protection" in *Handbook of South African Copyright Law* (2003) 112.

- Subsequent reference:

Dean *Handbook of South African Copyright Law* 112.



Conference Papers

- Author, title of paper in *italics*, name of conference, date of conference (in brackets) and page:

Du Toit *When does Affirmative Action in Favour of Certain Employees Become Unfair Discrimination Against Others?*
Paper presented at conference on Equality: Theory and Practice in SA and Elsewhere, University of Cape Town, (January 2001) 14.

- Subsequent reference:
- Author, name of conference and page:

Du Toit paper presented at conference on Equality: Theory and Practice in SA and Elsewhere 14.



Dissertation, thesis, treatise

- Author, title of thesis in *italics*, type and institution (in brackets), year, and page:

Buchan *Franchisor Failure: An Assessment of the Adequacy of Regulatory Response* (doctoral thesis, Queensland University of Technology) 2010 23.

- Subsequent reference:
- Author, shortened title, and page:

Buchan *Franchisor Failure* 23.



Cases

- first reference:

National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa v Total Service Station (2002) 23 ILJ 1835 (LC) 1837D.

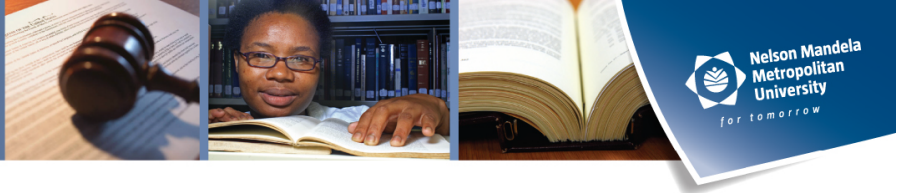
Strydom v Van der Walt 2004 (1) SA 335 (A) 342G.

- subsequent reference:

NUMSA v Total Service Station 1841F.

Strydom v Van der Walt 344B.

- please note that “and Another” / “and Others” are left out in the references of case names



Cases (continued)

- do not refer to citation in text
- when names of parties are referred to in the text, do not repeat names in the footnote just the citation
- always indicate specific page and/or paragraph of case referring to
- different publications make use of different brackets or no brackets at all, therefore set out the citation exactly as provided for by each publication (for example Juta or LexisNexis *etc*)
- Case names are **always** in *italics* – in main text and in footnotes



Cases (continued)

- Unreported cases:
 - the name of the case;
 - the court;
 - indicate that unreported
 - the date on which the judgment was given in the form yy-mm-dd
 - the case number.

Waks v Jacobs & die Stadsraad van Carletonville TPD
(unreported) 1989-10-30 Case no 5971/89 par[5].

- Foreign cases
 - 1st reference – provide detail of court name etc
 - 2nd reference – use acronyms/abbreviations



Articles

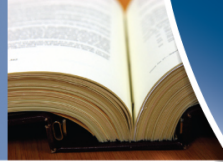
- first reference:

Le Roux "The Impact of the 2002 Amendments on Residual Unfair Labour Practices" 2002 23 *Obiter* 311 314.

- subsequent references:

Le Roux 2002 *Obiter* 325.

- title of article in double quotation marks
- year of publication of journal article is **not** in brackets
- volume number **without** preceding "vol"
- title of journal in italics
- page number article starts on as well as page number referring to must be indicated in first reference



Newspapers and Magazines

- first reference:

Bisseker "New Laws for FIFA 2010" (2009-12-21) *Herald* 3.

- subsequent references:

Bisseker (2009-12-21) *Herald* 3.

- title of article in double quotation marks
- publication dates is in brackets (yyyy-mm-dd)
- title of journal in newspaper
- page number of article



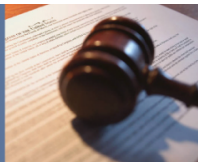
LAWSA

- paragraph references instead of page numbers should be used for references to *LAWSA*, first reference:

LAWSA XVII Mortgage and Pledge par 398-402.

- subsequent references:

LAWSA XVII par 398-402.



Legislation

- short titles should not be in italics and no punctuation marks should be used, for example:

The Interpretation Act 33 of 1957.

- where the short title of the act is used in the text, the number and the year should be in a footnote, for example:

Text:
as set out in the Interpretation Act.¹

Footnote:
¹ 33 of 1957.



Legislation

- Referencing to a section of an Act:

Text:

A court may grant a decree of divorce on the ground of an irretrievable break-down of the marriage if the marriage has deteriorated to such an extent that it cannot be restored.¹

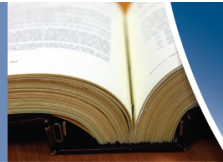
Footnote:

¹ S 4(1) of the Divorce Act 70 of 1979.

- Subsequent reference:

Footnote:

² S 4(1) of 70 of 1979.



Legislation

- Referencing the Constitution:

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution).

- Referencing the interim Constitution:

Text:

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa¹ (the interim Constitution).

Footnote:

¹ 200 of 1993.



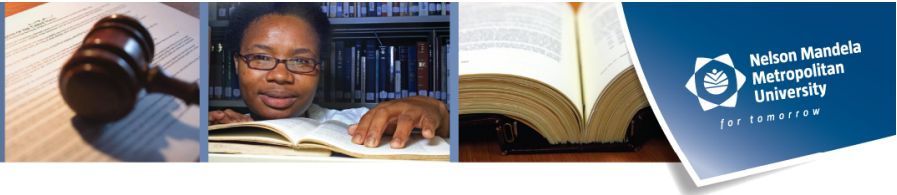
Government notices/policies

- For example:

Proc R138 in *GG* 8331 of 1982-08-06.

GN R3 in *GG* 7356 of 1981-01-02. (for regulations)

- Abbreviations used:
 - AN – administrator’s notice
 - reg – regulation
 - GN – government notice
 - Proc – proclamation
 - *GG* – *Government Gazette*



Websites

- surname(s) of author(s) or editor(s), or the name of the institutional author, editor or compiler
- full title of the document in double quotation marks
- date of electronic publication or latest update of website (in brackets), if no date available then insert (undated) after the title of the article
- URL of particular webpage (identical)
- date accessed (yyyy-mm-dd)
- pages are usually non-existent but if available indicate

Keene and Yang "PRC Passes Labour Contract Law" (10 July 2007)
<http://www.allens.com.au/pubs/pdf/asia/fochempjul07.pdf> (accessed 2009-03-27) 3.



Websites

- Subsequent reference
 - surname(s) of author(s) or editor(s), or the name of the institutional author, editor or compiler
 - URL of particular webpage (identical)
 - pages are usually non-existent but if available indicate

Keene and Yang <http://www.allens.com.au/pubs/pdf/asia/fochempjul07.pdf> 3.



General

- multiple sources in footnotes separated by semicolons (;)
- *Ibid* may be used **only** if the reference in the footnote above is **exactly** the same, *ie* the same author, book/article **and** page numbers



Students

- text to be in Arial 12 and 1.5 spacing and justified
- Chapter headings to be in Arial 14 and other headings in Arial 12
- footnotes to be in Arial 10 and single spacing (not justified)

Contributors of articles

- text to be in Arial 11 and 1.5 spacing and justified
- headings to be in Arial 12
- footnotes to be in Arial 9 and single spacing (not justified)

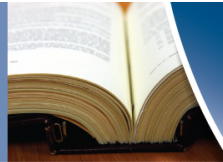


Table of Statutes

- **on a separate page at the end of the assignment after the conclusion**

TABLE OF STATUTES

Apportionment of Damages Act 34 of 1956

Magistrates' Court Act 32 of 1944

Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination
Act 4 of 2000

Road Accident Fund Act 56 of 1996



Table of Cases

- on a separate page at the end of the assignment after the Table of Statutes

TABLE OF CASES

Abrahams v Peterson 1988 3 SA 52 (C)

Abrahams v The Minister of Safety and Security [1996] 2 All SA 176 (D)

Galaxie Melodies v Dally 1975 4 SA 736 (A)

Kloosterman v De Wet 1995 11 BCLR 212 (CC)

Van Gool v Guardian National Insurance Co Ltd 1994 2 SA 134 (W)



Bibliography

- on a separate page at the end of the assignment after the Table of Cases

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Barnard, AH, Cronjé, DSP and Olivier, PJJ *The South African Law of Persons and Family Law* 3ed (1994) Butterworths: Durban.

Davel, CJ and Jordaan, RA *Law of Persons Students' Textbook* (1995) Juta & Co Ltd: Cape Town.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Havenga, M "Corporations and the Right to Equality" 1999 *THRHR* 495.

Rautenbach, IM "The Conduct and Interests Protected by the Right to Privacy in Section 14 of the Constitution" 2001 *TSAR* 115.



Bibliography

- on a separate page at the end of the assignment after the Table of Cases

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Barnard, AH, Cronjé, DSP and Olivier, PJJ *The South African Law of Persons and Family Law* 3ed (1994) Butterworths: Durban.

Davel, CJ and Jordaan, RA *Law of Persons Students' Textbook* (1995) Juta & Co Ltd: Cape Town.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Havenga, M "Corporations and the Right to Equality" 1999 *THRHR* 495.

Rautenbach, IM "The Conduct and Interests Protected by the Right to Privacy in Section 14 of the Constitution" 2001 *TSAR* 115.



Bibliography

- on a separate page at the end of the assignment after the Table of Cases

BIBLIOGRAPHY

INTERNET SOURCES

Abell, M "The Regulation of International Franchising" November 2010
<http://whoswholegal.com/news/features/article/28705/regulation-international-franchising> (accessed 2015-08-28).

Acts Online "Consumer Affairs Committee Reports, Business Practices Committee Reports" October 2000
https://www.acts.co.za/consumer_affairs_reports (accessed 2012-08-24).

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Gillingham, A "Hard Times but Industry Still Resilient: New Brands Find Market Entry Difficult as Economic Downturn Affects the Sector in SA" (2011-09-25) Sunday Times Survey: Franchising 17.

ADDENDUM 3: THE JOURNAL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY (JMFT)

Author Guidelines

Instructions for Authors

The *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (JMFT) is published in accordance with the purposes of the sponsoring organization, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, in January, April, July, and October to advance the professional understanding of marital and family therapy. Toward that end, the JMFT publishes articles on research, theory, clinical practice, and training in marital and family therapy.

Articles are selected on the basis of appropriateness, clarity, significance, timeliness, and contribution to the field of marital and family therapy. Authors need not be members of the AAMFT. No remuneration is paid for accepted manuscripts.

Submissions

Evaluation of Manuscripts

Manuscripts are accepted for consideration with the understanding that they have not been published previously and are not being considered simultaneously for publication elsewhere. The right to reject any manuscript or return it to the author for format, style, or other revisions before accepting it for publication is reserved by the editorial staff.

Authors must submit their manuscripts online via the ScholarOne system at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jmft>. If an author does not already have an account, click on Create Account on the upper right side of the screen to be guided through the submission process. Please follow all of the instructions carefully, including adding all co-author names into the system where indicated. Cover letters should be copied and pasted into the window provided rather than as an attachment. Submissions that do not adhere to these instructions will be returned to the author for resubmission. [Click here for a full tutorial related to the submission process.](#)

JMFT will acknowledge receipt of the manuscript via email. Our evaluation process includes an initial review by state-of-the-art plagiarism-checking software <http://www.ithenticate.com/>. Our peer review process entails obtaining blind feedback on your manuscript from three to four experts on the topic. We strive to reach a decision concerning publication as quickly as possible, and we typically have a six-week turnaround.

If a manuscript is accepted, page proofs will be sent to authors and *must be returned within 48 hours*. Changes at that point will be limited to the correcting of printing errors, spelling, dates, and grammar. Substantive changes such as adding phrases, sentences, and paragraphs are not permitted without the Editor's approval.

Format for Manuscripts

General Guidelines:

Manuscripts should be no more than 30 pages, including references, tables, and figures, formatted for 8 1/2 x 11' paper with 1-inch margins on all sides and using 12-point Times New Roman font. The entire manuscript, including abstract, references, and quoted materials should be double-spaced. Include a running head at the top of every page, with the running head flush left and page numbers flush right. Please refer to our sample submission or the current issue of the *JMFT* for examples of the format and style elements. Articles not in the specified format will be returned to authors for revision.

Style. All manuscripts should be written in American English. The style of *JMFT* calls for formal usage. Contractions, slang, and abbreviations should be omitted, except in cases of direct quotation or when usage is specifically demanded by the context and set forth in quotation marks. We prefer authors to use active versus passive voice. (e.g., “The researchers collected data...” instead of “Data were collected...”) All submitted manuscripts are subject to editing.

Blinding. We prefer that you do not attempt to blind your manuscript so that we may do so according to our particular process; blinded manuscripts that do not follow our protocol often must be unsubmitted to provide missing information crucial to blinding it properly for the peer review process, thus causing delays.

Specific File Guidelines:

Using our online system, you will upload your submission as separate documents. Please only upload Microsoft Word documents; pdfs are not acceptable and will be returned for resubmission.

A) Title Page. The separated title page must provide the title of the article and each author’s name along with his or her primary (current) professional affiliation. Underneath a short dividing line at the bottom of the page please provide:

1. A sentence about each author that includes author’s name, highest earned degree, current professional or departmental affiliation, and location;
2. Any changes in affiliation subsequent to the time of the study;
3. Previous presentations of the paper, grants, or thanks and acknowledgments as well as any conflicts of interest;
4. Full contact information including name of author, complete mailing address, and e-mail.

B) Main Document. The main document is your basic manuscript text. Do not include the title page, and do not upload more than one main document. In addition, please make sure your submission does not include any tracked changes.

This file must contain the following in order:

Abstract. The first page should provide an abstract of no more than 150 words, describing the paper's topic, method, and conclusions or implications. Abbreviations and acronyms used in the paper should be defined in the abstract.

Main Text. Beginning on a new page, provide the article title and divide the text into appropriate sections with headings. Each regular paragraph should be indented.

Headings:

First-Order Headings. First-order headings should be centered on a separate line, bolded, and in title case.

Second-Order Headings. Second-order headings should be placed on a separate line, flush with the left margin, bolded, and in title case.

Third-Order Headings. Third-order headings should begin on the same line with the first sentence of the section, indented five spaces, bolded, have only the first word capitalized, and end with a period.

If you use more than three levels of headings, consult section 3.02 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.).

Citations and References. In-text citations and references must follow APA style. Citations should be given in the text by enclosing in parentheses the surname of the author(s) and the year of the publication. The page numbers are included when a direct quote is used. Example: (Caldera, 2000, p. 156). After the main body of the text, begin the references section on a new page.

References corresponding to all citations should be typed, double-spaced, and listed alphabetically. They should be in hanging indent format. Journal and book titles are italicized. Page numbers must be included for book chapters. The guide for style related to citations and references is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). This guide can be obtained from the Order Department, American Psychological Association, P.O. Box 92984, Washington, DC 20090 or [by clicking here](#).

Notes. Notes should be used rarely. They must be double-spaced and numbered consecutively on a separate sheet following the references.

C) Figures and Tables. Figures and tables of all kinds such as charts and graphs should be kept to a minimum, and each should convey important information that adds to the manuscript. Each figure should be provided on a separate page, but multiple tables or multiple figures may be included in one document. When uploading to the system, select Table or Figure. The

desired location of figures and tables should be noted in the text of the main document, and they should be numbered appropriately so that they correspond to mention of them in the text.

D) Online Supplemental Files. In order to keep your submission to 30 pages, you may consider providing online supplemental files. These could be non-critical tables or other information extricated from your main document that could stand on its own. For example, some recent authors designated their training protocol, demographic charts, and other material suitable as supplementary files (e.g., see Willis, Walters, & Crane, 2014 at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jmft.12048/abstract>).

Article Preparation Service

Wiley Editing Services offers expert help with English Language Editing, as well as translation, manuscript formatting, figure illustration, figure formatting, and graphical abstract design – so you can submit your manuscript with confidence. Also, check out our resources for **Preparing Your Article** for general guidance about writing and preparing your manuscript.

COPYRIGHT

If your paper is accepted, the author identified as the formal corresponding author for the paper will receive an email prompting them to login into Author Services; where via the Wiley Author Licensing Service (WALS) they will be able to complete the license agreement on behalf of all authors on the paper.

For authors signing the copyright transfer agreement

If the OnlineOpen option is not selected the corresponding author will be presented with the copyright transfer agreement (CTA) to sign. The terms and conditions of the CTA can be previewed in the samples associated with the Copyright FAQs below:

CTA Terms and Conditions

For authors choosing OnlineOpen

If the OnlineOpen option is selected the corresponding author will have a choice of the following Creative Commons License Open Access Agreements (OAA):

Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License OAA

Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial -NoDerivs License OAA

To preview the terms and conditions of these open access agreements please visit the Copyright FAQs hosted on **Wiley Author Services** and **Wiley Online Access**.

If you select the OnlineOpen option and your research is funded by The Wellcome Trust and members of the Research Councils UK (RCUK) you will be given the opportunity to publish your article under a CC-BY license supporting you in complying with Wellcome Trust and Research Councils UK requirements. For more information on this policy and the Journal's compliant self-archiving policy please click [here](#).

For RCUK and Wellcome Trust authors click on the link below to preview the terms and conditions of this license:

Creative Commons Attribution License OAA

To preview the terms and conditions of these open access agreements please visit the Copyright FAQs hosted on [Wiley Author Services](#) and [Wiley Open Access](#).

OnlineOpen

OnlineOpen is available to authors of primary research articles who wish to make their article available to non-subscribers on publication, or whose funding agency requires grantees to archive the final version of their article. With OnlineOpen, the author, the author's funding agency, or the author's institution pays a fee to ensure that the article is made available to non-subscribers upon publication via Wiley Online Library, as well as deposited in the funding agency's preferred archive. For the full list of terms and conditions, [click here](#).

Any authors wishing to send their paper OnlineOpen will be required to complete the payment form available from [our website](#). Prior to acceptance there is no requirement to inform an Editorial Office that you intend to publish your paper OnlineOpen if you do not wish to. All OnlineOpen articles are treated in the same way as any other article. They go through the journal's standard peer-review process and will be accepted or rejected based on their own merit.

Reports on biomedical research involving human subjects must include a statement that informed consent was obtained from each subject or subject's guardian and from the Institutional Review Board.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are handled by AAMFT's business office. Inquiries should be addressed to: JMFT, 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3061. Phone: 703-838-9808, email: central@aamft.org.

Proofs

Authors will receive an e-mail notification with a link and instructions for accessing HTML page proofs online. Page proofs should be carefully proofread for any copyediting or typesetting errors. Online guidelines are provided within the system. No special software is required, most common browsers are supported. Authors should also make sure that any renumbered tables, figures, or references match text citations and that figure legends correspond with text citations and actual figures. Proofs must be returned within 48 hours of receipt of the email. Return of proofs via e-mail is possible in the event that the online system cannot be used or accessed.

Article Promotion Service

Wiley Editing Services offers professional video, design, and writing services to create shareable video abstracts, infographics, conference posters, lay summaries, and research news stories for your research – so you can help your research get the attention it deserves.

ADDENDUM 4: ETHIC APPROVAL



Prof CC Wessels
Social Work
COMPRES

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research,
Training and Support**

Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC)
Tel: 018-285 2291
Email: Wayne.Towers@nwu.ac.za

27 November 2018

Dear Prof Wessels

APPROVAL OF YOUR APPLICATION BY THE HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HREC) OF THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Ethics number: NWU-00098-18-S1

Kindly use the ethics reference number provided above in all future correspondence or documents submitted to the administrative assistant of the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) secretariat.

Study title: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children

Study leader: Prof CC Wessels

Student: L Roodt-11126639

Application type: Single study

Risk level: Medium (monitoring report required six-monthly) until intervention and then High (monitoring report required three-monthly)

Expiry date: 30 November 2019 (monitoring report is due at the end of May and November annually until intervention, then monitoring report is due at the end of February, May, August and November annually until completion)

You are kindly informed that after review by the HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences, North-West University, your ethics approval application has been successful and was determined to fulfil all requirements for approval. Your study is approved for a year and may commence from 27/11/2018. It, however, requires the following further conditions specific to *the progress* of the study:

- The researchers should submit an amendment to the HREC indicating the sample size to be implemented during Objective 1, Phase 1, Step 2 for approval, before being implemented
- The researchers should submit an amendment to the HREC indicating the questionnaire to be implemented during Objective 1, Phase 1, Step 2 for approval, before being implemented
- The researchers should submit an amendment to the HREC indicating the program manual to be implemented during Objective 3, Step 3, Phase 4 for approval, before being implemented
- The researchers should submit an amendment to the HREC indicating the interview schedule to be implemented during Objective 3, Step 3, Phase 4 for approval, before being implemented

As the study progresses the aforementioned conditions should be submitted to Ethics-HRECProcess@nwu.ac.za with a cover letter with a specific subject title indicating "Outstanding documents for approval: NWU-XXXXX-XX-XX". The letter should include the title of the approved study, the names of the researchers involved, that the documents are being submitted as part of the conditions of the approval set by the HREC, the nature of the document i.e. which condition is being fulfilled and any further explanation to clarify the submission.

The *e-mail*, to which you attach the documents that you send, should have a *specific subject line* indicating the nature of the submission e.g. "Outstanding documents for approval: NWU-XXXXX-XX-XX". The e-mail

should indicate the nature of the document being sent. This submission will be handled via the expedited process.

Continuation of the study is dependent on receipt of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation. A monitoring report should be submitted two months prior to the reporting dates as indicated i.e. annually for minimal risk studies, six-monthly for medium risk studies and three-monthly for high risk studies, to ensure timely renewal of the study. A final report must be provided at completion of the study or the HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences must be notified if the study is temporarily suspended or terminated. The monitoring report template is obtainable from the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support at Ethics-HRECMonitoring@nwu.ac.za. Annually, a number of studies may be randomly selected for an internal audit.

The HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences requires immediate reporting of any aspects that warrants a change of ethical approval. Any amendments, extensions or other modifications to the proposal or other associated documentation must be submitted to the HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences prior to implementing these changes. These requests should be submitted to Ethics-HRECApply@nwu.ac.za with a cover letter with a specific subject title indicating, "Amendment request: NWU-XXXXX-XX-XX". The letter should include the title of the approved study, the names of the researchers involved, the nature of the amendment/s being made (indicating what changes have been made as well as where they have been made), which documents have been attached and any further explanation to clarify the amendment request being submitted. The amendments made should be indicated in **yellow highlight** in the amended documents. The *e-mail*, to which you attach the documents that you send, should have a *specific subject line* indicating that it is an amendment request e.g. "Amendment request: NWU-XXXXX-XX-XX". This e-mail should indicate the nature of the amendment. This submission will be handled via the expedited process.

Any adverse/unexpected/unforeseen events or incidents must be reported on either an adverse event report form or incident report form to Ethics-HRECIncident-SAE@nwu.ac.za. The *e-mail*, to which you attach the documents that you send, should have a specific subject line indicating that it is a notification of a serious adverse event or incident in a specific project e.g. "SAE/Incident notification: NWU-XXXXX-XX-XX". Please note that the HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.

The HREC, Faculty of Health Sciences complies with the South African National Health Act 61 (2003), the Regulations on Research with Human Participants (2014), the Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Structures and Processes (2015), the Belmont Report and the Declaration of Helsinki (2013).

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support at Ethics-HRECApply@nwu.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

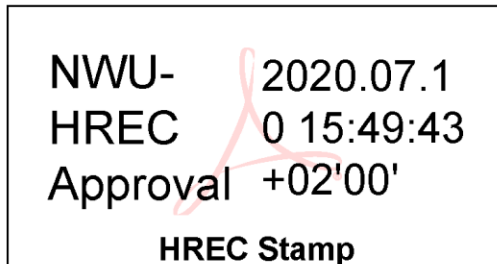
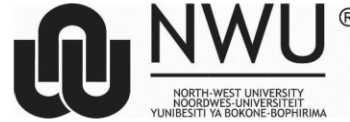


Prof Wayne Towers
HREC Chairperson



Prof Minrie Greeff
Ethics Office Head

ADDENDUM 5a: HREC CONSENT FORMS EXPERTS



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR Experts with divorce related experience

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBERS: NWU-00098-18-S1

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Cornelia Cecilia Wessels

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Lisl Roodt

ADDRESS: North West University, Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Psycho Social Health, Private Bag X6001, PO Box 206, Potchefstroom, 2520

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 469 0066

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of my PhD studies in social work. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00098-18-S1)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in South Africa and will involve experts with divorce related experience. Six to eight participants will be included in this study.*
- *We plan to give you a programme and questionnaire to determine what your perceptions of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents are and follow it up by means of the Delphi Technique. The researcher will use the information to evaluate and refine the new programme.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to be part of this research because you are considered to be an expert, and specialises in divorce related cases.*
- *You also fit the research because you are able to communicate fluently in English,*
- *You have internet access to participate in the study because that will be the only way to give your input in the different phases of the Delphi Technique.*
- *You have experience in working with divorce cases and have dealt with cases involving children.*
- ***The benefit for you** as participant will be the opportunity to gain knowledge and make a positive contribution towards a divorce education programme for South Africa in order to alleviate future adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce.*
- *We are primarily interested in your views and knowledge regarding your expert experience of the process of divorce as well as your ability to contribute to the content of the proposed programme.*

- *You will **not be able to take part** in this research if you are not considered to be an expert in the field of divorce or if you indicate that you do not have time to take part in the study.*

What will be expected of you?

*You will be expected to **study and evaluate the content** of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents by means of the Delphi technique, which provides you with the opportunity to express an opinion, without feeling pressured by other panel members. This entails that the proposed programme and a schedule of seven questions will be sent to you electronically to peruse and complete in the comfort of your own office at your own convenience. It will take approximately 90 minutes of your time to read and give your expert input and make a contribution. The feedback will be analysed and might be recirculated more than once to reach consensus between participants. Your active involvement will assist the development of the new divorce education programme for South Africa.*

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There is no direct gain for you if you take part in this study but you will be given the opportunity to gain knowledge and make a positive contribution towards a divorce education programme for South Africa to alleviate future adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce.*
- *The in-direct gain for you will be that you will take part in the development of a programme that will educate divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of their children.*
- *The other in-direct gain of the study is for parents to be educated to prevent adjustment problems of children in the process of divorce.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

- *The risks to you in this study are low as the content of the discussion are work-related and no personal information will be asked or discussed.*
- *You will also be given the opportunity to express an opinion without feeling pressured by other participants.*
- *There are more in-direct gains for you in joining this study than there are risks. We will supply a contact number of a person to contact if you experience any discomfort.*

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?

- *The electronic returned data will be password protected.*
- *Anonymity of your findings will be limited but protected by coding the information manually when the information/data are received.*
- *No identifying information will be used.*
- *Only the researcher and study leaders will be able to look at the feedback from you.*
- *The data will be saved on a memory stick and after completion of the research it will be stored in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the office of COMPRES at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus.*
- *The data will be stored for 5 years and then be destroyed by erasing it.*

What will happen with the findings or samples?

- *The findings of this study will only be used for this study.*

How will you know about the results of this research?

- *We will give you the results of this research when the findings were disseminated and the related article published.*
- *We will send you the related article electronically.*
- *You will be informed of any new relevant findings by the researcher or Prof Cornelia Wessels.*

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

This study is not funded and you will not be paid to take part in the study. There will be no costs involved for you, if you do take part in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- *You can contact Lisl Roodt at 084 533 6120 if you have any further questions or have any problems.*
- *You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 1206 or carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.*
- *You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.*

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in the research study titled: *Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children in the process of divorce.*

I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to
.....
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above

- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I did/did not use an interpreter
 I was available should he/she want to ask any further questions.
- The informed consent was obtained by an independent person.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of researcher

.....
Signature of witness

ADDENDUM 5b: HREC CONSENT FORMS PARENTS



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR Parents in the process of divorce

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBERS: NWU-00098-18-S1

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Cornelia Cecilia Wessels

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Lisl Roodt

ADDRESS: North West University, Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Psycho Social Health, Private Bag X6001, PO Box 206, Potchefstroom, 2520

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 469 0066

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of my PhD studies in social work. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00098-18-S1)** and

HREC General WICF Version July 2016

Page 1 of 6

will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in South Africa and will involve parents in the process of divorce. Seven to nine couples in the process of divorce will be included in this study.*
- *We plan to give you a program to study and a reinforcing questionnaire to determine what your perceptions of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents are. It will be preceded and followed up by means of a pre- and post-test. The researcher will use the information to evaluate and refine the new programme.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to be part of this research because you are considered to be in the process of divorce and have a child(ren) between the ages of 1 month to 12 years old.*
- *You also fit the research because you are able to communicate fluently in English.*
- *You reside in Potchefstroom in order to have your study material delivered at your home and the completed questionnaires collected or internet access if you prefer to participate and receive your study material via email and submit your completed pre- and post-test online.*
- ***The benefit for you** as participant will be the opportunity to gain knowledge and prevent adjustment problems of your children during the process of divorce.*
- *We are primarily interested in your views regarding your experience of the program as well as your ability to contribute to the content of the proposed programme.*
- *You will **not be able to take part** in this research if you are not considered to be in the process of divorce or if you indicate that you do not have time to take part in the study.*

What will be expected of you?

You will be expected to complete the presentation of the divorce educational programme and complete a questionnaire afterwards. The feedback will be analysed to evaluate your insight and whether you have gained enough information to prevent adjustment problems of your children during the process of divorce. Your active involvement will assist the refinement of the new divorce education programme for South Africa.

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There is no direct gain for you if you take part in this study but you will be given the opportunity to gain knowledge and prevent adjustment problems of your child(ren).*

- *The in-direct gain for you will be that you will take part in the development of a programme that will educate divorcing parents to prevent future adjustment problems of their children.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

- *The risks to you in this study are low no personal information will be asked or discussed.*
- *You will also be given the opportunity to express an opinion without feeling pressured by other participants.*
- *There are more in-direct gains for you in joining this study than there are risks. We will supply a contact number of a person to contact if you experience any discomfort.*

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?

- *Anonymity of your findings will be limited but protected by coding the information manually when the information/data are received.*
- *No identifying information will be used.*
- *Only the researcher and study leaders will be able to look at the feedback from you.*
- *The data will be saved on a memory stick and after completion of the research it will be stored in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the office of COMPRES at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus.*
- *The data will be stored for 5 years and then be destroyed by erasing it.*

What will happen with the findings or samples?

- *The findings of this study will only be used for this study.*

How will you know about the results of this research?

- *We will give you the results of this research when the findings were disseminated and the related article published.*
- *We will send you the related article electronically.*
- *You will be informed of any new relevant findings by the researcher or Prof Cornelia Wessels.*

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

This study is not funded and you will not be paid to take part in the study. There will be no costs involved for you, if you do take part in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- *You can contact Lisl Roodt at 084 533 6120 if you have any further questions or have any problems.*
- *You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 1206 or carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns*

that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.

- *You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.*

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in the research study titled: *Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children in the process of divorce.*

I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to
.....
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I did/did not use an interpreter
I was available should he/she want to ask any further questions.
- The informed consent was obtained by an independent person.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of researcher

.....
Signature of witness

ADDENDUM 5c: HREC CONSENT FORMS PARENT SELF STUDY



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR Parents in the process of divorce

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBERS: NWU-00098-18-S1

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof Cornelia Cecilia Wessels

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Lisl Roodt

ADDRESS: North West University, Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Psycho Social Health, Private Bag X6001, PO Box 206, Potchefstroom, 2520

CONTACT NUMBER: 082 469 0066

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of my PhD studies in social work. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00098-18-S1)** and HREC General WICF Version July 2016

Page 1 of 5

will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *This study will be conducted in South Africa and will involve parents in the process of divorce. Seven to nine parents in the process of divorce will be included in this study.*
- *We plan to give you a program to study and a reinforcing questionnaire to determine what your perceptions of the newly designed and developed educational programme for divorcing parents are. The researcher will use the information to evaluate and refine the new programme.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to be part of this research because you are considered to be in the process of divorce and have a child(ren) between the ages of 1 month to 12 years old.*
- *You also fit the research because you are able to communicate fluently in English,*
- *You have internet access and prefer to participate and receive your study material via email and submit your completed questionnaire via email.*
- ***The benefit for you** as participant will be the opportunity to gain knowledge and prevent adjustment problems of your children during the process of divorce.*
- *We are primarily interested in your views regarding your experience of the programme as well as your ability to contribute to the content of the proposed programme.*
- *You will **not be able to take part** in this research if you are not considered to be in the process of divorce or if you indicate that you do not have time to take part in the study.*

What will be expected of you?

You will be expected to complete the study material of the divorce educational programme and complete a questionnaire evaluating the contents afterwards. The feedback will be analysed manually by the researcher. Your active involvement will assist the refinement of the new divorce education programme for South Africa.

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- *There is no direct gain for you if you take part in this study but you will be given the opportunity to gain knowledge and prevent adjustment problems of your child(ren).*
- *The in-direct gain for you will be that you will take part in the development of a programme that will educate divorcing parents to prevent future adjustment problems of their children.*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

- *The risks to you in this study are low no personal information will be asked or discussed.*
- *You will also be given the opportunity to express an opinion without feeling pressured by other participants.*
- *There are more in-direct gains for you in joining this study than there are risks. We will supply a contact number of a person to contact if you experience any discomfort.*

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?

- *Anonymity of your findings will be limited but protected by coding the information manually when the information/data are received.*
- *No identifying information will be used.*
- *Only the researcher and study leaders will be able to look at the feedback from you.*
- *The data will be saved on a memory stick and after completion of the research it will be stored in a locked, fireproof cabinet in the office of COMPRES at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus.*
- *The data will be stored for 5 years and then be destroyed by erasing it.*

What will happen with the findings or samples?

- *The findings of this study will only be used for this study.*

How will you know about the results of this research?

- *We will give you the results of this research when the findings were disseminated and the related article published.*
- *We will send you the related article electronically.*
- *You will be informed of any new relevant findings by the researcher or Prof Cornelia Wessels.*

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?

This study is not funded and you will not be paid to take part in the study. There will be no costs involved for you, if you do take part in this study.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- *You can contact Lisl Roodt at 084 533 6120 if you have any further questions or have any problems.*
- *You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 1206 or carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.*
- *You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own purposes.*

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in the research study titled: *Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children in the process of divorce.*

I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to
.....
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of person obtaining consent **Signature of witness**

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I did/did not use an interpreter
I was available should he/she want to ask any further questions.
- The informed consent was obtained by an independent person.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of researcher **Signature of witness**

ADDENDUM 6: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

QUANTITATIVE SELF CONSTRUCTED QUESTIONNAIRE: EXPERTS IN THE FIELD

The aim of the survey is to do a **quantitative analysis of specific themes that should be addressed in an educational program for divorcing parents** to equip them with knowledge to prevent adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce.

You were identified by the researcher as a possible respondent due to your experience in divorce related cases.

The aim of the research study is to develop an educational programme for South African parents as part of the completion of a PhD in Social Work.

The survey consists of ten (10) questions and will not take longer than 10 minutes to complete.

The survey is completed anonymously. Your identity will not be asked, and will not be used in the research report.

By completing and submitting the survey you give consent for gathered data to be used as part of the researcher's study.

QUESTIONS

Please read the question and select the appropriate option from the provided list.

1. What is your profession?

• Social worker in private practice	
• Divorce attorney	
• Advisor from the office of the family advocate	

2. How many years of experience do you have in the field of divorce related cases?

• 3 - 5 years	
• 5 - 8 years	
• More than 8 years	

3. Are you aware of divorce education programs globally?

• Yes	
• No	

If yes, which of the following programs are you aware of?

• Family Transitions Triple P: A group administered parenting program to minimize the effects of parental divorce on education	
• Focus On Kids Program (FOK)	

• Divorce Parent Education Program (DPE)	
• Mandatory Family Information Sessions (FIS) on the use of court resources by divorcing parents	
• Protecting children after divorce	
• Children In Between: Divorce Education For Parents	

4. To your knowledge, is there a divorce education program in South Africa?

• Yes	
• No	

If yes, please name the program?

--

5. Do you think South African children will benefit from a divorce education program for parents?

• Yes	
• No	

If yes, how?

--

If no, why not?

--

6. Are you of the opinion that the attendance of divorce education program should be compulsory?

• Yes	
• No	

If yes, why?

--

If yes, should both parents be compelled to attend the program, together or attend separate sessions?

ANSWER	COMPELLED	SEPERATELY	TOGETHER
• YES			
• NO			

If no, why not?

--

7. At what stage in the process of divorce do you think the programme will be appropriate?

• Before filing for divorce	
• 30 Days after filing for divorce	
• 60 Days after filing for divorce	

8. Please rank the order of importance of possible topics to be addressed during a divorce education program, in order of importance?

One (1) being the most important and ten (10) being the least important.

• Emotions	
• Conflict/anger management	
• Communication	
• Problem solving	
• Parent-child relationship	
• Parental involvement	
• Discipline	
• Legal processes	
• Starting a new life	
• Financial matters	

9. In your opinion, how many sessions will be appropriate and practically possible for divorcing parents to attend, over what period of time and how long, in your opinion, should a session last?

• How many sessions	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6	Other
• Duration of sessions	1-2 hours	3 - 4 hours	1 day	Other
• Period of time	Within two weeks	Within one month	Within Two months	Other

If other, please give your opinion?

How many sessions	
Duration of sessions	
Period of time	

10. In your opinion, what should form part of a divorce education program for parents to prevent adaption problems for children during the process of divorce?

Thank you for participating in this research project and completing the survey. Your opinion is valued.

Kind regards

LISL ROODT
RESEARCHER

ADDENDUM 7: DELPHI INFORMATION LEAFLET

DELPHI INFORMATION LEAFLET

Research study

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce

What is the research study all about?

The overall aim of this study will be to design, develop and evaluate a divorce educational programme to be followed by divorcing parents in South Africa during the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in their children.



The study will involve experts in the field of divorce-related cases by means of the Delphi technique. The aim of the survey will be to evaluate and refine the content of the newly designed educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in their children in the process of divorce.

The objectives of this study will be to:

Evaluate the content of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents by means of the Delphi technique with participating experts in the field of divorce. The proposed programme and a schedule of questions will be given to proposed participants to complete in the comfort of their offices.

You should participate if:

- you have expert experience in the field of divorce-related cases, and
- you can communicate in English.

Unfortunately, you can't participate if:

- you are not an expert in the field of divorce-related cases or unable to communicate in English.

There is no exclusion of participants due to race, age or gender.

The benefit for you as participant:

- will be the opportunity to gain knowledge and contribute positively to alleviate future adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

We are primarily interested in your views and knowledge regarding your expert experience of the process of divorce and your ability to contribute to the content of the proposed programme to equip them to prevent and alleviate adjustment problems in their children during the process of divorce.

Should you be interested to participate in the study, please contact Lisl Roodt at 0845336120 or lislroodt1@gmail.com or Prof CC Wessels at 018 2991683 or cornelia.wessels@nwu.ac.za for more information regarding this project.

The worst problems for children stem from parental conflict, before, during and after divorce.....

Stephanie Coontz

ADDENDUM 8: DELPHI LETTER TO EXPERTS

DELPHI LETTER TO EXPERTS

Research study

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce



Dear Expert Participant,

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this research study. Your feedback with regard to the new divorce educational programme is being analysed and implemented. It will be sent to you for your final input.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, it must be presented to parents during the process of divorce. As all of the professional expert participants indicated the need for a programme of this nature, it would be appreciated if you, as participant, could inform your clients, during the process of divorce, of the programme. It will be presented during November 2020.

Could you please inform your clients during the process of divorce of the newly developed programme? I attached a Programme Information Leaflet, for your convenience, to use as information when you do the referral. This is not a therapeutic group and therefore participants do not need to discuss any sensitive personal information. The aim of the programme is to educate parents about the process of divorce and the impact their negative behaviour have on their children's future adjustment. The programme will have no financial implication for the attendees and light refreshments will be served during a tea break.

The parents will **benefit from the programme by** gaining knowledge to alleviate future adjustment problems in their children due to the process of divorce. A secondary benefit is that they will contribute to the finalisation of a programme for divorcing parents in South Africa and contribute indirectly to the wellbeing of many children in South Africa.

Attached please find an information brochure that can be sent to the parents electronically or, alternatively a hard copy pamphlet is available, which can be delivered to your practice on request.

Parents who are interested, but not able or willing to participate in person can be accommodated by means of self-study in the safety and comfort of their home.

Your valuable contribution to this programme is appreciated.

Please confirm whether you will be able and willing to refer clients who are in the process of getting a divorce.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Roodt'.

**LISL ROODT
RESEARCHER**

ADDENDUM 9: DELPHI ROUND 1

DELPHI ROUND 1

RESEARCH STUDY

Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce

Questionnaire: EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF DIVORCE

The aim of this process is to evaluate the content and validity of the proposed divorce educational programme with the expertise of a panel of experts in the field of divorce-related cases by means of the **Delphi technique**. The Delphi technique is a structured process, which utilises a series of questions and/or rounds to gather and provide information until group consensus is reached. The Delphi technique will assist the researcher in getting opinions from experts in the field of divorce despite the fact that they are geographically far from each other. The aim of the process is to do a qualitative analysis of specific themes that should be addressed in an educational programme for divorcing parents to equip them with knowledge to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

You were identified by the researcher as a possible respondent due to your experience in divorce-related cases.

The aim of the research study is to develop an educational programme for South African parents as part of the completion of a PhD in Social Work.

This process consists of the following:

- You will receive the proposed programme for divorcing parents via email (Addendum 2);
- You will have to read through the proposed programme and then answer seven questions – which will take a maximum of 90 minutes of your time;
- The Delphi technique entails that, after every submission by the participants, the corrections will be done by the researcher and the programme will be sent back to you for comments;
- This process will continue until data saturation has been reached and all participants are satisfied with the newly developed programme.

Your identity will not be used in the research report.

2. Are there other themes that you would want to address in such a programme?

--

3. What is your opinion on the following:

3.1 Do you think the information in the programme is sufficient?
Please give your input.

3.2 Do you think adequate sessions were suggested? Please motivate your answer.

--

3.3 How long do you think should a session be and why?

--

3.4 Would you suggest any changes to the proposed programme?
3.5 Do you want to make any recommendations about themes that are not included in the proposed programme? If so, please do so and motivate why you think it is necessary.

Thank you for participating in this research project and completing the survey. Your opinion is highly valued.

Kind regards



**LISL ROODT
RESEARCHER**

ADDENDUM 10: DELPHI ROUND 2

DELPHI ROUND 2

22/10/2020

Dear Participant



Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this study as well as your valuable contributions during round 1 of the evaluation of the newly designed programme.

The feedback was very positive. After dissemination, the responses from the respective participants to the questions were summarised in Table 1. The changes that were made with reference to the recommendations are also summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summarised feedback and proposed changes to the newly designed divorce educational programme

Question	Summary of feedback	Changes to programme
What is your opinion on the relevancy on the themes that the programme proposes to address?	The themes are relevant and the most important themes were covered.	No changes were made to the themes.
Are there other themes that you would want to address in such a programme?	No other themes were suggested, except adding a list of contact details of professionals for further reference, assistance and support with regard to divorce-related issues.	A list of experts in the field of divorce, e.g. therapists, social workers in private practice, non-governmental welfare organisations, psychologist, Law Clinic and Child Justice Centre, psychologists and play therapists were added.
Do you think the	The majority of	No changes were made with

information in the programme is sufficient? Please give your input.	participants agreed that the information is relevant and sufficient.	regard to the amount of information in the programme.
Do you think adequate sessions were suggested? Please motivate your answer.	40 % of participants agreed that two sessions are sufficient, as participants do not have ample time available, especially within the process of divorce and the fact that they need to find alternative care for their children while attending the programme. 60 % of the participants were of the opinion that there might be a need for more sessions due to the emotional impact, complex information and possible lengthy discussions.	No extra sessions were added to the programme, as the participants who argued for more than two sessions primarily based their requests on emotional discussions/impact. The programme, however, was designed as an educational programme and not a therapeutic programme. Parents will not attend the session simultaneously and personal information will not be discussed.
How long do you think a session should be and why?	The majority of the participants recommended a two to three hour presentation of the programme per session. One participant suggested that the programme be presented over three, five-hour sessions and another	The longer sessions were suggested by participants who were also concerned about the emotional impact and possible complex personal discussions within. Due to the informative nature of the programme and the fact that it is not therapeutic group discussions and the fact that parents do not have

	suggested four sessions of 90 minutes each.	much spare time, the presentation time of each session was extended with half an hour and a 15 minute tea break was included to prevent them from losing focus and/or interest.
Would you suggest any changes to the proposed programme?	The majority of participants had no other suggestions to the programme except earlier suggestions of number and length of the sessions, which were addressed. Another suggestion for change was the possibility of adding more information regarding the legal process of divorce.	The legal process of divorce contains many technicalities and differs from case to case. It is also a considerable specialised field and can be presented as a programme on its own. It was not included in the divorce educational programme, as the aim of the programme is to educate the parents on the negative impact of their behaviour on their children, and not about legal processes and technicalities.
Do you want to make any recommendations about themes that are not included in the proposed programme? If so, please do so and motivate why you think it is necessary.	The majority of the participants replied with no suggestions. There was, however, a suggestion for more focus on communication, as well as the possibility of involving the children with the parents or in a separate programme.	Due to the fact that this is only an educational programme, no extra detail on communication were included. The main objective of the programme is to make parents aware of their negative behaviour, but the necessary referrals will be done via the included

	<p>The suggestion of a contact list for continued professional services were also mentioned again.</p>	<p>contact list, should parents feel the need for intensive professional help to address their possible shortcomings. A few programmes are available globally for children caught in the middle of a divorce. However, this is a separate study and design, and therefore cannot be included in this divorce educational programme for parents.</p>
--	--	---

With the original programme in mind as well as the suggested changes, the explanation of changes made and those not made, please answer the following questions:

1. Are you of the opinion that the changes to the programme, in light of the participant feedback, are sufficient?

ANSWER	PLEASE MOTIVATE YOUR ANSWER
Yes	
No	

2. Do you have any other suggestions with regard to the newly developed divorce educational programme for parents in the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in children?

Please return this page with your answers via email by no later than 5
November 2020.

Thank you very much for your time and expertise.

Kind regards,



**LISL ROODT
RESEARCHER**

ADDENDUM 11: PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS

PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS

We are primarily interested in your views and knowledge regarding your child's experience of the process of divorce and your ability to prevent adjustment problems during the process of divorce.

Should you be interested to participate in the study, please contact Lisl Roodt at 0845336120, e-mail

or
Prof CC Wessels at
018 2991683, e-mail

[for more information](#)
regarding this project.

The programme consists of two sessions of two to three hours each. Participants do not have to attend the group with their spouse/partner. Participants can choose which date they want to attend.

The groups are scheduled as follows:

7 November 2020

21 November 2020

Session 1: 08:00 – 11:00

Session 2: 11:30 – 14 :30

Participants need to attend both sessions, even if it is not on the same day. Self-study participation can be arranged for parents who are not able or willing to attend in person.

Please confirm your attendance in order to receive the venue information.

RSVP:

Lisl Roodt
0845336120

Research study

Educational programme for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DIVORCING PARENTS



What is the research study all about?

This study will aim to design, develop and evaluate a divorce educational programme to be followed by divorcing parents in South Africa to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

The worst problems for children stem from parental conflict, before, during and after divorce or within marriage.

Stephanie Coontz

The study will be conducted in North West and Gauteng provinces. This will involve a presentation of the new programme with divorcing parents to evaluate the content of the programme. The aim is to alleviate the trauma of their children during the process of divorce.

The objectives of this study

To evaluate the content of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents by presenting and discussing it during a group meeting with parents who are in the process of getting a divorce. The proposed programme manual and a schedule of questions for completion before and after the session will be available at the group meeting.

You should participate if you:

- are in the process of getting a divorce.
- have at least one child under the age of twelve years.
- want to prevent adjustment problems in your child due to the process of divorce.
- can communicate in English.

Unfortunately, you can't participate if you:

- are not in the process of getting a divorce, without children or unable to communicate in English.

There is no exclusion of participants due to race, age or gender.

The benefit for you:

- as participant will be the opportunity to gain knowledge and make a positive contribution to prevent future adjustment problems in your children due to the process of divorce.

ADDENDUM 12: INFORMATION LEAFLET PARENTS

INFORMATION LEAFLET PARENTS

Research study
Educational program for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce



What is the research study all about?

In South Africa, the overall wellbeing of at least 22 000 children (SA Stats, 2018) are being affected by divorce every year and these children are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with still-married parents (Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249). It has been argued by the SA Law Reform Commission (2015:244) that the South African society fails to manage divorce effectively and identified the need to assist families with procedural issues arising out of separation, divorce and child welfare. Research (Brandon, 2006:172-183) indicates that divorce education programs globally have reported increased parental awareness of children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviour that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication and greater willingness to settle custody disputes with their formal partner (Kelly, 2006:40). Grych (2005:99) stresses that teaching skills to help contain and resolve conflict, manage anger and prevent conflict may reduce the negative impact of stress factors affecting children's mental health and promote better adjustment following divorce.

The overall **aim of this study** is to design, develop and evaluate a divorce education programme to be followed by parents in South Africa during the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems of their children. Similar divorce educational programs are presented, with a very good success rate, in the greater part of the United States of America, Europe and Australia.

The proposed programme was designed and developed after information was gathered by studying literature and consulting with experts in the field of divorce related cases.

You have been selected to partake in this study due to the fact that you are in the process of divorce and have at least one child(ren) between the age of 1 month and 12 years old.

The objectives of this phase of the study will be for you and your spouse to attend two group sessions between two and three hours long where the content of the proposed educational programme for divorcing parents will be presented and discussed. You should not attend the same sessions, as this may lead to conflict. You will have to complete a questionnaire after the sessions to evaluate the content of the programme.

You should participate if:

- you are able to communicate fluently in English, as the communication will be in English.
- you are the parent of at least one child between one month and twelve years old and in the process of divorce.

Unfortunately, you won't be able to participate if:

- you indicate that you do not have time to take part in the study.
- you are married and not in the process of divorce.

The benefit for you:

- as participant will be the opportunity to gain knowledge to alleviate future adjustment problems of your own children during the process of divorce and make a positive contribution towards a divorce education programme for South Africa.

The content of the proposed program is to equip parents to prevent and alleviate adjustment problems of their children during the process of divorce. No sensitive personal information will be discussed. This is an educational/information group, and not a therapeutic group.

Should you be interested to attend the programme during November 2020 and need more information please contact **Lisl Roodt at 084 533 6120 or lislroodt1@gmail.com**. The programme will be presented in Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp on the following dates.

DATE	TIME	SESSION NR	VENUE
Saturday 7 November 2020	08:00 to 11:00	1	Potchefstroom
Saturday 7 November 2020	11:30 to 14:30	2	Potchefstroom
Saturday 15 November 2020	08:00 to 11:00	1	Krugersdorp
Saturday 15 November 2020	11:30 to 14:30	2	Krugersdorp
Saturday 22 November 2020	08:00 to 11:00	1	Potchefstroom
Saturday 22 November 2020	11:30 to 14:30	2	Potchefstroom
Saturday 28 November 2020	08:00 to 11:00	1	Krugersdorp
Saturday 28 November 2020	11:30 to 14:30	2	Krugersdorp

The necessary Covid-19 protocol will apply

If you are interested in the programme but not able or willing to attend the sessions in person, but prefer to participate from the comfort and safety of your own home, please contact Lisl Roodt at 0845336120 or lislroodt1@gmail.com.

The worst problems for children stem from parental conflict, before, during and after divorce.....

Stephanie Coontz

ADDENDUM 13: PRESENTER PROGRAMME MANUAL

**Educational programme
for divorcing parents to
prevent adjustment
problems in children**

**PROGRAMME MANUAL
FOR PRESENTERS**

LISL ROODT



INDEX

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE

- Participants
- Layout of the educational programme
- Session Layout
- Programme manual with relevant literature
- How to use the manual and reference list
- Schematic layout of programme

SESSION 1: The process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children

- Main objective/learning outcome
- Subsection objectives/outcomes
- Content
- Manual

SESSION 2: Managing the process of divorce to promote healthy adjustment

- Main objective/learning outcome
- Subsection objectives/outcomes
- Content
- Manual

INTRODUCTION

When divorce is mentioned in South Africa, it brings to mind a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economic classes of life. Divorce can be described as an illness of the times and according to the South African Statistic Services release (SA Stats, 2018), 25 282 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2016 and 14 302 (54,6%) affected children under the age of 18 years old. In countries, such as the United States, around 39% of marriages ends in divorce (Owen & Rhoades, 2012) and in 2006 more than 1,1 million children (13,75%) were living with a parent who was either divorced or separated (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Due to the high incidence of problems relating to divorce, as experienced in practice, and an integrated literature review (Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249.; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:251-262; Amato, 2012:12-19) pointed out that divorce is a serious and ongoing problem, not only in South Africa, but globally as well.

According to literature (Brandon, 2006:172; Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111:172; Kelly, 2006:40) a divorce educational programme for parents can promote their communication and parenting skills and, in the process, prevent the negative impact of divorce on and adjustment problems in their children. Research (Brandon, 2006:172-183) indicates that divorce educational programmes have reported increased parental awareness of children's needs; a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes; better communication and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their former partner (Kelly, 2006:40).

The problem is being addressed by mandatory divorce educational programmes in many states of America, Europe and Australia.

The aim and purpose of this educational programme for divorcing parents, is to minimise adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce. This programme aims to fill a gap in South Africa, as identified by the office of the family advocate during a National Focus Group Forum. That is to make it compulsory for divorcing parents in South Africa to attend a parent information/educational programme prior to any divorce order being granted (SA

Law Reform Comm., 2015:244), as parents' insufficient knowledge is often a result of inadequate information.

The content of **Session 1** of the programme will be to educate divorcing parents to understand and obtain knowledge about the process of divorce and the negative impact it has on their children. During Session 1, the emotional process of divorce, the physical process of divorce and the impact of the process of divorce has on children, will be discussed.

During **Session 2**, applicants will learn how to manage the process of divorce to promote healthy adjustment. The sub-section objectives and outcome of Session 2 will be the triggers of conflict, healthy communication, conflict management and the needs of children during and after divorce.

Applicable literature will be noted in the manual during every session. The programme manual is an aid to assist for future reference. There will be a pre-training and post-training questionnaire to evaluate whether the programme served as an educational tool for divorcing parents, in order to prevent adjustment problems in children as a result of their parents' divorce.

This educational programme should, according to the National Focus Group Forum (SA Law Reform Comm., 2015:244), be implemented uniformly across the country to ensure that all parents receive equal service and quality of service. Parties have to attend the sessions in person and co-parents do not have to attend the programme jointly. The implementation of a proper educational programme for divorcing parents in South Africa will make a positive contribution towards the communication between all family members and prepare parents for the change following a divorce. Furthermore, it will contribute towards more effective conflict management among parents to minimise the negative impact of continued conflict between them and enable parents to educate and prepare their children for changes that occur after a divorce.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE

The general aim of this programme is to educate divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

PARTICIPANTS

This programme was designed to educate divorcing parents on the negative effects divorce has on children and to enable them to manage the process of divorce in order to prevent adjustment problems in their children. The programme will be presented to divorcing parents to educate them about their role and responsibility within the process of divorce to prevent adjustment problems in their children due to divorce.

THE LAYOUT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

The programme will be divided into two sessions, with duration of two and a half and three hours each. The sessions will be scheduled within two to four weeks of each other. The educational session will be divided into activities, including:

- Class presentations
- Class discussions
- Case studies
- Overhead presentation or film footage relevant to educational information
- Programme manual for use during presentations and taking notes

SESSION LAYOUT

- Each session will last between two and a half and three hours.
- Each session has different objectives. The objectives will be scheduled according to the needs of the participants. These needs will be established during their interaction and participation in discussions.

PROGRAMME MANUAL WITH RELEVANT LITERATURE

- A programme manual will be provided to each participant with the necessary theoretical information and the option to make personal notes during the programme for future reference.
- For future reference and self-study, a list with applicable references to the programme will be included in the manual.

HOW TO USE THE PROGRAMME MANUAL AND REFERENCE LIST

- The main objective and the subsection objectives of each session are indicated in the manual.
- During each session, the participants will be provided with practical information that can be noted in the manual.
- The manual can serve as a future reference when problems due to divorce surface.

SCHEMATIC LAYOUT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR DIVORCING PARENTS

SESSION	PROGRAMME	TIME	CONTENT
SESSION 1: The process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children	• Welcome	18:00 – 18:05	• The emotional process of divorce
	• Introduction	18:05 – 18:10	
	• Expectations	18:10 – 18:15	• The physical process of divorce
	• Practical arrangements/ground rules	18:15 – 18:25	
• Aim of programme	18:25 – 18:30 18:30 – 18:50	• The impact of the process of divorce on children	
• Presentation and discussion of content	18:50 – 20:30		
• Summary			
SESSION 2: Managing the process of divorce to promote healthy adjustment of children	• Welcome	18:00 – 18:05	• Triggers of conflict
	• Introduction	18:05 – 18:10	
	• Expectations	18:10 – 18:15	
	• Practical arrangements/ground rules	18:15 – 18:25	• Healthy communication and conflict management
	• Aim of programme	18:25 – 18:30	
	• Presentation and discussion of content	18:30 – 20:10	• Needs of children during and after divorce
• Summary and evaluation of programme content by means of self-constructed questionnaire	20:15 – 20:30		

SESSION 1: The process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children

Main objective/outcomes of Session 1:

The main objective of the programme will be to educate divorcing parents on the process of divorce and to understand the negative impact their own behaviour has on their children.

Subsection objectives/outcomes of Session 1

- Introducing the facilitator/researcher to the divorcing parents/group members
- Introducing the group members to each other
- Establishing and building relationships
- Discussing order arrangements/ground rules
- Clarifying the expectations, purpose and objectives of the educational programme
- Presentation of Session 1:
- Summary

Content

The first session will be utilised to welcome the group members and as an introduction session between the facilitator and the group members. An icebreaker will be utilised to facilitate the group members in getting to know each other. As an icebreaker, group members will be asked to write down three things in thirty seconds they think will make their divorce more difficult/easier for their children. During the next thirty seconds, they need to discuss this with the person sitting next to them and decide on the most important thing. Then, one person from each group will give feedback to the group while the facilitator writes it down. This will enable the group members to engage in the discussion and will keep their attention, as the presentation leads to answering these questions.

Group members will then be asked to introduce themselves to the group and identify their expectations of the programme. The group members will be informed of order arrangements and an outline of the two sessions will be given.

Aim of the programme

The general aim of this programme is to educate divorcing parents to understand the negative effects of divorce on children and enable them to manage the process in order to prevent adjustment problems in children.

The aim of Session 1 is to explain the process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children.

The group members will be expected to complete a pre-test questionnaire during Session 1 in order to determine their knowledge and stress levels.

Session 1 of the programme will explain:

- the emotional process of divorce,
- the physical process/implications of divorce,
- the impact of the process of divorce on children.

The group members will receive a training manual with the applicable literature, which can be used as a reference as well as a means of keeping notes during the presentation.

At the end of first session, the facilitator will summarise the presentation while the group members give oral feedback on their understanding of their gained knowledge regarding the emotional process of divorce, the physical implications of divorce, the legal processes as well as their understanding of the impact of divorce on their children.

SESSION 2: Managing the process of divorce to promote healthy adjustment of children

Main objective/outcomes of session 2:

The main objective of Session 2 is to educate divorcing parents on the process of divorce as well as promoting the healthy adjustment of their children.

Subsection objectives/outcomes of Session 2

- Welcome
- Introduction
- Expectations
- Practical arrangements/ground rules
- Aim of programme
- Presentation and discussion of content
- Summary and evaluation of program by means of post-test questionnaire

Content

The second session will start off by welcoming the group members and doing a brief outline of the first session. An icebreaker will be utilised to facilitate the group members' interaction and to encourage their participation. As an icebreaker, group members will be asked to write down three things in thirty seconds that they think make them a good parent. During the next thirty seconds, they need to discuss this with the person sitting next to them and decide on the most important factor. Then one person from each group will give feedback to the group while the facilitator writes it down. This will enable the group members to engage in the discussion and will keep their attention as the presentation leads to answering these questions.

Group members will then be asked to identify their expectations of Session 2 of the programme.

The group members will be informed of order arrangements and an outline of the second session will be given.

Aim of Session 2

The general aim of this session is to educate the divorcing parents to understand the negative effects of divorce on children and enable them to manage the process in order to prevent adjustment problems in children.

Session 2 of the programme will explain:

- Triggers of conflict

- Healthy communication and conflict management
- Needs of children during and after divorce

The training manual, as well as the applicable literature received during the first session, can be used by the group members as a reference as well as a means of keeping notes during the presentation.

At the end of the second session, the facilitator will summarise the programme while the group members will give oral feedback on their understanding of their gained knowledge regarding the management of the process of divorce in order to prevent adjustment problems in their children.

The group members will be expected to complete a self-constructed questionnaire after Session 2, in order to evaluate the content of the programme.

REFERENCES

- Amato, P.R. 2012. *The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children: An Update*. University Park. Pennsylvania State University
- Anthony, C.J. Diperna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. *Divorce, Approaches to Learning, and Children's Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mediated and Moderated Effects*. *Journal Of School Psychology* 52: 249–261. *Journal Homepage: Available at: www.Elsevier.Com/Locate/Jschpsy*. Date of access: 28 Mar. 2017.
- Brandon, D.J. 2006. *Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents*. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 45(1/2). Available at: <http://www.Haworthpress.Com/Web/JDR>. Date of access: 24 Jan. 2017.
- Fagan, P. & Churchill, A. 2012. *The Effects of Divorce on Children*. *Marriage & Religion Research Institute*, 56(5): 347-368.
- Gilman, J. Schneider, D & Shulak, R. 2005. *Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kid's Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds*. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4), 110-172. Available at: <http://haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Kelly, J.B. 2006. *Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights from Empirical and Clinical Research*. *Family Process*, 46(1):35-52. Available at: www.Familyprocess.Org. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Owen, J. & Rhoades, G. K. 2012. *Reducing inter parental conflict among parents in contentious child custody disputes: An initial investigation of the working together program*. *Journal of Marital yesand Family Therapy*, 38(3):542–555.
- South Africa. 2015. *The South African Law Reform Commission. Family dispute resolution: Care and contact with children. Project 100D, Issue Paper 31*. (ISBN: 978-0-621-44230-4).

South Africa. 2018. Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018.

Available at:

http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

United States Census Bureau. 2020. Marriage and Divorce Rates by State.

Available at: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/marriage-divorce-rates-by-state.html> Date of access: 17 Sept.2020.

ADDENDUM 14: PARENT PROGRAMME MANUAL

**Educational
programme for
divorcing parents to
prevent adjustment
problems in children**

**PROGRAMME
MANUAL FOR
PARENTS**

LISL ROODT



make some of the most important decisions of your life. **Do not make permanent changes** during this time.

The short-term aftermath will be to re-evaluate your situation after two years and reconsider all your options, be flexible and be willing to change decisions with regard to primary care and residency, relocation, etc.

The **long-term phase of divorce** is planning for the next twenty years, schooling, graduation, marriages, funerals, etc. The less conflict between you and your ex-spouse, the better you can plan and cooperate. Although you are no longer married, you will **forever be parents to the same children**. Children need **both parents** as it gives them a sense of **belonging and security**. Your positive relationship with your ex-spouse **makes it easier on the kids**, for example, if you sit close to each other at the concert, the child won't experience conflict of which direction to turn to when the concert is done. You do not want your child to feel he/she has to choose between parents.

NOTES TO MYSELF

What do I need to remember?



NEGATIVE FACTORS MAKING DIVORCE WORSE FOR CHILDREN

Divorce is a long-term ongoing process and the lack of proper management of the process often results in misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict between the concerned parties (Smit, 2010:1). The following factors make divorce even worse for children:

- Poor communication
- Poor conflict management
- Poor co-parenting
- Messages between parents/information
- Negative financial implications
- Loss of contact with one parent
- Long distance parenting

INTRODUCTION

When divorce is mentioned in South Africa, it brings to mind a picture of unhappy children from all socio-economical classes of life. Divorce can be described as an illness of the times and according to the 2018 statistics release from the South African Statistic Services (SA Stats, 2018), 24 689 marriages in South Africa ended in divorce during 2018 and 54,4% of those divorces involved 22 218 children under the age of eighteen years.

When one looks at the numbers, it is clear that thousands of children are affected by divorce and it is important that their best interests are looked at as well as the trauma that they might experience. The effect of divorce on children ranges from minor to severe and from short to long term (Fagan & Churchill, 2012:251-262). None of the effects applies to every child of every divorced couple, nor has any one child suffered all the effects.

There is no way to predict how any child will be affected nor to what extent. Children affected by divorce, however, are more likely to develop a variety of psychological problems compared to children with still-married parents (Anthony *et al.*, 2014:249). Children suffer when parents argue regularly, maintain inconsistent rules, and attempt to undermine one another's authority or relationship with children (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512). These children may experience difficulties like emotional problems, acting-out behaviour and poor



school achievement during parental separation or divorce (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:111). Children from divorce may also suffer short-term depression, anxiety and behavioural problems at home or school (Gilman *et al.*, 2005:110).

For some parents and children divorce might be the most stressful event of their lives and the unknown can cause even greater fear and stress than that they already know (Gadaua: 2012). Being aware of this may help reduce the negative impact of divorce on children and children may be more likely to have a happy, healthy relationship with both parents.

Divorce is an ongoing process and not just an incident, and the lack of proper management of the process often results in misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict between concerning parties (Smit, 2010:1). It is therefore very important for parents and children to be prepared properly and guided through the ongoing process to prevent a lifelong negative impact on children that may result in high numbers of early school dropout, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse and criminal offences (Smit, 2010:2). Children are happier, healthier and better adjusted when both their parents play an active role in their lives and



their trauma can be lessened when their parents get along (Philyaw & Thomas, 2013:4).

Participation in divorce educational programmes increase parental awareness of children's needs, reduce parental behaviour that put children in the middle of disputes, result in better communication and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with formal partners (Brandon, 2006:172-183; Kelly, 2006:40).

The aim and purpose of this educational programme for divorcing parents is to prevent adjustment problems in children during the process of divorce.

The content of **Session 1** of the programme will be to **educate divorcing** parents to understand and obtain knowledge of the process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on their child(ren). The emotional and physical process of divorce will be discussed as well as the impact thereof on children.

During **Session 2**, participants will learn how to **manage the process of divorce** to ensure healthy adjustment. It will deal with the triggers of conflict, healthy communication, conflict management and the needs of children during and after divorce.

Parents need to complete a self-constructed questionnaire to evaluate the content of the programme after completion. They will be ready to handle difficult situations in the process of divorce. The programme should make a positive contribution towards:

- the communication between different family members;
- the preparation for the change to follow divorce;
- more effective conflict management among parents;
- minimising the negative impact of continued conflict between parents, and
- enabling parents to educate and prepare their children for changes to follow.

OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

At the end of the programme parents will:

- understand that their own pain, rage, stress, needs, and vulnerability are normal in the process of divorce;
- be aware of the divorce process from the child's perspective, including the misbelief that "the divorce is my fault";
- realise the effect of the loss of extended family, home, school and friends on the child;
- realise they have to be emotionally available and involved,
- be able to communicate more effectively,
- be able to give reassurance, and
- be able to provide consistency.

PARENTS WILL REALISE THE SERIOUS HARM THEY CAUSE TO THEIR CHILDREN WHEN:

- the children witness parental confrontation and conflict;
- they prematurely introducing their children to dating partners;
- they speak ill of the other parent;
- they return the children late from visits or do not have them ready for visits;
- they use the children as messengers or informants, and
- place adult burdens on their children (e.g. "What would I do without you?").



PARENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- demonstrate knowledge of reflective listening, and
- dispute resolution techniques, including the availability of alternative dispute resolution services;
- appreciate the need for productive, positive communication skills;
- understand the child's right to and need for both parents;
- understand both parents' responsibility to provide financially for the child;
- stay involved as effective parents in spite of separation, and
- refer to written material and they will have a list of local resources for future use.

SESSION 1	The process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children
------------------	---

Outcomes: At the end of Session 1, parents should know:

- the impact of the process of divorce on children;
- the emotional process of divorce, and
- the physical process of divorce.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING THIS PROGRAMME

- The child's health and safety is always the most important priority.
- This information is based on two "normal" parents getting a divorce.
- This information will not be applicable in cases of family violence, alcohol or drug abuse.
- Divorce is a difficult and painful experience for everybody involved.
- Children need to have both parents in their life.
- Children need both parents to raise them.
- Children need both parents to teach them important things.
- Children need both parents to help them with problems.
- Children adjust better when they have a positive relationship with both parents.
- You as parent will always have a relationship with the other parent.

(Kemp *et al.*, 2019)

REASONS PEOPLE GET DIVORCED

Some of the reasons people want to get a divorce is because they do not want to talk to or see the other spouse anymore. Divorcees do not want to discuss and solve problems together, and most definitely do not want to live with their partners any longer.



However, the reality of a divorce is that they still have to communicate with each other with regard to their children, solve problems with regard to the children together, manage their time and money together when it involves the children and even plan their holidays together in order to accommodate their children. The biggest challenge will also be the planning of a new relationship together, as this also involves the children.

SESSION 1: The process of divorce and the negative impact thereof on children

Main objective/outcomes of Session 1:

The main objective of the programme will be to educate divorcing parents on the process of divorce and to understand the negative impact their own behaviour has on their children.

Subsection objectives/outcomes of Session 1

- Introducing the facilitator/researcher to the divorcing parents/group members
- Introducing the group members to each other
- Establishing and building relationships
- Discussing order arrangements/ground rules
- Clarifying the expectations, purpose and objectives of the educational programme
- Presentation of Session 1:
- Summary

Content

The first session will be utilised to welcome the group members and as an introduction session between the facilitator and the group members. An icebreaker will be utilised to facilitate the group members in getting to know each other. As an icebreaker, group members will be asked to write down three things in thirty seconds they think will make their divorce more difficult/easier for their children. During the next thirty seconds, they need to discuss this with the person sitting next to them and decide on the most important thing. Then, one person from each group will give feedback to the group while the facilitator writes it down. This will enable the group members to engage in the discussion and will keep their attention, as the presentation leads to answering these questions.

Group members will then be asked to introduce themselves to the group and identify their expectations of the programme. The group members will be informed of order arrangements and an outline of the two sessions will be given.

NOTES TO MYSELF

What behaviour do I see in my own child/ren?



MAIN REASONS FOR NEGATIVE IMPACT OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN

Children of divorce easily become the victims of their parents' inability to deal with their differences, their lack of logical reasoning and poor conflict management (Amato *et al.*, 2011:512; Fagan & Churchill, 2012:1–13). While a divorce can be hard on children, it's often the fighting of the parents that most directly affects the children, and the impact thereof depends on how well the parents are able to isolate the children from these disruptions. According to Stadelman *et al.* (2010:106) the ability of divorced parents to establish a supportive, low-conflict parental unit has a positive impact on the quality of relationships within the family system for years to come.

Children experience severe losses during divorce (Kemp *et al.*, 2019):

- The loss of a parent
- The loss of quality parenting
- The loss of a family unity
- The loss of parental involvement
- The loss of identity
- The loss of economic security
- The decline in life standards

NOTES TO MYSELF



DIFFERENT REACTIONS OF CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Children at different stages of development will display different reactions to divorce (Pedro-Carrol: 2020) and will need to deal with the ongoing process of divorce for the rest of their lives.

Children 4–6 years

- Younger children (4–6 years) tend to blame themselves. They will be wondering what they could have done to prevent the divorce, especially if parents fight about a child in front of a child.
- Small children think that if parents could stop loving each other, they can stop loving their children.
- Parents need to tell their children that the divorce is final and that it is not their fault.
- Parents must reassure their children that they still love them and that they will be taking care of them.

Children 6–8 years

- Children from the age of six to eight years must adapt/adjust in school.
- If they cannot focus at home, they will not focus at school either, and therefore they will not be able to thrive.
- They begin to understand what the family unit means and that theirs is collapsing.
- They experience a feeling of powerlessness and helplessness.
- They cannot verbalise their feelings, but rather react on their feelings with poor behaviour.
- Parents need to listen, love and understand.
- Parents need to speak to the teacher in order for her to understand the child's behaviour.
- Parents need to keep some things the same, whether it is the school, the activities or the surroundings.
- The child needs to have some security and continuity.

Children 9–12 years

- Children between the age of nine and 12 years will experience conflict between parents like dogs fighting over a bone.
- They will choose a parent and eliminate the “bad” parent.
- The parent will lose a child, but the child will lose that parent/relationship/role model and connection for life.

- It is difficult for that child to relate to other people later in life.
- The custodial parent must “enjoy” it when the children go to the other parent and prevent the child from “choosing” between parents.

Children 16 years and older

- Older children (16 years) experience more difficulty with feelings of loss as a result of divorce, for example long standing family traditions, family Christmas and birthdays.
- They experience a false sense of maturity and still need their parents’ input, communication and emotional support.
- It is the time when they begin to break away from the family unit, but can’t learn independence when there is nothing to break away from
- They have to deal with changes in their bodies and their sexuality.
- It is very confusing when parents start new relationships at this stage.
- Your children need you; there is no time or place for new relationships at this stage of their development.
- Children cannot deal with a new girlfriend or boyfriend at this stage, the new person is stealing your time, love and attention from your children.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILDREN (Pedro-Carrol: 2020)

Parents need to reassure children of their love, that they will always be available for them and that everything will be okay in the end. Parents should keep as many things as possible constant, for example the daily routine, the same school, the same friends and activities. They need to be honest with the children and talk about their feelings, even if it is painful. Parents need to clarify the finality of the divorce and assure them that the divorce is not their fault. They should avoid custody fights, keep children uninvolved and avoid arguments in front of them. Parents need to protect the positive feelings towards both parents and remember that their children are going to be children of divorced parents for the rest of their lives. Before parents react, they need to take a step back and evaluate if what they are saying and doing are beneficial to their children.

NOTES TO MYSELF

How can I help my child/ren?



EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON PARENTS (Vitelli, 2015)

Emotional process of divorce (Vitelli, 2015)

Divorce brings along many emotional losses like socialising, being a couple, family unit, friends and intimacy. It equals the five stage grieving process of the death of a loved one, namely:

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression/sadness
- Acceptance

The emotional state of parents during divorce makes it difficult to parent, as parents are at their most vulnerable at a stage when their children need them the most. Parents going through divorce struggle with feelings of:

- Depression
- Lowered self-esteem
- Loss of sense of identity
- Feeling of rejection
- Embarrassment
- Withdrawal from social group
- Lower self-satisfaction
- Increased medical problems/visits to the doctor

NOTES TO MYSELF

What do I experience?



Physical process of divorce (Pedro-Carrol: 2020)

Divorce is also a physical **stressful process**. Although there is a divorce date, there are **different stages/phases** in the process. Divorce brings **an immediate life crisis** lasting for two to twelve months. It is a difficult time when you need to

make some of the most important decisions of your life. **Do not make permanent changes** during this time.

The short-term aftermath will be to re-evaluate your situation after two years and reconsider all your options, be flexible and be willing to change decisions with regard to primary care and residency, relocation, etc.

The **long-term phase of divorce** is planning for the next twenty years, schooling, graduation, marriages, funerals, etc. The less conflict between you and your ex-spouse, the better you can plan and cooperate. Although you are no longer married, you will **forever be parents to the same children**. Children need **both parents** as it gives them a sense of **belonging and security**. Your positive relationship with your ex-spouse **makes it easier on the kids**, for example, if you sit close to each other at the concert, the child won't experience conflict of which direction to turn to when the concert is done. You do not want your child to feel he/she has to choose between parents.

NOTES TO MYSELF

What do I need to remember?



NEGATIVE FACTORS MAKING DIVORCE WORSE FOR CHILDREN

Divorce is a long-term ongoing process and the lack of proper management of the process often results in misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict between the concerned parties (Smit, 2010:1). The following factors make divorce even worse for children:

- Poor communication
- Poor conflict management
- Poor co-parenting
- Messages between parents/information
- Negative financial implications
- Loss of contact with one parent
- Long distance parenting

NOTES TO MYSELF

What can I do to improve the process of divorce for my child/ren?



WAYS TO COPE (Kemp *et al.*, 2019)

In order for a parent to tend to the physical and emotional needs of his/her child/ren during the process of divorce, it is important to first take care of his/her own physical and emotional needs. It is a difficult time with difficult decisions to be made. Here are a few practical pointers on where to start with their own wellbeing:

- Write or talk about it, keep a journal.
- Write down your feelings, moods, and thoughts. It will help to release tension, sadness and anger. You can look back at how far you have come.
- Take care of your body and get active.
- Exercise will relieve stress and frustration and eating healthy will help you feel better.
- Remind yourself of the great things in your life.
- Take “time out” to do things you love.
- Give back.
- Lean on friends, see them often, or build new friendships.
- Keep laughing.
- See a therapist.

NOTES TO MYSELF

How do I plan to cope with my divorce?



SESSION 2	Managing the process of divorce to promote healthy adjustment of children
------------------	--

Outcomes: At the end of Session 2, parents should:

- be able to identify the needs of their children;
- understand the reaction of their children;
- understand the impact of their own behaviour on their children;
- be able to resolve conflict in a constructive way, and
- communicate effectively enough to promote constructive co-parenting

in order to manage the process of divorce and promote the healthy adjustment of their children.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS DURING THE PROCESS OF DIVORCE (Kemp *et al.*, 2019)

- Children need as much **stability, structure and routine** as possible.
- Children need **consistent communication** with both parents.
- Children feel safer when they **know what to expect**.
- Children need **both parents to stay involved** in their lives: call them. Text them, ask them questions about their lives, if not, they will not feel important and loved.
- Children need you to **stop fighting** – try to get along, try to agree on matters concerning the children, if you fight about them, or matters concerning them, they will feel guilty.
- Children need to **love both parents**.
- Children need to **spend time with both parents**.
- **Don't get upset** if a child goes to the other parent, it makes them feel as if they have chosen between parents, or love the one more than the other.
- **Communicate with each other**; do not use your child as the messenger.
- **Do not speak ill of the other parent**. If you say mean things about the other parent, the child feels as if he/she has to pick a side.
- Children need to hear **"I love you"**. They need to know you are going to take care of them.
- **Acknowledge the changes** – some things will stay the same and others will change, but together you will deal with it.
- Always be **age-sensitive**. Younger children will need less detail while teenagers will need more detail.
- Share the **logistical information** like living arrangements, school and other activities with them.
- **Always be truthful**.

NOTES TO MYSELF

What do my child/ren need?



CHILDREN'S REACTION TO DIVORCE

- It is normal for children to experience anger, anxiety and a mild depression.
- Children feel guilty about the divorce.
- They think they are to blame – their poor grades, or because they misbehaved or because they got in trouble at school.
- Children also experience a grieving process with the loss of a parent, loss of the family unit, loss of life as they knew it.
- **Red flags requiring professional help** would be sleeping problems, poor concentration, problems at school, drug or alcohol abuse, self-injury, cutting, eating disorders, frequent angry or violent outbursts, withdrawal from loved ones and disinterest in favourite activities.

NOTES TO MYSELF

How do my child/ren react?



Does my child show red flag behaviour requiring professional help?

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD DO

- Parents have to help their children to grieve and adjust.
- Parents must listen and encourage their children to share their feelings, their sadness, loss and frustration, even if it is difficult.
- Parents should encourage honesty despite their own feelings.
- If children and parents do not share their feelings with each other, children will struggle to deal with the process.
- Talking about the divorce is an ongoing process; children have different experiences at different ages and stages of development.
- Acknowledge your children's feelings. Even if you cannot make it better, show them that you understand.

THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR ON CHILDREN

- If parents fight about the children in front of them, they feel guilty.
- If parents speak ill of each other, children feel as if they have to pick a side, and as if they have to love one parent more than the other one.
- If parents use children as messengers, they feel guilty and in the middle.
- If parents take/make drastic decisions like relocation, children lose their feeling of security, stability and belonging.

NOTES TO MYSELF

What should I remember?



CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict is part of our everyday lives, but if we do not manage conflict effectively, it can consume our lives and ruin relationships. It is a situation where one or both parties perceive a threat, whether the threat is real or not, and it will be present until it is resolved (Kemp *et al.*, 2019). They further state that conflict arises when people disagree and that strong feelings of conflict are usually based in deep

personal needs like safety, security and respect. During divorce a lack of understanding results in distance and arguments. When parents are willing to recognise their conflicting needs and are willing to examine them, it can lead to creative problem solving and stronger relationships for the sake of the children.

Children experience extreme stress when parents hurt each other physically, emotionally or verbally, when there is unresolved conflict or the use of silent treatment (Pedro-Carrol: 2020). Although it is not usually the intention of parents to put their children in the middle of their conflict, their unmanaged conflict increase the risk of behaviour problems, depression, substance abuse and dependence, poor social skills and poor academic performance in their children.

According to Kemp *et al* (2019) your personal background from early childhood experiences and perception of conflict will influence how you deal with conflict for the rest of your life. Conflict can trigger strong emotions, but if it can be resolved in a healthy way it increases understanding, builds trust and strengthen relationships. They further explain healthy and unhealthy ways to deal with conflict in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Unhealthy and healthy ways to deal with conflict

UNHEALTHY RESPONSES TO CONFLICT	HEALTHY REPOSSES TO CONFLICT
An inability to recognise and respond to the things that matter to the other person	The capacity to empathise with the other person's viewpoint
Explosive, angry, hurtful, and resentful reactions	Calm, non-defensive, and respectful reactions
The withdrawal of love, resulting in rejection, isolation, shaming, and fear of abandonment	A readiness to forgive and forget, and to move past the conflict without holding resentments or anger
An inability to compromise or see the other person's side	The ability to seek compromise and avoid punishing behaviour
Feeling fearful or avoiding conflict; expecting a bad outcome	A belief that facing conflict head on is best for both sides

NOTES TO MYSELF

What should I remember about the influence of conflict on my child/ren?



HEALTHY, EFFECTIVE WAYS TO RESOLVE CONFLICT (Kemp *et al*, 2019)

- **Listen** with the necessary attention and **hear** what is said, but also what is **felt**. Do not interrupt while the other person is speaking.
- Make resolution the priority, rather than being right; be respectful and rather maintain the relationship than win the fight.
- Leave the past in the past and focus on the present and resolving the here-and-now problem for the sake of the future.
- Pick your battles and decide whether it is worth your while, if the issue is important.
- Do not fight a losing battle and ALWAYS be the better person.
- Always stick to the facts; never bring emotion into the argument.
- Forgive and forget.
- Always communicate honestly.
- If all else fails, agree to disagree or get professional help to solve your conflict, for example, mediation or co-parent counselling.

EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE YOUR NEEDS AND EMOTIONS

Use "I" messages

- I feel hurt...
- I feel like you blame me for...
- I feel disrespected if...
- I feel ignored when...

Don't use words like:

- *always* (you are always late..., because one day the other person was on time);
- *never* (you never call..., because one day the other person did phone), and

- you are *just like* your mother/father (because you don't want to be just like your mother/father either).

Then work towards “we” solutions:

- If we can...
- If we go...
- We might be able to...
- We can...

CONSTRUCTIVE CO-PARENTING

- Children are resilient when they have the love and support of both parents.
- Your words, actions and consistency will give the reassurance of your unchanging love.
- Assure them that both parents will be part of their lives.
- Assure them that everything will be okay.
- Give enough physical closeness and hugs.
- Be honest, and if you do not know the answer, tell them and say that you will find out and it will be okay.



LEGAL AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- If there is **shared DNA** there is a **duty to pay** maintenance.
- It depends on the **need** of the child and the **ability** of the parent to pay.
- The need of the child is to be fed, clothed and suitable living conditions similar to what the child was used to, unless the ability of the parent to pay changes.
- Do not go the criminal route if a parent doesn't pay, rather go the civil way.

NOTES TO MYSELF

The worst problems for children stem from parental conflict, before, during
and after divorce...

Stephanie Coontz

CONTACT LIST FOR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Therapy, parental guidance, communication skills, conflict resolution/management skills, mediation, visitation, parental alienation, etc.

Adri Christi
Social Worker in Private Practice
Speciality: Play Therapist
Klerksdorp
adrichristie07@gmail.com

Elsabe Bosch-Brits
Social Worker in Private Practice
Krugersdorp
Speciality: Forensic Assessment and Parental Alienation
eboschbrits12@gmail.com

FAMSA (Families South Africa)
National Directorate
011 975 7106/7
Famsa.org.za

Marietha Oelofse
Social Worker in Private Practise
Speciality: Therapy
Potchefstroom
082 784 0827

Marlize Holtzhausen
Social Worker in Private Practice
Speciality: Therapy
Sasolburg
Marlizeh.2020@gmail.com

Melindi Van Rooyen
Social Worker/Advocate
Speciality: Mediation
Potchefstroom
Melindivr@gmail.com

NG Welfare North West and Gauteng
Head Office
Social workers
Therapy and mediation
018 297 3928
info@ngwelsyn.co.za

Legal advice, mediation, litigation, etc.

Centre for Child Law
University of Pretoria
012 420 4502
centreforchildlaw@up.ac.za
www.centreforchildlaw.ca.za

Cindy Du Plessis
Attorney
Divorce-related Matters
hornduplessis@telkomsa.net
hornduplessis@gmail.com

Jaco Labuschagne
Attorney and Mediator
Divorce-related Matters
jaco@jdatorneys.co.a

Law Clinic
North-West University
Mahikeng
018 2892062
LAW-MC@nwu.ac.za
Potchefstroom
018 299 1568
LAW-PC@nwu.ac.za
Vanderbijlpark
016 910 3483
LAW-VTC@nwu.ac.za

Reynette Stevens
Attorney
Divorce-related matters
reynette@rstevens.co.za

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Amato, P.R. Kane, J.B. & James, S. 2011. Reconsidering the 'Good Divorce'. *Family Relations*. 60(5):511-524.
- Anthony, C.J. Diperna, J.C. & Amato, P.R. 2014. Divorce, Approaches to Learning, and Children's Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis of Mediated and Moderated Effects. *Journal Of School Psychology* 52: 249–261. Journal Homepage: Available at: www.Elsevier.Com/Locate/Jschpsy. Date of Acces: 28 Mar.. 2017.
- Brandon, D.J. 2006. Can Four Hours Make a Difference? Evaluation of a Parent Education Program for Divorcing Parents. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 45(1/2). Available at: <http://www.Haworthpress.Com/Web/JDR>. (Date of access: 24 Jan. 2017.
- Fagan, P. & Churchill, A. 2012. The Effects of Divorce on Children. *Marriage & Religion Research Institute*, 56(5): 347-368.
- Gilman, J. Schneider, D & Shulak, R. 2005. Children's Ability to Cope Post-Divorce: The Effects of Kid's Turn Intervention Program on 7 to 9 Year Olds. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 42(3/4), 110-172. Available at: <http://haworthpress.com/web/JDR>. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Kelly, J.B. 2006. Children's Living Arrangements Following Separation and Divorce: Insights from Empirical and Clinical Research. *Family Process*, 46(1):35-52. Available at: www.Familyprocess.Org. Date of access: 25 Jan. 2017.
- Kemp, G, Smith, M.A., and Segal, J. 2019. Children and Divorce. Help guide. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/parenting-family/children-and-divorce.htm> Date of access: 19 Nov. 2020.
- Pedro-Carroll, J.A. How Parents Can Help Children Cope With Separation/Divorce. In: Tremblay RE, Boivin M, Peters RDeV, eds. Emery RE, topic ed. *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development* [online]. <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/divorce-and-separation/according-experts/how-parents-can-help-children-cope-separationandivorce>. Updated November 2020. Date of access: 19 Nov. 2020.
- Philyaw, D. & Thomas, M.D. 2013. *Co-Parenting 101: Helping Your Kids Thrive in Two Households After Divorce*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.
- Smit, M. 2010. Skei is vir 'n Kind soos Amputasie. *Kerkbode*, 3 Sept. 2010. Available at: www.mathildasmit.co.za Date of access: 28 Feb. 2017.
- South Africa. 2018. Statistics South Africa: Marriages and Divorces 2018. Available at: http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1856&PPN=P0307&SCH=7912 Date of access: 14 Sept. 2020.

Stadelmann, S., Perren, S., Groeben, M. & Von Klitzing, K. 2010. Parental separation and children's behavioral/emotional problems: the impact of parental representations and family conflict. *Family Process*. 49(1):92-108.

Vitelli, R. 2015. Life After Divorce. Is divorce always going to have a negative impact on the people involved? Psychology Today.
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/media-spotlight/201507/life-after-divorceosted>. Date of access: 19 Nov. 2020.

ADDENDUM 15a: SELF CONSTRUCTED QUESTIONNAIRE PROGRAMME ATTENDANCE

RESEARCH STUDY

Design and development of an educational program for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce

QUESTIONNAIRE: PARENTS IN THE PROCESS OF DIVORCE

The aim of this process is for the divorcing parents to have the opportunity to evaluate the content of the proposed divorce education program. The process aims to do a qualitative analysis of whether the program equipped you with the knowledge to prevent adjustment problems of your child(ren) during the process of divorce.

You were identified by the researcher as a possible participant because you are a parent of a child(ren) between the ages of 1 month and twelve years old and in the process of divorce.

The research study aims to develop an educational programme for South African parents as part of the completion of a Ph.D. in Social Work.

This process will consist of the following:

1. During presentation of the programme you will receive a programme manual (Addendum 2b).
2. At the end of session 2 you will need to complete a content evaluation (9 questions) of the proposed programme.
3. You will receive a short evaluation report with the research findings after completion of the study.

Your identity will not be used in the research report.

QUESTIONS

Research (Brandon, 2006:172-183) indicates that divorce education programmes have reported increased parental awareness of children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication, and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their formal partner (Kelly, 2006:40).

The proposed education programme for divorcing parents (Programme added as Addendum 2b) was drafted in light of information gathered during an integrated

literature review, a quantitative survey, and the input of experts in the field of divorce. The input of parents in the process of divorce, by completing nine (9) questions, will evaluate the content of the newly designed programme.

- 1. Do you think South African children will benefit from a divorce education programme for parents?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer.

--

- 2. Are you of the opinion that the attendance of divorce education program should be compulsory?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer.

--

- 3. Are you of the opinion that you benefited from the information?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer

--

4. In your opinion, what is the most important thing for you to remember during the process of divorce?

5. In your opinion, what has the worst and most direct negative impact on a child during a divorce?

6. In your opinion, what are the most important needs of your child during the process of divorce?

7. Please rank the order of importance of the topics addressed during The divorce education programme, in order of importance?

One (1) being the most important and ten (9) being the least important.

• Emotions	
• Conflict/anger management	
• Communication	
• Problem-solving	
• Parent-child relationship	
• Parental involvement	
• Discipline	
• Starting a new life	
• Financial matters	

8. If it is possible to attend the programme in person, in your opinion, how many sessions will be appropriate and practically possible for divorcing parents to attend, over what period of time and how long, in your opinion, should a session last?

• How many sessions	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6	Other
• Duration of sessions	1 -2 hours	3 - 4 hours	1 day	Other
• Period of time	Within two weeks	Within one month	Within Two months	Other

If other, please give your opinion?

How many sessions	
Duration of sessions	
Period of time	

9. In your opinion, what else should form part of a divorce education programme for parents to prevent adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce?

--

Thank you for participating in this research project and completing the survey. Your opinion is highly valued.

Kind regards



LISL ROODY
RESEARCHER

ADDENDUM 15b: SELF CONSTRUCTED QUESTIONNAIRE SELF STUDY

RESEARCH STUDY

Design and development of an educational program for divorcing parents to prevent adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce

QUESTIONNAIRE: PARENTS IN THE PROCESS OF DIVORCE

The aim of this process is for the divorcing parents to have the opportunity to evaluate the content of the proposed divorce education program. The process aims to do a qualitative analysis of whether the program equipped you with the knowledge to prevent adjustment problems of your child(ren) during the process of divorce.

You were identified by the researcher as a possible participant because you are a parent of a child(ren) between the ages of 1 month and twelve years old and in the process of divorce.

The research study aims to develop an educational programme for South African parents as part of the completion of a Ph.D. in Social Work.

This process will consist of the following:

1. You will receive a Parent Programme Manual and a questionnaire via email (Addendum 2c).
2. You will be able to study the content of the newly developed programme in the comfort and safety of your home.
3. After you completed your self-study you will have to complete a questionnaire (9 questions) to evaluate the content of the proposed programme.
4. You will receive a short evaluation report with the research findings after completion of the study.

Your identity will not be used in the research report.

QUESTIONS

Research (Brandon, 2006:172-183) indicates that divorce education programmes have reported increased parental awareness of children's needs, a reduction in parental behaviours that put children in the middle of disputes, better communication, and greater willingness to settle custody and access disputes with their formal partner (Kelly, 2006:40).

The proposed education programme for divorcing parents (Programme added as Addendum 2b) was drafted in light of information gathered during an integrated

literature review, a quantitative survey, and the input of experts in the field of divorce. The input of parents in the process of divorce, by completing nine (9) questions, will evaluate the content of the newly designed programme.

- 1. Do you think South African children will benefit from a divorce education programme for parents?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer.

--

- 2. Are you of the opinion that the attendance of divorce education program should be compulsory?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer.

--

- 3. Are you of the opinion that you benefited from the information?**

<input type="radio"/> Yes	
<input type="radio"/> No	

Please motivate your answer

--

4. In your opinion, what is the most important thing for you to remember during the process of divorce?

5. In your opinion, what has the worst and most direct negative impact on a child during a divorce?

6. In your opinion, what are the most important needs of your child during the process of divorce?

7. Please rank the order of importance of the topics addressed during The divorce education programme, in order of importance?

One (1) being the most important and ten (9) being the least important.

• Emotions	
• Conflict/anger management	
• Communication	
• Problem-solving	
• Parent-child relationship	
• Parental involvement	
• Discipline	
• Starting a new life	
• Financial matters	

8. If it is possible to attend the programme in person, in your opinion, how many sessions will be appropriate and practically possible for divorcing parents to attend, over what period of time and how long, in your opinion, should a session last?

• How many sessions	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6	Other
• Duration of sessions	1 -2 hours	3 - 4 hours	1 day	Other
• Period of time	Within two weeks	Within one month	Within Two months	Other

If other, please give your opinion?

How many sessions	
Duration of sessions	
Period of time	

9. In your opinion, what else should form part of a divorce education programme for parents to prevent adjustment problems of children during the process of divorce?

--

Thank you for participating in this research project and completing the survey. Your opinion is highly valued.

Kind regards



LISL ROODT
RESEARCHER

ADDENDUM 16: PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

SE de Bruin

Text Editing

BA (Hons) in African Languages (Stellenbosch University)

31 Sunset Close

Sonstraal Heights

Durbanville

7550

076 303 9797

Loliedebuin@gmail.com

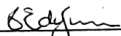
DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the thesis mentioned below was properly language edited. The “track changes” function was used and the author was responsible for accepting the changes, as well as for the correctness of the references. The editor will keep a copy of the version with track changes, which was submitted to the author, for six months from the date below.

**Design and development of an educational programme for divorcing parents
to prevent adjustment problems in children**

by

Lisl Roodt


SE de Bruin

Durbanville

8 December 2020

ADDENDUM 17: TURN IT IN



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: TASLEEM SAYED
Assignment title: Roodt
Submission title: 20062621:Roodt.pdf
File name: c0f65_Assignments_102e9b03-2c3...
File size: 1.8M
Page count: 148
Word count: 41,740
Character count: 233,039
Submission date: 09-Dec-2020 09:00AM (UTC+0200)
Submission ID: 1469557998

