



UNIFICATION PROCESS AND BROKEN HOMES: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE CANADIAN SOCIAL CARE SYSTEM

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Abstract: This research explores the lack of mediation and reunification for victims of broken homes and their families and seeks to sort the laid down support systems from the Canadian social care support systems. Reunification can be described as a roundtable involving the child and caregiver, trying to bring restoration and solutions to families disrupted by child welfare. Reunification is an ambiguous concept and reality, as it is open to multiple interpretations.

This paper dissect and digest the elements of broken homes, how reunification is essential but lacking in most situations and how it is a psychological relief for both victims, families using the Canadian social care support systems.

Bringing methodologies and theories together makes room for flexibility around research goals. That principle can be translated in to practice by talking about and prioritizing symbiotic frameworks. If frameworks are made intersectional and connective with one another and phenomena outside of themselves (phenomenology), then, coalitions and solidarities can take place. Alliances reduce vulnerabilities to poverty, homelessness, trauma, by forging links and connectivity amongst people and across differences

This paper centers on the social welfare system and philosophical underpinnings of processes systems use to transition victims of broken homes back to their families using support systems and regulations brining about an efficient universal reunification.

Keywords: Abuse, Trauma, Family, Social care, Homeless, Child care.

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Introduction

When there is abuse in the family, it is possible that the child or children who are at stake, abused, are removed. This apprehension guides children in to group homes, residential care, and foster care. What happens to family restoration? Access arrangements can alleviate some of the stressors involved in family reunification. That is to say, access arrangements can reunify family members and bring families back together. Reunification is an ambiguous concept and reality grounded in lived experiences of family breakdown and reconstitution.

Using the system of child welfare, children need to be protected if they are abused (The Law Foundation of Ontario, 2018). If children are believed to be “in need of protection”, children need to be brought in to a process of reunification and integration, where they do not undergo damage and trauma (The Law Foundation of Ontario, 2018).

Finding solace, the researchers were of the view that, the Canadian society needs vibrant social care systems to admit and support any family that fall short of the standard social care system leading to victims (children) of broken home. Counseling services must be integrated in child welfare to keep anxiety, lack of motivation, loneliness, loss, and other cultural determinants, at bay. These circumstances are some of the experiences of child welfare survivors.

As a profession, social work tries to “help” people. Abusive homes are very bad, as they risk endangering the welfare of family members. What causes this abuse? What causes this violence? Sometimes, apprehension is not the only solution to end abuse. Working with abuse is a variable that could be implemented in policies and politics of child welfare, where the root cause of abuse and violence is addressed, rather than mystified (Child welfare in Ontario: Developing a collaborative intervention model, 2005). It is important that causes of abuse do not fall through the cracks of society; that is how the cycle of trauma continues (Child welfare in Ontario: Developing a collaborative intervention model, 2005).

Forms of Broken Home

Historically, colonialism and oppression disenfranchised people on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc. This disempowerment is structural and exists in a sociocultural context. This situation can be understood as ongoing, as the past is performative, sustaining the present. Historic trauma has articulated damage for minorities, placing them/us in a vulnerable position. These words have meaning; they do not emerge in a vacuum. Colonization, tracing back to imperialism, Eurocentrism, and Whiteness, has set the scene for layered forms of oppression, which have been carried on to and for generations and generations. The “Other” has been disenfranchised due to systemic, structural violence. Racism, patriarchy, and classism intersect to marginalize people and create vulnerabilities in their/our lives. Indeed, social workers are implicated in all this, which sets the stage for complex power dynamics. How do individuals and families begin to interrogate the child welfare system? If child welfare care is mired in historical violence and colonialism, it has to be deconstructed to make room for new possibilities, new desires. These can be new bio families, or “chosen” families. Family networking allows

restoring old and creating new relationships, staving off the bad feelings and experiences in moments and events of abuse.

Maybe a gap of restoration exists because the system of care is inefficient in “saving” lives and offsetting premature deaths. Slow deaths are a result of patriarchal, racist, classist societies. Canadian context does not make room for flourishing in precarity. So, it is Canada that needs to be jettisoned. Colonialism, slavery, and oppression, which lead to disproportionalities in care, employment, and generalized problems (e.g. addiction and mental health), need to be dismantled and weeded out so that a new set of relations emerges. Ideally, this new set of relations would be anti-colonial (Landertinger, 2017; Pihama, Nana, Cameron, Smith, Reid, & Southey, 2016; Coleman, Jackson, Gun, & Grass, 2014). This conversation about the past and present brings us full circle to my research question: How is reunification understood and practiced in victims of broken home cases? Many assumptions undergird this question. First, the researchers looked at children, who have been removed from their family homes (Blackness). This apprehension was a multifaceted process, as child removal orders, in the light of colonialism and the status quo, function in a context that is violent, abusive. Blackness can be understood as the matter that organizes lives (Agathangelou, 2013). Paired with Crown wardship, there is something bio political about children of broken homes who are ward survivors. Survivorship, like child removal orders, exists in a context of life and death, or survivance and abjection. So, the poignant quality of being a victim of broken home inspires new struggles to end colonialism and systemic harms done to children, specifically young children and the youth. Indeed, how do victims of broken homes understand reunification? Surviving child welfare entails solace, but it can also entail brutality. The liminal space of having been removed places children and youth and adults in a vulnerable, precarious position, where more damage can be done to them, us. The bio political context of Canadian society carves out a space for more welcoming and warm ways of being; the system has to be navigated to prevent harm from being done to people and circulated and commodified (Foucault, 1997). Bio politics is double-edged, as it is unfortunately the terrain on which Canadian politics emerge and function. Black Crown wards can reunify or find their own relationships when they speak out and actively organize against violent instantiations. Simply put, family reunification might take place where Black Crown wards rearticulate their stories, in the name of justice and enfranchisement.

Through this research question, the knowledge gap, around the in-between state of having been removed, is another reason to conduct this research. Though there is a plethora of articles and scholarly literature on child welfare, the liminality of removal and lack of resources and restoration have yet to be fleshed out to an extent that assesses the implications of race, class, ability, and gender. This research is rooted in childhood trauma. This is not to psychiatrize childhood, agitation, and harm; this is to locate systemic, structural harm, violence, and abuse in “evidence” or concrete experiences and realities. Certainly, author of this work try to stay away from medical discourses of damage, which harkens back to critical social work. Social work that is critical is productive in nature. So, by orientating (Ahmed, 2006) this research toward critical thinking, it hoped to produce innovative social work scholarship and practice. After all, one of the goals of this research is to restore old relationships and create new ones, in

the lives of victims of broken homes. This work is passionate about reunifying families and de-escalating situations that could result in suicide and death. At times psychological defects calls for premature and slow death in care (self-harm, cutting, and assisted suicide), which impact victims and affect careers in social work practice. Social work needs to be pushed to implement new boundaries around child integrity, to restore and create new child integrity. There is a lot of shame attached to being a victim of broken home, and being a survivor. Reunification, then, is about undoing some of that shame so that integrity is restored in the name of family bonding and solace.

Effects of Broken Families on Children

Family is a social institution that gives a sense of belonging and support to its members. The elements affection, care, and guidance, and contribute to shape the progress and well-being of both children and parents. However, the idea of a happy family does not exist for everybody. Broken families, or families that have undergone separation, divorce, or other forms of dissolution, can have a significant impact on children's emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

1. Emotional Effects:

Children from broken homes often experience an array of negative energies. They may feel sadness, anger, fear, confusion, and grief. These emotions can be exacerbated by the feeling of loss of a parent or family unit, as well as the stress and conflict that often accompanies a divorce or separation. One of the most common traumatic effects of broken homes on children is a sense of insecurity. It can occur to the children that they cannot rely on their parents for psychological support, trust, love, bringing about some level of uncertainty and vulnerability. They may also experience a sense of guilt or responsibility for the breakup. They may feel like they did something wrong or that they could have prevented the divorce or separation. This can lead to a sense of shame and self-blame, which can negatively impact their self-esteem and self-worth.

2. Psychological Effects:

The psychological effects of broken homes on children can be long-lasting and significant. One of the progressive psychological effects is anxiety and depression such children go through. Children may experience high levels of stress and uncertainty, leading to an increased risk of developing mental health issues. Another psychological effect of broken families on children is a heightened risk of behavioral problems. Children may act out or exhibit aggressive behavior as a result of the stress and turmoil in their lives. They may also have difficulty regulating their emotions and managing their impulses, leading to increased risk-taking behaviors for example engaging in substance abuse and other harmful behaviors, as a way of coping with their emotional distress. Their academic performance also gets hampered to great levels. The stress and instability in their lives can make it difficult for them to focus and concentrate in school. These children afflicted, may have fewer resources available to them, such as financial support and educational resources, which can limit their opportunities for academic success.

Social Effects:

Broken families can also have a significant impact on a child's social development. Children from broken families may struggle to form healthy relationships with peers and adults. They may have difficulty trusting others and may struggle with social skills such as communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. They may also experience a sense of isolation and loneliness, and may feel like they don't fit in with their peers or that they don't have a sense of belonging. This can lead to a lack of social support and can further exacerbate their emotional and psychological difficulties. Additionally, children from broken families may struggle with their sense of identity. They may feel like they do not know who they are or where they belong. This can lead to feelings of confusion and frustration, as well as a lack of direction and purpose. It is essential to know that the effects of broken families on children are not universal. Some children may be more resilient and better able to cope with their parents' separation, while others may be more vulnerable to negative outcomes. Additionally, the impact of broken families on children may vary depending on a range of factors, such as the child's age, gender, and personality, as well as the quality of the parent-child relationship.

There are a number of factors that can help to mitigate the negative effects of broken families on children. For example, children may benefit from access to counseling and support services, which can help them to process their emotions and develop coping strategies. Additionally, maintaining a positive and supportive relationship with both parents can be beneficial for children, as it can help to mitigate the sense of loss and provide a sense of stability and security.

Conclusion

The repercussion of broken families on children can seriously affect the general wellbeing of children and parents from the emotional point of view to the psychosocial lens. Issues such as insecurity and guilt, anxiety and behavioral problems, and others such as isolation and difficulty forming relationships can devour the child and its net effect will affect the community at large.

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