Please note that your proposal assignment does NOT require a Title page.
Section 1: Divorce is a common occurrence in most modern families. Nearly half of all marriages end in divorce, and most of the time the children that are brought into the middle of these divorces show how divorce negatively affects their behaviors and their social development. Thesis: Children and teenagers who have witnessed and experienced their parents' divorce have trouble developing good, well-rounded social skills, experience higher amounts of stress, and often show negative behaviors.

Section 2: In chapter one, John B. Watson's theory of behaviorism explains that by observing behaviors around an individual becomes influenced. This explains why behaviorism is also referred to as the learning theory. In the same chapter, Albert Bandura's social learning theory focuses on how as humans, people are social creatures and learn the behaviors they learn by observing the people and environment around them. When adults let their divorce play out loud instead of in silence, their young children and teenagers often pick up on the behaviors they observe from their parents. Later in life, the divorce and its impact might affect how that child develops socially. These children will associate themselves with other children who have experienced the same things and will often marry and get divorced, much like their parents did in their childhood.

Section 3: Part 1-Reference List


**Section 3: Part 2 - Article Information**

**Article 1:** "Common stressful life events and difficulties are associated with mental health symptoms and substance use in young adolescents"

- **Research Question:** The goal of this article was to see if stressful life events, such as divorce, led to mental health problems and/or caused negative behaviors. The researchers studied previous cross-sectional studies along with longitudinal studies and found that the relationship between such a stressor and the mental health and behavior of a child had not yet been understood to the fullest. The hypothesis of the researchers was that stressful life events, such as divorce, led to mental health problems in young adults as they do in adults.

- **Method:** The participants in this study ranged from age eleven to age fifteen and were just beginning their what was considered their first year of secondary school, or seventh
grade. To get the information on the different stressors that they believed led to such problems, the researchers gave the students a questionnaire-type survey. Only sixty-three percent of the students answered the questions on the survey. In relation to the student survey, the researchers also had the parents take a survey to see what their home life and health was like. They used this data to see the correlation between what their stressors were and how they caused behavioral and mental health problems.

- **Discussion**: The researcher’s hypothesis was somewhat supported by their research and data collection. A little less than six percent of the students that took the survey said that their stress came from a family disruption. However, they found that family disruption was related to the young adults being depressed, smoking and/or using illegal drugs, which in a way help their argument a bit more. This piece of information was important because children spent most of their time outside of school with their families.

- **Human Development**: This research shows that there is some correlation to divorce and negative behaviors of the children it impacted. After looking at these conclusions, one can seek to manage help to prevent these behaviors from happening in the future. Also, parents can help reduce the stress by keeping the stressful event out of light.

**Article 2**: "Predictors of behaviors and academic competence of children of nuclear families, single parents, and recasts"

- **Research Question**: This article focused on the parent-child relationship within families. These researchers argue that being divorced and remarrying does not have a direct relationship or does not affect the child's development (fully). Instead, they monitored whether behavioral problems and social competence were the issues that were risk factors.
• **Method:** In this study, over 160 mothers from different types of families who had children in their early years of elementary school participated. Also, twenty-two teachers of these children were informants. The researchers wanted to study what the direct causes of behavior problems were and what social skills were developed from the relationships of the parent and child. They also wanted to see if divorce had anything to do with the two problems. Several instruments were used, such as the Inventory of Parental Practices, the Social Skills Rating System, and Family Environment Resource Inventory. The researchers asked the teachers to send home a survey with the kids to give to their parents asking about their marital statuses. After receiving the information from the families, the researchers contacted the families to see if they were interested in participating in this study. The participants were separated into two different groups. In the first group, all the parents were considered to have positive parenting practices due to their educational status, financial situation and their show of affection. The second group was considered the parents with negative practices. They were more disciplinary. In the end, the researchers ran two different experiments to test their starting hypothesis.

• **Discussion:** The results from the experiment hurt, but also help the initial hypothesis made by the researchers. They found that the negative parenting practices had a greater correlation to poor behavioral problems in their children than the positive parenting group did. It also showed in their school environment.

• **Human Development:** This does not necessarily prove that parent-child relationships are weak due to these conditions. However, it somewhat proves the behavioral problems present in the child's school environment. This study should encourage the strong
relationships of separated families and keeping them that way to prevent developing poor social skills and more extreme behavioral problems.

Article 3: "Mediation and moderation of divorce effects on children's behavior problems"

- **Research Question:** The researchers in this article were looking at the correlation between divorce and a child's behavioral development. The researchers had tested two different hypotheses in their experiment. The first one was that children that came from families of divorce and separation were more likely to experience more internal and external behavioral problems than children from families that had not experienced any type of divorce or separation. The second hypothesis that was tested was that children who had experienced the least amount of stress before and after the divorce would least likely be affected negatively behavioral wise.

- **Method:** In this study, the researchers observed children between the ages of five and fifteen. They examined a relationship between divorce and the internal and external behaviors that they believed would show after witnessing this event. The children were split up into two separate groups. The first group contained children that came from intact divorced families, while the second group came from families that were still held together and have not gone through divorce. The researchers also looked at each family's income before the separation/divorce to see whether there was a strong correlation between divorce and negative behaviors in children. They collected data from the mothers of the children at different time periods. The mothers had the mothers monitor their child's behavior over a long period of time and all throughout school up until the age of fifteen. They took all this data to measure the relationship between the two beginning variables.
• **Discussion:** After conducting the experiment and collecting the data from this longitudinal study, the researchers had found that their hypotheses could be proven. Despite the other studies that they had looked at prior to this one, they concluded that behavioral problems were more evident in families with children who had experienced divorce than families with children who had not experienced it at all. They noticed that the negative behaviors had not gone away and followed them into their teenage years even several years after the divorce.

• **Human Development:** This study should encourage families to monitor their child's behavior if they ever get a divorce. They should also pay attention to their academic behavior and performance. Their school performance can be greatly affected by witnessing divorce and not being able to cope with it in a positive manner.
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