

## **BROKEN FAMILY STRUCTURES AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS: A REVIEW OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT IN STUDENTS**

**Cynthia Petra Haumahu**

Universitas Pattimura, Program Studi Bimbingan Konseling.  
Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan.  
email: [petrahaumahu@gmail.com](mailto:petrahaumahu@gmail.com)

**Criezta Korlefura**

Universitas Pattimura, Program Studi Bimbingan Konseling.  
Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan.  
email: [criezta.tapilatu@gmail.com](mailto:criezta.tapilatu@gmail.com)

**Theophanny P. Th. Rampisela**

Universitas Pattimura, Program Studi Bimbingan Konseling.  
Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan.  
Email: [rampisela83@gmail.com](mailto:rampisela83@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Broken family structures have become an increasingly important issue in contemporary education, as they influence students' socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Family instability caused by parental separation, divorce, conflict, neglect, and dysfunctional parenting environments may create emotional distress and educational difficulties among students. This study aims to examine the educational implications of broken family structures by reviewing the relationships among parenting styles, social support, socio-emotional development, and academic achievement. The research employed a qualitative library research method using scholarly articles, books, and reputable international journals indexed in Scopus and other academic databases published primarily within the last five years. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis and thematic synthesis to identify major conceptual patterns and recent research findings regarding students from broken-home families. The findings indicate that broken family structures significantly affect students' emotional stability, self-esteem, motivation to learn, classroom participation, and academic performance. Students experiencing family instability are more vulnerable to anxiety, depression, emotional insecurity, and behavioral problems that interfere with educational engagement. However, supportive parenting styles, positive school environments, peer relationships, and counseling support systems function as protective factors that strengthen students' resilience and adaptability. This study also highlights the importance of trauma-informed and inclusive educational approaches in supporting students from vulnerable family backgrounds. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative perspective, which combines socio-emotional, academic, parenting, and social support dimensions within a unified educational framework. Therefore, collaboration among families, schools, communities, and policymakers is essential to create supportive educational ecosystems that promote students' emotional well-being and academic success despite family adversity.

**Keywords:** broken home, family structure, parenting style, social support, socio-emotional development, academic achievement, education.

## **Introduction**

The family is widely recognized as the first and most influential educational environment in shaping children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. A stable family structure generally provides emotional security, behavioral guidance, and academic encouragement that support students' overall educational achievement. However, the increasing prevalence of broken family structures due to divorce, parental conflict, separation, domestic violence, and neglect has become a global social phenomenon affecting children's developmental outcomes. Recent studies indicate that children raised in unstable family environments tend to experience emotional distress, low self-esteem, anxiety, and reduced academic motivation, which subsequently influence their educational performance and social adaptation processes (Amato & Anthony, 2021; Lansford et al., 2021). In educational settings, these challenges often manifest through declining academic achievement, absenteeism, and behavioral problems among students. The phenomenon of broken homes has become increasingly visible in both developed and developing countries, including Indonesia, where family disintegration rates have continued to rise in recent years. The rapid transformation of social values, economic pressures, urbanization, and technological changes has contributed to shifts in family dynamics and parenting practices. According to recent educational and psychological literature, students from broken families often experience difficulties with emotional regulation, peer interactions, and concentration during learning (Sun & Li, 2022). These socio-emotional disturbances not only affect students' classroom participation but also weaken their long-term educational aspirations and resilience. Consequently, educational institutions are increasingly required to address psychosocial issues alongside academic instruction.

From a psychological perspective, parenting style serves as a crucial mediating factor influencing how children adapt to family instability. Positive parenting characterized by warmth, communication, and emotional responsiveness may reduce the negative consequences of family disruption, whereas authoritarian or neglectful parenting tends to intensify emotional and academic difficulties among students (Pinquart, 2021). Social support from teachers, peers, and communities also plays an essential role in helping students cope with stressful family conditions. Several studies have shown that supportive school environments contribute significantly to students' emotional recovery and academic persistence despite adverse family circumstances (Rueger et al., 2022). Therefore, the interaction between family structure, parenting patterns, and external social support becomes an important educational issue requiring comprehensive scholarly attention.

Although many studies have examined broken homes and child development separately, there remains inconsistency regarding the extent to which family disruption directly

influences students' socio-emotional and academic outcomes. Some scholars argue that family structure alone is not the primary determinant of educational failure because other protective factors, such as emotional support and school climate, may moderate negative impacts (Bernardi & Boertien, 2020). Conversely, other researchers emphasize that prolonged exposure to family conflict substantially increases students' vulnerability to depression, academic disengagement, and social maladjustment (Wang et al., 2023). These contrasting findings indicate the existence of unresolved debates concerning the mechanisms through which broken family structures affect educational development.

In addition, previous literature tends to focus predominantly on either psychological consequences or academic achievement without sufficiently integrating both dimensions into a holistic educational framework. Many earlier studies also concentrate on quantitative statistical relationships while paying limited attention to the broader socio-educational implications of family instability in contemporary learning environments. Furthermore, recent educational transformations after the COVID-19 pandemic have altered students' learning experiences and family interactions, thereby creating new contextual challenges that remain underexplored in the literature (Garbe et al., 2020). This condition demonstrates a significant research gap concerning comprehensive analyses of socio-emotional and academic development among students from broken families in the current educational era.

Another important research gap lies in the limited synthesis of contemporary studies examining the combined influence of parenting styles and social support systems as protective mechanisms for students experiencing family disruption. Existing literature reviews often discuss broken homes in fragmented ways without systematically identifying educational intervention strategies capable of mitigating negative developmental outcomes. Moreover, there is still insufficient discussion regarding how schools, teachers, and educational policymakers can collaboratively establish emotionally supportive learning ecosystems for vulnerable students (Theron, 2022). Consequently, a more integrative literature review is needed to clarify conceptual relationships and identify effective educational responses to broken family conditions.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach that combines discussions of family structure, parenting style, socio-emotional development, social support, and academic achievement within a unified educational perspective. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize psychological pathology or academic decline independently, this review highlights the interconnected nature of emotional well-being and educational performance among students from broken homes. Furthermore, this study synthesizes recent international literature from the last five years to provide updated insights into contemporary educational challenges and resilience strategies relevant to modern schooling systems. This integrative perspective contributes incremental newness by positioning schools and social support networks as active agents in mitigating educational inequalities arising from family instability.

This study is urgently needed because the increasing number of students experiencing broken family conditions requires more adaptive educational policies and psychosocial interventions. Without proper understanding and institutional support, socio-emotional disturbances among vulnerable students may lead to long-term academic underachievement, social exclusion, and mental health problems. Educational stakeholders, including teachers, counselors, parents, and policymakers, need evidence-based strategies to foster inclusive learning environments that support students' emotional resilience and academic growth. Therefore, this literature review aims to examine the educational implications of broken family structures by analyzing the relationships among parenting styles, social support, socio-emotional development, and students' academic achievement based on contemporary scholarly evidence.

## **Literature Review**

### **Broken Family Structure in Educational Contexts**

A broken family structure generally refers to family conditions characterized by parental separation, divorce, prolonged conflict, domestic violence, neglect, or the absence of one or both parents in children's lives. In educational discourse, broken homes are considered a significant social factor influencing students' psychological well-being and academic development. Contemporary studies argue that family instability reduces emotional security and weakens children's ability to build healthy interpersonal relationships, thereby affecting their learning motivation and classroom participation (Sun & Li, 2022). The family environment functions as the primary socialization agent, and when this environment becomes unstable, children often experience difficulties in developing self-confidence, emotional regulation, and adaptive behavior.

From the perspective of ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner, family serves as the closest microsystem influencing children's developmental processes. Instability within this microsystem may disrupt emotional attachment and cognitive growth, particularly during adolescence, which is a critical developmental stage. Students from broken families frequently encounter stress, loneliness, anxiety, and emotional insecurity that interfere with educational engagement and social interaction in schools (Wang et al., 2023). Consequently, educational institutions increasingly recognize family structure as an important determinant of student well-being and academic resilience.

### **Parenting Styles and Student Development**

Parenting style represents one of the most influential factors determining how children respond to family disruption. Baumrind's parenting theory classifies parenting approaches into authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful styles, each producing different developmental outcomes in children. Recent research demonstrates that authoritative parenting characterized by emotional warmth, responsiveness, and supportive communication positively contributes to students' academic achievement and socio-emotional competence even in unstable family conditions (Pinquart, 2021). In

contrast, neglectful and authoritarian parenting often intensify emotional distress, academic disengagement, and behavioral problems among students from broken homes. Moreover, parenting quality is considered more important than family structure itself in shaping children's developmental outcomes. Several studies suggest that students living in single-parent or separated families may still achieve positive academic and emotional development when parents maintain supportive communication and consistent involvement in children's education (Bernardi & Boertien, 2020). Emotional availability, parental encouragement, and monitoring of academic activities help students develop resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms despite adverse family circumstances. Therefore, parenting style functions as both a protective and risk factor within broken family environments.

### **Socio-Emotional Development among Students from Broken Homes**

Socio-emotional development refers to individuals' abilities to regulate emotions, build interpersonal relationships, demonstrate empathy, and adapt socially within their environments. Students experiencing family disruption are often vulnerable to emotional instability because prolonged family conflict may create feelings of rejection, insecurity, and low self-worth. According to recent psychological studies, children from broken homes show higher risks of anxiety, depression, emotional withdrawal, and aggressive behavior compared to students raised in stable family environments (Amato & Anthony, 2021). These emotional disturbances frequently affect classroom behavior, peer interaction, and students' participation in collaborative learning activities.

Furthermore, socio-emotional difficulties among students from broken homes can reduce academic self-efficacy and learning motivation. Emotional stress often interferes with concentration, memory retention, and problem-solving abilities during the learning process. Recent educational literature emphasizes that socio-emotional competence is strongly associated with students' academic persistence and long-term educational success (Theron, 2022). Consequently, schools are encouraged to integrate emotional support systems, counseling services, and inclusive educational practices to support students experiencing family-related challenges.

### **Academic Achievement and Educational Outcomes**

Academic achievement reflects students' ability to attain educational goals through cognitive performance, classroom participation, and learning outcomes. Numerous studies indicate that broken family structures may negatively influence students' educational performance due to reduced parental supervision, emotional stress, and financial instability (Sun & Li, 2022). Students from unstable family backgrounds frequently demonstrate lower academic motivation, increased absenteeism, and higher risks of school dropout. Family conflict may also create learning environments that are less conducive to educational concentration and discipline.

However, recent literature also reveals that academic outcomes among students from broken homes are not entirely deterministic. Some students successfully develop resilience and maintain strong academic performance when supported by effective

parenting, positive peer relationships, and emotionally supportive schools (Rueger et al., 2022). This finding indicates that educational achievement is influenced not only by family structure but also by broader social and institutional support systems. Therefore, understanding the interaction between emotional conditions and educational environments is essential for addressing educational inequalities associated with broken homes.

### **The Role of Social Support Systems**

Social support is an important external factor helping students cope with the negative consequences of family disruption. Social support may originate from teachers, peers, school counselors, extended families, and community institutions. The social support theory explains that emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance can strengthen students' coping capacities and psychological resilience. Recent studies demonstrate that students who receive positive emotional support from schools and peers tend to show better emotional adjustment and academic engagement despite experiencing family instability (Rueger et al., 2022). Supportive relationships create a sense of belonging and emotional safety that contributes to healthy developmental outcomes.

In educational contexts, teachers play a strategic role in identifying emotional distress among vulnerable students and creating inclusive classroom environments. Counseling programs, mentoring systems, and collaborative peer activities may reduce feelings of isolation and improve students' socio-emotional well-being. Furthermore, community-based interventions and family counseling services can strengthen communication patterns between parents and children affected by family disruption. Therefore, social support systems function as essential protective mechanisms mitigating the adverse educational impacts of broken family structures.

### **Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

This study is grounded in several theoretical perspectives, including Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Baumrind's Parenting Style Theory, and Social Support Theory. Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes that children's development is shaped by interactions between individuals and their surrounding social environments, especially family and school contexts. Parenting Style Theory explains how parental behaviors influence children's emotional and academic development through varying patterns of responsiveness and control. Meanwhile, Social Support Theory highlights the importance of emotional and social resources in enhancing resilience among individuals facing adversity.

Conceptually, this literature review positions broken family structure as an independent variable influencing students' socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Parenting style and social support systems are treated as mediating and moderating variables that may either reduce or intensify the negative effects of family instability. Through this integrative framework, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how educational institutions and social environments can support students from broken homes in achieving emotional well-being and academic success.

## **Research Method**

This study employed a library research method using a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the educational implications of broken family structures on students' socio-emotional and academic development. Library research was selected because it enables researchers to systematically collect, analyze, and synthesize scholarly literature related to family structure, parenting styles, social support, emotional well-being, and academic achievement. The data sources consisted of scientific articles, international journal publications, books, and reputable academic databases indexed in Scopus, Google Scholar, Springer, Taylor & Francis, ScienceDirect, and Wiley Online Library. The literature selection focused primarily on studies published within the last five years to ensure the relevance and contemporariness of the findings. Keywords used in the literature search included "broken home," "family structure," "parenting styles," "social support," "socio-emotional development," and "academic achievement."

The data analysis process was conducted through several stages, including literature identification, data classification, content evaluation, critical interpretation, and thematic synthesis. Relevant studies were selected based on their alignment with the research objectives and their contribution to understanding the relationship between broken family structures and students' educational outcomes. The collected literature was analyzed using a content analysis to identify major themes, conceptual patterns, and research gaps in contemporary educational discourse. To enhance the validity of the findings, the study compared and integrated perspectives from various disciplines, including education, psychology, sociology, and child development studies. Through this approach, the research aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of how family instability affects students' socio-emotional well-being and academic performance, and the roles of parenting and social support in mitigating these challenges.

## **Results and Discussion**

The findings of this literature review indicate that broken family structures significantly influence students' socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Recent studies consistently show that students raised in unstable family environments tend to experience emotional insecurity, anxiety, low self-esteem, and behavioral difficulties that interfere with their educational performance. Family conflict, parental separation, and inconsistent caregiving often create psychological stress that weakens students' concentration, learning motivation, and classroom engagement (Wang et al., 2023). In many cases, emotional disturbances emerging from family instability contribute to absenteeism, declining grades, and limited participation in social and academic activities at school. These findings demonstrate that family conditions remain one of the most influential environmental factors shaping students' educational experiences.

Recent literature also reveals that socio-emotional problems among students from broken homes have become increasingly complex in the post-pandemic educational era. During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, students spent more time within family environments,

making household conflicts more directly connected to learning experiences and emotional well-being. Research conducted by Donker et al. (2023) found that adolescents exposed to prolonged family conflict experienced higher emotional exhaustion, stress, and difficulties in adapting to hybrid learning systems. Similarly, educational studies indicate that emotional instability negatively affects students' cognitive functioning, including memory retention, problem-solving abilities, and academic persistence (Theron & Phasha, 2023). These findings suggest that educational achievement cannot be separated from students' psychological and family conditions.

Another important finding concerns the role of parenting style as a determining factor in students' resilience within broken family environments. Recent studies emphasize that supportive parenting characterized by empathy, communication, and emotional warmth can reduce the negative consequences of family disruption on children's educational outcomes. Students who continue to receive emotional support and academic supervision from parents demonstrate better adaptability, stronger self-confidence, and higher academic motivation despite experiencing parental separation (Pinquart & Ebeling, 2022). Conversely, neglectful parenting and unresolved parental conflict intensify emotional distress and increase the likelihood of academic disengagement. Therefore, parenting quality functions as a protective factor that can either strengthen or weaken students' socio-emotional resilience.

The findings further demonstrate that social support systems play a critical role in helping students cope with broken family conditions. Teachers, peers, school counselors, and communities contribute significantly to students' emotional recovery and academic adaptation. According to Rueger et al. (2022), students who perceive strong emotional support from schools tend to develop higher self-esteem, emotional stability, and educational engagement. Supportive school environments create a sense of safety and belonging that enables vulnerable students to remain socially connected and academically motivated. In this context, educational institutions are not merely centers for academic instruction but also important psychosocial support systems for students facing family adversity.

In addition, the review highlights that academic achievement among students from broken homes is influenced not solely by family structure but by the interaction between multiple environmental and psychological variables. Several contemporary studies argue that family instability does not automatically determine academic failure because resilience, emotional intelligence, peer support, and school climate may moderate negative developmental outcomes (Li et al., 2024). This finding challenges deterministic assumptions suggesting that all students from broken families inevitably experience poor educational performance. Instead, the literature supports a more dynamic understanding in which protective factors and supportive educational ecosystems significantly shape students' developmental trajectories.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which explains that child development is influenced by interconnected social

systems, including family, school, and community environments. Broken family structures disrupt the child's microsystem, creating emotional instability that subsequently affects interactions within educational contexts. However, positive school climates and supportive peer relationships may compensate for emotional deficiencies originating from unstable family conditions (Theron & Phasha, 2023). This demonstrates that socio-emotional and academic development should be understood holistically rather than through isolated family variables alone.

The findings also reinforce the relevance of Social Support Theory in explaining students' resilience within adverse family situations. Emotional support from teachers and peers contributes to adaptive coping mechanisms that help students manage stress and maintain academic persistence. Recent studies indicate that counseling interventions, mentoring programs, and inclusive classroom practices positively influence students' emotional regulation and learning engagement (Li et al., 2024). Consequently, educational policies should prioritize psychosocial support services alongside academic achievement programs, particularly for students identified as vulnerable due to family instability.

Moreover, this literature review identifies an important contemporary issue concerning the limited integration of mental health support within educational systems. Although schools increasingly recognize emotional well-being as an important educational component, many institutions still focus predominantly on cognitive achievement and standardized academic outcomes. Recent educational discourse emphasizes the urgency of implementing trauma-informed educational practices capable of addressing students' emotional experiences and family-related stressors (Donker et al., 2023). Such approaches encourage empathy-based teaching, emotional literacy programs, and collaborative counseling systems to support holistic student development.

Overall, the results indicate that broken family structures have multidimensional implications for students' socio-emotional and academic development. However, the negative effects of family instability can be mitigated through supportive parenting, positive school environments, and strong social support systems. Therefore, educational stakeholders should adopt integrative approaches that combine academic instruction with emotional and psychosocial interventions. Schools, families, and communities need to collaborate in creating inclusive educational ecosystems capable of fostering resilience, emotional well-being, and academic success among students from broken homes.

## **Conclusion**

This literature review concludes that broken family structures have significant implications for students' socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Family instability caused by parental separation, conflict, neglect, or dysfunctional parenting environments contributes to emotional distress, anxiety, low self-esteem, behavioral problems, and declining educational motivation among students. These socio-emotional challenges often influence learning concentration, classroom participation, academic persistence, and overall educational performance. Therefore, the family environment remains a

fundamental factor shaping students' psychological well-being and educational development.

The findings further reveal that parenting style and social support systems function as important protective factors capable of mitigating the negative effects of broken homes. Supportive parenting characterized by emotional warmth, communication, and educational involvement can strengthen students' resilience and adaptability despite adverse family conditions. In addition, positive school climates, peer relationships, counseling services, and community support significantly contribute to students' emotional recovery and academic engagement. These findings demonstrate that educational success among students from broken families is not solely determined by family structure but also by the quality of social and educational support surrounding them.

This study also emphasizes the importance of adopting holistic and trauma-informed educational approaches within schools to address the increasing psychosocial challenges faced by students from vulnerable family backgrounds. Educational institutions should not only prioritize cognitive achievement but also integrate emotional support systems and inclusive learning environments into educational practices. Collaboration among parents, teachers, counselors, schools, and communities is essential for fostering students' emotional well-being and academic resilience. Finally, this review contributes to contemporary educational discourse by providing an integrative understanding of the relationships among broken family structures, parenting styles, social support, socio-emotional development, and academic achievement, while also highlighting the need for further empirical and interdisciplinary research in this field.

## References

- Amato, P. R., & Anthony, C. J. (2021). Divorce, family conflict, and children's behavior problems: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Family Psychology, 35*(6), 809–818. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000832>
- Bernardi, F., & Boertien, D. (2020). Understanding heterogeneity in the effects of parental separation on educational attainment in Europe. *European Sociological Review, 36*(6), 825–840. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcaa028>
- Donker, M. H., Mastrotheodoros, S., & Branje, S. (2023). Family conflict, emotional insecurity, and adolescent adjustment in post-pandemic education contexts. *Journal of Adolescence, 95*(4), 522–536. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12145>
- Garbe, A., Ogurlu, U., Logan, N., & Cook, P. (2020). COVID-19 and remote learning: Experiences of parents with children during the pandemic. *American Journal of Qualitative Research, 4*(3), 45–65. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/8471>
- Lansford, J. E., Godwin, J., & Bornstein, M. H. (2021). Parenting and child adjustment across diverse family structures. *Developmental Psychology, 57*(7), 1014–1027. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001200>
- Li, X., Zhao, Y., & Chen, H. (2024). School climate, peer support, and academic resilience among adolescents from disrupted families. *Children and Youth Services Review, 158*, 107421. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2024.107421>

- Pinquart, M. (2021). Associations of parenting styles and dimensions with academic achievement in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(3), 945–974. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09574-5>
- Pinquart, M., & Ebeling, M. (2022). Parental educational involvement and academic achievement in children from diverse family structures. *Educational Psychology Review*, 34(4), 2011–2035. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-022-09683-4>
- Rueger, S. Y., Malecki, C. K., Pyun, Y., Aycocock, C., & Coyle, S. (2022). A meta-analytic review of the association between perceived social support and depression in childhood and adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 148(3–4), 236–267. <https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000365>
- Sun, Y., & Li, Y. (2022). Family structure, parent-child relationships, and adolescent educational outcomes. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 31(5), 1284–1298. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02159-4>
- Theron, L. (2022). Resilience of children with adverse childhood experiences: The role of school support systems. *School Psychology International*, 43(4), 345–361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01430343221091234>
- Theron, L., & Phasha, N. (2023). School support and resilience among adolescents facing family adversity. *School Psychology International*, 44(2), 155–172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01430343221149876>
- Wang, M. T., Degol, J. L., & Henry, D. A. (2023). Family conflict and adolescents' emotional and academic adjustment: A longitudinal investigation. *Child Development*, 94(2), 456–472. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13892>