The associations for separated parents: their role for parents’ well-being and co-parenting

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Theoretical frame

Separation/divorce

Critical event that involves all areas of life

**SEPARATED PARENTS**
Lower well-being
Challenge: maintain a cooperative relationship with the ex-partner (co-parenting)

**ASSOCIATIONS FOR SEPARATED PARENTS IN ITALY**
Created by parents to support each other
Psychological well-being: divorced parents present a lower level of well-being; a higher risk of psychological and health disorders; higher levels of stress than married people.

Relational well-being: the separation/divorce has a negative effect on social relationships, who play, at the same time, a very important role in supporting and helping parents.

Co-parenting: divorced parents have to cooperate and collaborate for their children’s well-being.
Research

• Explorative aim
• Interdisciplinary (sociological/psychological perspective)
• National web survey

Sample: 449 separated/divorced parents belonging to about 50 Italian associations

• Research questions:
  – Does perceived support from the association help separated parents to cope with the challenges associated with the separation/divorce?
  – In particular, does perceived support from the association favor a higher well-being (both psychological and relational) and a greater co-parenting ability?
Methods: statistical analyses

ANOVA

IV: PERCEIVED SUPPORT from the association (2 levels; high vs low)

DV: 1. PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: depressive symptoms

2. RELATIONAL WELL-BEING: satisfaction with the relationship with children, relationship with friends, relationship with parents

3. CO-PARENTING
Results

Psychological well-being

F(1,319)=5.147 p < .05
Results

Relational well-being

- Satisfaction with children:
  - Low perceived support: 6,9691
  - High perceived support: 7,8862
  - t (327) = -2.975, p < .05

- Satisfaction with friends:
  - Low perceived support: 6,8395
  - High perceived support: 7,4072
  - t (327) = -2.446, p < .05

- Satisfaction with parents:
  - Low perceived support: 6,5370
  - High perceived support: 6,7066
  - t (327) = -0.515, p > .05
Results

Co-parenting

F(1,327) = 11.644 p < .05
Conclusions

Those who perceive to be more supported by the association have a GREATER CO-PARENTING ABILITY

Feeling more supported by the association has a POSITIVE EFFECT on well-being (psychological and relational)

Being part of an association seems to HELP separated/divorced parents to COPE WITH THEIR NEW CHALLENGES
Future research questions

What does it mean for parents being part of such associations?

Which is the impact of being part of these associations for their children?
Thank you!

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