

High Ratio of Divorce and its Rationale in Pakistan

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Abstract:

Relationships are the basis of all civilized society. A family is the first and immediate unit for every child. She or he is born into and is considered as a full member of a family. A family is a recognized group of people who are joined together by a marriage commitment. However, it is sad when one of the family members – husband or wife - give up; stops

compromising e.g.: on psycho, social and domestic issues and have no alternative but to accept the worse solution - and agree to separate. Consequently, the relationship and the family begin to disintegrate. The total number of respondents on which this research was accomplished with the help of questionnaires and interviews was 170 children -10 to 18 years of age and selected through comprehensive sampling techniques from various Secondary Schools and other Institutions. The data collected were analyzed through the use of simple percentages and multi-variate and bi-variate methods.

Introduction

Because of so many financial, psychological and social issues, the divorce rate in the Islamic State of Pakistan is relentlessly increasing. Though Islam doesn't highly recommend divorce, it gives couples the right to decide whether they want to live with each other or not. Now it is the duty of husband and wife to protect the rights of their children by giving them justified attention and love that is possible in entirety if they show patience and tolerance in their marital relationship. But all over the world and especially in Pakistan the dominance of males as they try to establish their supremacy over woman does not give women their equal rights that spoil the nuptial bond.

Causes of Martial Breakdown

There are many different causes and reasons for a broken home which disturb the harmony of the couple. Broken homes are due to personal problems between couple's marital relationship.

Experts put down social change as the main reason for a rising number of divorces. More and more women are now fully aware of their rights and are able to live on their own. Experts say career-oriented women are more prone to taking divorce than housewives. Experts describe forced marriages; lust; infidelity; joint family system; misunderstandings; lack of trust; financial pressures; differences in social status as other reasons for a high divorce rate.

There are many reasons why people get divorced which can be influenced by a person's character; age; status; education; religion. For instance:

- one or both spouses may have few skills in the commitment to marriage or they have deficiencies in the communication of problems.
- They may have different expectations about rearing children or rely on traditional role model that impedes personal growth.
- Have divergent ideas of personal and career goals
- or a couple may have financial problems which in turn provoke crises and lead to divorce. (Margit: 2010)

Divorce is seen as putting a great strain and pressure on the couple in question and there is a temptation, in common sense thought, to see divorce as an indicator of a mistaken or perhaps even damaging relationship. Divorce, however, can also be damaging to others involved in particular young children. So much so that we often hear of married couples staying together 'for the sake of children' (Liz Steel, 2001).

There are certain factors that appear to play a decisive role and have a negative effect on a pair relationship: education; way of life; political convictions; religious beliefs; attitude towards marriage and family

(e.g. children, private property), educational levels, employment; the environment such as living in urban and rural areas (Margit, 2001).

Reasons for broken homes that are common in Pakistan include desertion; alcohol addiction; physical abuse; emotional abuse; personal differences; financial problems; interference of in-laws and parents; lack of maturity; religious conversion; cultural and lifestyle differences; sexual incompatibility; lack of patience; *watta satta*; long term clashes; *sardari* system; wrong religious interpretation; etc.

- A second group who would be critically affected is the elderly. Older members of the community cannot rely on the kind of broken family and they become totally dependent on the state (Stephen & Barry, 1983).
- Early marriages increase the risk of breakdown, where both spouses are younger than 20 is three times the average (Stephen & Barry, 1983).
- Alcoholism brings ignorance and aggression in families which can lead to arguments and fights as an alcoholic person lose his senses and talks irrelevant things that might dishearten others feelings.
- Physical or emotional abuse.
- Alcohol and drug abuse are among the top behavioral reasons identified by women who divorced in the mid-life (David & Caroline, 2005).
- Marriage has to be contracted with consent and even the consent of the girl has to be obtained (Mohammad Sharif, 2007).
- Pakistani society is very conservative; it is generally considered the right and duty of parents to arrange a suitable match for their daughters. It is taken for granted that the girl will give her consent while law does not accept such kinds of marriages (Saveitri, 2004).
- *Watta satta* is very common in Pakistan in which marriage of a brother-sister pair from two houses is made. This is an endogamous form of marriage in which relationships are very fragile because if a husband mistreats his wife then the brother-in-law is expected to hurt his wife to take revenge for his sister. The possibility of breaking the relations is double in this type of marriage. If one of the husband's divorces or maltreats his wife, similar treatment is meted out to the woman from his family (Saveitri, 2004).
- *Walwar* is a practice prevalent in Balochistan which encourages the selling of girls in marriage. This type of marriage is also practiced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in which girls are sold off bartered to rival parties to settle disputes (Saveitri, 2004).
- In few regions, weddings are preceded by the payment of an agreed-upon dowry by the bride's family. Failure to pay the dowry can lead to violence and then divorce. In case of failure to pay the dowry women have to face dowry death including: suicide, hanging, poisoning, burning and most of the cases lead to divorce (Bharti, 2015).
- An extra-marital affair has been associated with subsequent divorce. The spouse having the affair may feel unloved at home. Involvement in an affair may bring both love and sex and speed the spouse towards divorce (David & Caroline, 2005).
- Managing differences and conflicts in the marriage helps to reduce negative feelings that may develop in a relationship. Some partners respond to conflict by withdrawing emotionally from their relationship; others response by attacking, blaming, and failing to listen to their partners point of view (David & Caroline, 2005).

Separation of the husband and wife generally precedes divorce. This separation actually constitutes the disruption of the marriage (Harvey, 1951). Arguments, suspicion, ego, male dominance, kids, and misunderstanding can be factors that contribute to divorce or separation. Usually divorce occurs because of dishonesty, demands, and arguments on minor issues. Those occupations involving regular absence from home are high at risk (Stephen & Barry, 1983). Divorce has become more socially acceptable. Young people who have high expectations of marriage might divorce at a later stage if these expectations are not met longer life expectancy might mean that as married couples grow older they grow apart. Changes in Divorce Reforms Act law made divorce easier to obtain (Liz & Warren, 2001).

- *Khula* or *Talak* is obtained by the wife if the husband is found guilty of neglecting or torturing his wife and his guilt has been proved beyond doubt. It can be obtained if the husband is physically and mentally incapable of performing his marital duties or denied his wife the position of honor she is entitled to (M.U. Qureshi, 2006).

Literature Review

Burton (2012) reports that a recent study by University of Notre Dame and the University of Rochester revealed that parents' marital problems can leave a lasting impact on their young children. Researchers found that when young children witnessed conflict between their parents, this eventually led to issues including depression and anxiety in their teenage years (Burton, 2012).

Paul R. Amato and Alan Booth (1996) pointed out after divorce, the frequency of contact between children and parent who left the house, mostly fathers, is decreased.

Children's relation with mothers is observed as the same after separation in most of the cases as before divorce; but in some cases, it is found declining long after divorce. It might happen because of guardian mother's remarriage. This study also shows that

- the fathers and mothers who later broke up with each other had very harsh attitudes with their sons in comparison to the couples who remained together.
- Children of divorced parents have more behavioral and academic issues than those whose parents never set apart.
- The parent-child relationship before divorce has strong connection with the dissolution of the parental relations.
- Divorce does not seem to affect mother's loyalty for her children.
- Marital disputes deviate parents' minds and attention from children that causes so many personality issues in them.
- Divorce or separation of parents may make the children frustrated and difficult to handle.

Methodology

The research in this thesis was a descriptive type. The sample size for this study consisted of

170 children aged 10 to 18 years through *Purposive Sampling Technique* who were questioned about their parents' breakup. Every respondent was selected according to *Purposive* and *Snowball Sampling Method* because it was difficult to find respondents from the specific universe, so, the researchers practiced *snowball* and *purposive sampling* in order to get through to their respondents. Researchers used Questionnaire and Interview Schedule Techniques for data collection purposes because many of the respondent children had difficulty to fill in a questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed through the use of simple percentages. Tables were prepared through SPSS and frequencies were put in to these tables through the bi-variate and multi-variate tabulation processes. Afterwards cross tables were made and variables were tested through the bi-variate and multi-variate tabulation method. Frequency distribution expressed the number of cases within each value of

is to find patterns and exceptions in data. Techniques of this type commonly include regression analysis, conjoint analysis, and other modeling techniques.

The inferential statistics was used during *bi-variate analysis* to explore the association of two variables and the result was verified.

Reason of Family Breakup, Experience of Broken Family/Question about Breakage

Status of the breakage	Freq.	Duration the present status of the breakage			Ever asked the reason from parents		Total
		initial stage	up to 1 year	more 1 year	Yes	No	
		Separated	55	55	0	0	55
Divorce	59	18	25	16	39	20	59
Blended Family	56	0	0	56	0	56	56
Total	170	73	25	72	94	76	170

a variable as a percentage or proportion of the total number of cases. It was calculated through following formula.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$

Where
 P = Percentage
 F = Frequency of Classes
 N = Total frequency

Bi-variate Analysis: Helps analyze the relationship between two variables.

Multi-variate Analysis: Helps identify the underlying relationships among sets of variables.

The basic purpose of both *multi-variate regression analysis* and *bi-variate analysis*

Reason of family breakup, Experience of broken family and any question about breakage.

This table shows that 55/170 (32.3%) respondents were separated; 59/170 (34.7%) were divorced; 56/170 (32.9%) respondents were reported from blended families.

In separated category all of them were at the very start stage of their separation. Whereas, in divorced parents 25/59 (42.3%) respondents said it's been up to one year they are facing their parents' divorce. Similarly in blended family category 56/170 (32.9%) respondents were reported being in blended families.

This table also highlights that the parents who were divorced recently, all of the respondents replied 'yes' they have asked their parents about their reason for the marriage breakup.

Among divorced parents 39/59 (66.1%) respondents said yes they investigated their parents for their marriage breakup while, 20/59 (33.8%) said 'no', they never asked their parents about their divorce reason.

And among blended family respondents 56/56 (100%) respondents said 'no' they have never asked the reason about their divorce from their parents.

This table clearly highlights the situation that the children whose parents were recently separated were in position to ask them about the reason behind their separation. Besides, the children from blended families whose parents were divorced more than one year didn't ask their parents about their divorce reason. It means blended families kid got involve in their new life and one thing the scholar observed that blended families have more adverse impacts on a child personality so they were happy in their dependent life. They usually don't let their own parent and step parent interfere in their life.

On the other side the respondents were divorced 39/59 (66.1%) said 'yes' and 20/59 (33.8%) said 'no' they didn't ask the reason behind their divorce. This attitude is also observed that usually children are not allowed to talk about this matter. Whereas, the Psychiatrist and the Family Therapists advise to keep the doors open for discussion for your children that anytime they want to talk about the separation and divorce. It is healthy for children to get out their pent-up emotions in discussions with their parents and to learn that the parents are willing to listen to their feelings and fears.

Causes of Breakage of the Family

Causes of nonfunctional relationship	Freq.	Communication with the parents not living with		Total
		Yes	No	
Financial Problem	33	33	0	33
Third Party Involvement	72	63	9	72
Problems with relatives	55	0	55	55
Health Problem	3	0	3	3
Other	7	0	7	7
Total	170	96	74	170

- The above table shows that 33/170 (19.4%) respondent that financial problems were the reason family breakage. But they were still in contact with their parents;
- 72/170 (42.3%) number of respondents marital breakdown reason was because of third party involvement;
- 63/72 (87.5%) were in contact with their parents;
- 9/72 (12.5%) respondents were not in contact with parents.
- 55/172 (31.9%) respondents had problems with their parents and all of the children were not in contact with their parents.
- 3/170 (1.7%) had health problems that's why their family broke down. And all of them were not in contact with their parents.
- Domestic violence; fighting about dowry; minor clashes; etc were other reasons of family breakdown of their parents.

This table features the highlights that the youngsters whose parent's conjugal breakdown reason was relatives, those kids were still not in contact with their parents since

they (Close relatives) don't want to meet them.

Results and Discussion:

- 42.9% respondents had experienced a broken home for more than 1 year;
- 38.8% respondent's parents were divorced;
- 30.6% respondent's parents were separated;
- 30.6% respondent's parents were from blended families;
- 55.3% respondents personally approached their parents and asked about what had happen to their relationship;
- 44.7% respondents never approach their parents.
- 45.3% respondents thought there was involvement of 3rd party;
- 30.0% respondents thought that problem with relatives was the reason for their parent's breakup.
- 41.8% respondents considered relatives were the reason of family fragmentation;
- 36.4% respondents considered both parents were the reason of family fragmentation;
- 10.6% respondents considered their grandparents were the reason for family fragmentation.

Many broken homes today are provoked by unnecessary influences and involvement of parents, relatives, friends who interfere in private matters of the family. When a man or woman permit these third elements to be their adviser this aspect will lead their private affairs not to be confidential; that will further cause family clash; the end results would certainly ruin the couple bond that will undoubtedly create a clash between both husband and wife which will negatively affect their relationship. If a couple is facing problems in their marriage, the family and friends as their duty should step in which is almost 'good work'. But

sometimes extra interference and involvements is harmful for their relationship. In few cases, due to a jealousy some family members and friends intentionally try to spoil their marital life factor.

In our society, a joint family system is quite common and when a woman marries a man she lives with her in-laws, as well. Having some advantages, a joint family system also sometimes develops some controversies amongst various relations. The issues mostly are common between mother-in-laws and the daughter-in-laws which often become a prime reason of rift between husband and wife. Change is a natural cycle so both spouses can go through changes throughout the marriage. Failure to accept these changes often lead to divorce with a query that he is not the same person. People may go through essential value changes after marriage.

Margret Mead the famous anthropologist says that her first marriage was a student marriage; her second was a professional marriage and her third was an intellectual marriage with whom she bears her only child. She experienced a different set of needs at several stages of her life and selected a partner who fulfilled her needs (David & Caroline, 2005).

In recent year's women have attained higher degrees of education. They cannot be forced anymore to follow lethargic traditions. On the other hand, men have carried on with their traditions accordingly. Therefore, higher educated women have to deal with traditional mind set possessing a comparable educational background and enlightened mind set (Margit, 2010). Financial independence of women highly contributes to the higher rate of divorce in Pakistan as in such cases women do not rely on men in financial terms hence are free to speak up.

In many cases women prefer divorce to lose her career.

Recommendations

By taking into consideration certain recommendations to further improve the status of families and its decrease in divorce ratio the following recommendation have been put:

- People may have right to choose their partner seriously and analytically before getting married.
- Silence and lack of communication are the major enemies of marriages. Conversation with your spouse is an important part of avoidance from Divorce.
- Respect and admiration are also primary means of confrontation against marital tensions.
- It is essential to devote time, patience and tenderness to the other spouse because marriage demands time, attention and devotion.
- Strive to lead a full and active sex life. Sexual relations are necessary in a couple's life because it gives a feeling of intimacy and love.
- Parents need to try to develop confidence in their children so that they are able to make their own decisions by themselves and face the challenges of married life.

Conclusion

Family is incredibly significant because it influences our individuality and behavior. Relations and family support our self-respect and are concerned with our prosperity. Family also imparts us with wisdom, culture and traditions, which are the standards we carry universally that guide us all through our lives. Family is the building block of a successful person. Family is the first friend; first brick; first memory of a person. It can either make me or break me into pieces. Family breakup has adverse

effects on children and whole family. But there are ways to minimize the emotional impact that individual usually feel in these kinds of families. Though study summarizes the troubles and problems crop up due to family breakup. But if the single parents sincerely put their strength to give a secure, caring and effective setting to their children, it might reduce the s ratio of a family breakup.

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