

Investigating the harms of divorce on the lives of couples and children

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ABSTRACT

Unfortunately, in the past several years, the downward slope of marriage statistics and on the other hand, the upward slope of divorce was very worrying. The damage caused by divorce is multi-dimensional, that is, couples, families and children are damaged. On the other hand, the most common mental disorder for men after divorce is depression and guilt, while anxiety and material problems and lack of financial security are common injuries for women. Therefore, specialized training in marriage and divorce counseling seems necessary. The harms mentioned in this article are: 1. Fear of loneliness, 2. Guilt, 3. Emotional problems, 4. Identity problem, 5. Role duality, 6. Economic problems, 7. Community evaluation. In addition, in the current research, the difference between men's and women's reactions to divorce and the damages that children of divorce are exposed to were investigated.

Keywords: Divorce, women's and men's injuries, divorce crisis for children

1 Introduction

One of the most imperative issues in any society is the "family" field, referred to as one of the "social institutions." It is an institution whose functions can affect the functions of other social institutions such as the government, education, economy, and religion and also be influenced by them. Whenever we talk about the family, several basic elements, such as marriage, divorce, children, etc., come to mind, each of which is important in its place (Sbarra & Whisman, 2022).

Some believe that the study of divorce is critical in terms of the wide-ranging effects on the transformation of society's lifestyle, the weakening of the family structure, and the process of its increase in society because the proper functioning of the family also affects other parts of the society (Damota, 2019).

The damage of divorce has become a concern with the growing divorce rate in today's societies. With the increase of divorce damages, families' health is also endangered. Separation of couples can occur for various reasons, including increased stress, financial problems, lack of

recognition, cultural differences, beliefs, etc. Despite this, divorce causes much damage and complications for men and women and families, to the extent that its consequences sometimes continue for years (Rowshani, Tafte, & Khosravi, 2019). This issue increases the need for pre-marriage knowledge and problem-solving skills throughout life. In this article, the damages caused by divorce are described in detail.

2 Harmful Effects of Divorce

The experience of divorce can have many negative consequences for men and women. The damage of divorce can affect the personal and social lives of men and women for a long time. Some of these consequences include the following:

2.1 Fear of loneliness

Women or men who experience divorce, especially in the beginning, usually feel the fear of loneliness. The emotional dependence that arises in couples' relationships makes the experience of separation terrifying. This fear and concern can show itself in different issues. A person may feel unable to live alone (Thadathil & Sriram, 2020).

One may be worried that they will not be happy like before and will always be in a bad mood. People, especially women, have often become dependent on their spouses regarding the economy, work, housing, and life responsibilities. In these cases, the worry and fear of being unable to carry the burden of life alone adds to other concerns. In this regard, reading the article on the treatment of loneliness can be useful (Thadathil & Sriram, 2020).

2.2 Feeling guilty

Many times, people have doubts about their decision after separation. They often feel guilty, especially the man or woman who significantly ended the relationship and lived together. Either person may also dwell for a long time on what they did wrong in the relationship or what they could have done more. In this way, for a long time, they blame themselves for the separation and the end of their partnership. Feeling guilty after a breakup is a strategy of the mind to deal with this painful experience. After experiencing separation, a person experiences some grief. Feeling guilty and blaming oneself for the breakup gives a person a sense of control over the uncontrollable. A mental process that usually happens in genuine mourning. So, it may seem

strange, but at first, this feeling of guilt benefits the psyche to some extent. Nevertheless, the important thing is that the person can gradually overcome this feeling and accept the incident (Rowshani, Tafte, & Khosravi, 2019; Sbarra & Whisman, 2022; Zulkarnain & Korenman, 2019).

2.3 Emotional problems

The emotional damage that a person experiences after separation is one of the most challenging consequences of divorce. The severity and duration of these problems are different for different people. Usually, the ways to deal with it are different depending on the person. Nevertheless, breaking up after a long relationship can bring problems and emotional suffering for years. Many people experience much grief after a breakup. Feelings of sadness, grief, hopelessness, and lack of motivation may be experienced for a long time. Sometimes, these feelings lead to depression (Damota, 2019; Raley & Sweeney, 2020).

Negative emotions of anxiety, worry, anger, and restlessness in people during the experience of separation are normal for a long time. Some people gradually go through these stages and cope with it, but coping with it is much more difficult for some. These people may experience these feelings longer and more intensely, or after some time, they may experience problems such as widespread anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, job problems, etc. In this case, it becomes necessary to take the help of psychological counseling (Sbarra & Whisman, 2022).

2.4 Identity problem

After divorce, people who experience separation after years may have difficulty maintaining their identity. Usually, a woman or a man has defined their personality based on their relationship with their spouse, child, or social friends related to the family. A person has accepted specific roles as his coherent identity in life. The disintegration of the family and the separation of couples can shake their identity and make it challenging to create a new identity. The coincidence of divorce with the crisis of forty years will increase the intensity and duration of the person's confusion. We suggest you read the article on the 40-year crisis (Raley & Sweeney, 2020; Sbarra & Whisman, 2022).

2.5 Role duality

One of the harms of divorce is a person's role conflict. It can happen especially to women. A person who has played

the role of wife and mother until now, after separation, must also shoulder the responsibilities of being a father. On the other hand, a father who faces separation must compensate for the emotional lack of the mother's presence for the child. While he may not have enough time or facilities for it. This conflict of roles can be created in terms of emotional and support responsibilities for the child or social and economic responsibilities (Damota, 2019; Rowshani, Tafte, & Khosravi, 2019).

2.6 Financial problems

Facing financial problems and not having a suitable job or housing is one of the problems that may happen mostly to women. The more economically dependent a woman is on her husband, the more problems she faces after separation. Housewives who did not work or left their jobs may have trouble finding a source of financing for a long time after divorce (Bredtmann & Vonnahme, 2019).

On the other hand, even if the person does not have much financial dependence or is employed, it will still be difficult to adapt to the new conditions for some time. Before the divorce, the house, car, tools and many properties and activities were shared. After the separation, the person should try to provide the conditions for an independent life and adapt to the new conditions. Finding a suitable job is one of the ways to reduce some of these damages (Sbarra & Whisman, 2022).

2.7 Social attitude

Society's attitude and people's negative feedback make it more challenging to deal with the individual's separation. Generally, the more traditional societies are or have more rigid frameworks, the more these judgments and evaluations are. Especially in our society, negative judgments are directed towards women after experiencing divorce. Women who separate from their husbands may not be accepted in some social situations (Damota, 2019).

The formation of new relationships for them sometimes falls under the radius of their separation. They are much more likely to be negatively evaluated by others just because of their divorce experience. Even labels such as divorcee and widow are used for this group of women, which can affect their low self-esteem and distance from others. This negative feedback will make it more difficult for them to cope with what happened and adapt to new conditions (Bredtmann & Vonnahme, 2019; Rowshani, Tafte, & Khosravi, 2019).

3 Divorce damages for children

Children of divorce are exposed to various injuries during and after the divorce. The experience of moving a child between two homes and parents can be confusing and difficult for him. We recommend referring to the article on children of divorce to understand this concept better. Also, the following are some of the harms of divorce on children (Sorek, 2019).

3.1 Feeling Guilty

Children sometimes worry about their parents not loving them anymore. Some children blame themselves for their parents' separation. They blame themselves in this case and sometimes think they behaved badly or did something wrong (Van Dijk et al., 2020).

3.2 Aggression

Children's aggression is more common at older ages than parents' divorce. Sometimes, they blame one or both parents for this separation. In this way, aggressive behaviors show a confrontation in front of them. In this context, reading the article on children's aggression will provide useful information (Garriga & Pennoni, 2022; Goisis, Özcan, & Van Kerm, 2019).

3.3 Behavioral problems and anxiety

Children of divorce may show a range of anxiety disorders, aggression, or behavior problems over time. Despite this, parents' attitude and, helping them to accept a new lifestyle and not withhold sufficient support and attention despite the separation can largely prevent their problems and anxiety (O'Hara et al., 2019; Raley & Sweeney, 2020).

In addition, based on psychological research, children who live in a two-parent home but have many arguments and in a tense atmosphere experience far more problems and emotional damage than children who live in a single-parent family but in a calm atmosphere (Sorek, 2019; Zulkarnain & Korenman, 2019).

4 The difference in the reaction of men and women to divorce

Men and women often react differently to breakups. Despite the statistical differences in the intensity of the experiences, most symptoms are the same in both sexes. Coping with divorce is like any other loss. One must

understand the problem to cope. Feel it and accept it. In this way, the person can adapt to the new life. In the following, we discuss some differences in the reaction of men and women to divorce.

4.1 Men's reaction to separation

Divorce can have more damage and complications for men. Men are more exposed to major depression after divorce. Also, they are more likely to be addicted to drugs than women. Men with these conditions are also at greater risk for physical health problems like heart attacks. Men start grieving after separation later than women (Sbarra & Whisman, 2022).

For this reason, the mourning process becomes longer for them. Men in the early stages of a breakup may be in denial. In the face of divorce, men tend to act rather than express their feelings verbally to reduce stress.

4.2 Women's reaction to separation

Women generally experience emotional damage caused by divorce earlier than men. Negative emotions can be more intense in them at first. Women suffer more economic problems after divorce than men. They may face more difficulty in shouldering the financial responsibilities of life. Also, due to custody of children, household responsibilities and living expenses are more for them. When faced with divorce, women face fewer physical problems because they express their negative feelings more with reactions such as crying and discussing it with others more (Rowshani, Tafte, & Khosravi, 2019; Sbarra & Whisman, 2022)

Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethics Considerations

Not applicable.

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