

Investigating the Causes of Divorce in R. Armenia in Comparison with I.R. Iran

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ABSTRACT

The present study deals with the causes of divorce in R. Armenia. The method used was survey research method and the tool for collecting data was questionnaire designed by the researcher. The data was collected from among two groups of divorced and couples currently having married life. The sample community was 400 randomly selected. Alpha cronbach was used to evaluate validity of the tests and SPSS was used to analyze the data. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the tendency to divorce and issues like economic problems, spouses' disagreement, mental and personality problems, addiction to alcohol or drugs, spouses belonging to different social classes, disloyalty of spouses, spouses being far from each other for a long time, physical problems, others' meddling in spouses' life and unemployment. Most of these causes are the same as those in I.R. Iran.

KEYWORDS: Marriage; couples; Family; family problems; divorce.

INTRODUCTION

A majority of spouses begin their common life with love .At this time they will never think that someday this burning love may put off. The expression of "only death will do part the spouses " has lost its meaning as the figures of divorce and family violations is increasing each year.

The development of urban life, migration, neglecting moral values, poverty and unemployment ,addiction, the concept of "lack of mutual understanding" have had such undesirable impacts on family that everyday more disruption in this smallest unit of the society can be seen. Neglecting social traditions and customs, financial demands beyond affordability, irresponsibility toward children all have put the basis of the family vulnerable to severe risks. Divorce is a social innovation .It can be used as a social means when confronting a defeat in marriage. Different factors are involved in divorce including economic , social , psychological factors as well as external and internal stressful factors . Divorce more frequently happens in the first five years of married life.[1, pp126-129)

Although it is supposed that divorce as a social phenomena is as old as marriage, as an approved and rule governed phenomena it does not have a long history. The first legal and known forms of divorce is found in Hammurabi Law about 2300 years BC in which wife is among husband's properties and assets and the husband can divorce his wife without any reason. For Jews also the divorce was regarded unquestionable right of the husband .According to Romans' early laws , husband was full authorized to dissolve marital relationship and refrains to do his family commitments even though he faced some obstacles in this regard. After emergence of Christianity, Roman laws on divorce were considerably adjusted and divorce was possible with the agreement of two sides up to the second half of the fourth century. In Islam, although divorce is regarded as obscene and unwelcome, it is possible in some cases.[2,p.111].According to Iranian laws which are rooted in religion, divorce is the sole right of the man who can divorce his wife whenever he likes by paying her rights. Moreover the wife can also plea for divorce from a competent court based on some conditions. Uncontested divorce is another form of divorce in which the spouses agree to end their married life.

In most developed countries, divorce is a judicial entity and is subject to the judgment of a special court. Iran is among these countries. Divorce is the disruption of a family or dismantling the social unit called family due to failure of one or some member of the family in performing their functions. The outcome of divorce is children with social minor and big crimes including tendency to addiction, social deviation and different misdemeanors in society imposing uncompensated costs to the society.[3, p. 182).A small number of divorces mutually selected simultaneously with the life development of two sides and is led to more freedom and mutual development of the two sides is called justified divorce.

However, the most common divorce which is not made with the desire or mutual selection of the two sides, rather one or both sides feel desperate and are filled with anger, reprimand, feeling of injustice and deficiency of self-respect is called unsuccessful divorce.[4, pp 264-265) Divorce is defined as a legal mechanism through which the spouses change their legal status from being married to being single and are consequently freed from the bounds of married life .[5,p 5].

The Significance and necessity of the issue

The transformation in relations between wife and husband in recent decades is not something doubtable. Some believe the existing transformations is worrying as they have led to increase in conflicts and more divorce. While some others see it as inevitable or somehow desirable. As the outcome of the transformations made in the process of social development in reaching a new point of balance. Although some religions have traditionally boycotted divorce or limited it to special cases, some others have strictly reprimanded it and have inevitably prescribed it in very few cases only when continuing married life may result in more harms for both spouses and their relatives .

This social issue has turned into a big issue in recent decades, threatening the structure of the most fundamental sector of the society that is family. Several studies indicate that beside severe mental harms and tensions the divorced spouses suffer, the children of divorce are severely affected and put the society in danger as well.

Undoubtedly successful families grow successful children for the society and in this way the society moves toward growth and development with a more hasty pace .Therefore in protecting the society as a whole and family as the smallest unit of it, it will not be an exaggeration to call divorce as "The disaster of family dissolution."

One of the most common and the most significant crises in the life of married people is divorce. The frequency of divorce is increasing throughout the world. [5, p.4)According to Stewart and Sandinereports, the figures of divorce in the last decades in the United States is increasing. [6, p. 261).Some types of divorce are not revealed due to some cultural ,value and legal considerations. These types of divorce happen while the divorce is not dismantled. The statistics of evident divorces in American and European countries is high , while in Asian countries , the hidden divorce is more common. Oleson, *et al.*report that 40 to 50 percent of marriages are dismantled. [7,p. 150].Divorce is an undesirable event for parents and a disaster for children. It hurts the kids of the family who demand the kindness of the parents and see home as the only point for hope and comfort.[8,p.99].

The increase in divorce and family struggles not only threatens the basis of the family , it is a strict threat for the society and social systems, as raising a generation with health of body and mind who can take the responsibility of the future of the society will not be possible in an environment far from comfort and security. Protecting the family foundation and preventing it from being dismantled will develop socialization and normal social behaviors and will lead to a normal society with the least disorders and crimes.

Today divorce is a global issue. Richard Avordi the author of "The Social Basis of Marriage" states: "Applying a variety of methods in recognizing family relations indicates that about 20 to 25 percent of the marriages made for the first time end to divorce ,leave or family disruption".[2, p. 112].

Iran is currently in the fourth global rank from the figures of divorce .[9, p. 40].The raise in divorce within the past 6 last years has been more than marriage¹.

In Australia the number of 41000 divorces have been approved in 1988 and this raised to 51400 in 1998. The statistics in Australia is less than the United States and is nearly equal with Canada and England.[10, p. 1].

In Armenia, the registered divorce statistics within years 2000 to 2010 is announced as 1343,1776,1684,1820,1968,2466,2797,2931,3031 and 2829 cases respectively.[11,p. 100].The process is generally increasing except in years 2000 and 2009 which show a decrease compared to the previous year.

The outcome of divorce is children with light and heavy crimes which in itself imposes uncompensated expenses to the society. According to the WHO report, in thirteen EU countries being studied , the most significant factor related to suicide is divorce. [12, pp2-4]

Therefore studying the factors causing this abnormal event can help the society and government to minimize its occurrence.

The Goals:

The general goal of the study is to investigate the reasons for divorce in in R. Armenia within the last ten years in comparison with I.R. Iran. The applied target is to help the society on one hand and government on the other hand in preventing this disorder in strengthening the fundamentals of family.

The hypothesis

- a. Different social, economic, cultural, family, and individual and personality factors affect the occurrence of divorce.
- b. The subsidiary hypotheses:
 1. There is a significant relationship between family's economic problems and the tendency to divorce.
 2. There is a significant relationship between spouses' emotional problems and the tendency to divorce.

²- Interview ,AliakbarMahzoon, general director of data and population statistics of civil status registration organization , 04-10-2012

3. There is a significant relationship between spouses' lack of understanding and the tendency to divorce.
 4. There is a significant relationship between spouses' sexual problems and the tendency to divorce
 5. There is a significant relationship between spouses' high age difference and the tendency to divorce
 6. There is a significant relationship between spouses; mental and personality problems and the tendency to divorce.
 7. There is a significant relationship between spouses' addiction (to alcohol or drugs) and the tendency to divorce
 8. There is a significant relationship between spouses' different social classes and the tendency to divorce
 9. There is a significant relationship between spouses' disloyalty and the tendency to divorce
 10. There is a significant relationship between spouses' long departure and the tendency to divorce
 11. There is a significant relationship between not having child and the tendency to divorce
 12. There is a significant relationship between spouses' type of job and the tendency to divorce
 13. There is a significant relationship between spouses' physical problems and the tendency to divorce
 14. There is a significant relationship between relatives' meddling and the tendency to divorce
 15. There is a significant relationship between type of marriage (met at street, by telephone, through internet,...) and the tendency to divorce
 16. There is a significant relationship between social issues (unemployment) and the tendency to divorce
- Research Question: What factors affect divorce occurrence ?

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in the present study is descriptive with field study or survey research method. Since the cause and effect has happened in the past, the researcher tries to find probable cause through the effect.

Research Tools:

Data was gathered by the researcher-made questionnaire. Primarily 100 questions were planned by studying related books and essays and by considering the hypotheses and the results of numerous studies made on the topic of divorce in the world and Iran. The validity of the questions in several stages were analyzed by ten of the professors in the fields of psychology, consulting, sociology and family law and by applying their comments, balancing and correcting the questions, 50 questions were selected. After the questionnaire was performed on sample group to 30 persons, the validity of the questions was calculated by Alpha cronbach. In order to calculate the tests' reliability, the correlative coefficient was used between the score for questions related to each hypothesis with the total score of the test. All correlative coefficients are significant in level of 0.001. All questionnaire were analyzed with SPSS software using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Statistical Community:

The statistical community in this study, statistically is the whole country, but in statistical sample is Yerevan. The statistical samples were from two groups of A: Those divorced and live separately to 120 persons and B: Married people continuing married life 120 persons were completely randomly selected as control group from among different educational, gender, occupational and social classes.

Definitions:

Lexical definition: Divorce means separation, set free from the bound of being married. In other words, divorce means set free from the bound of marriage not considering the gender.

Conceptual definition: Divorce means dissolving a legal and formal marriage while the two sides are alive and are free to remarry afterwards. Divorce is a legal mechanism through which the spouses change their legal status from being married to being single. [13, p.75].

Operational definition: Divorce means the separation of wife and husband and dissolving a formal marriage not considering the fact that it is registered or not.

Research Literature:

Divorce is a topic studied in different sciences including psychology, consulting, sociology and law. Each discusses the issue from a particular aspect. Current facts indicate that family problems is increasing in communities and one of the most evident one is divorce. Therefore the researchers in the above-said fields have studied the issue each from a special aspect and have gained some results. The reasons for divorce in European and American countries is failure in communication, financial problems, irresponsibility, disloyalty, not meeting the expectations, addiction, physical or mental sexual abuse and inability in problem-solving. According to some studies made in Iran, unjustified expectation, being luxurious, some mates' lusting, not understanding and unjustified meddling are among some effective reasons for divorce. [14, p.36].

Sepehrian stated the following as the factors effective in divorce: Ethical and behavioral incompatibility, Relatives' unjustified meddling, marrying or having another wife, moral corruption, addiction, husband's irresponsibility toward family, husband's harassment, hate from the mate, psychological disease, problems in earning living, marriage in young ages and unequal age or cultural level. [1, p. 129].

Some have concluded that the variables of spouses' different educational level, age difference, not meeting the marital expectations, husband's violence, mate's untruthfulness and not consulting in the current issues of life has a significant relationship with the women's tendency to divorce. When divorce is turned into a social harm, it causes other direct or indirect harms such as addiction, delinquency, suicide, behavioral and personality disorders. [15, pp 77-78].

Marriage is a contract for common life for perfection, uniqueness and fulfilling the deepest need of human beings. The existence of a healthy emotional, adaptive and interactional one to one relationship is a requisite for its continuation and stability. Therefore the source of failure in gaining the said goal should be searched in the difference in the function of complicated mechanisms of spouses' relations in different aspects of psychology. [16, p.117].

SaeedIsazade et al., concluded in his study that while crises, economic downturn and as a result increase in the rate of unemployment happen in the country, we should accept their destructive impacts on rise in divorce. This impact will be through economic pressure and emerging crises in families and eventually the spouses' separation. [17, p.27]

Data Analysis : In order to test the research hypotheses T test was used to compare two independent variables with the results that follows:

Hypothesis 1 : There is a relationship between family's economic problems and tendency to divorce.

test result:

t	df	sig.
3/722	240	0/000

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than %5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the research hypothesis H_1 is confirmed. That is, economic problems affect divorce.

Hypothesis 2 : There is a relationship between spouses' emotional problems and tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
0/379	240	0/705

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than %5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is confirmed and the research hypothesis H_1 is rejected. That is, spouses' emotional problems do not affect divorce.

Hypothesis 3 :There is a relationship between spouses' lack of understanding and tendency to divorce.

test result:

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than%5 there is a significant relationship between the data.

t	df	sig.
4/083	240	0/000

Thus the zero hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the research hypothesis H_1 is confirmed. That is the spouses' lack of understanding is among factors of divorce.

Hypothesis 4 :there is a relationship between spouses' sexual problems and a tendency to divorce.

test result:

t	df	sig.
1/536	240	0/126

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than %5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is confirmed and the research hypothesis H_1 is rejected. That is, spouses' sexual problems do not affect divorce.

Hypothesis 5 :There is a significant relationship between spouses' high age difference and a tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
0/594	240	0/533

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than %5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is confirmed and the research hypothesis H_1 is rejected. That is, spouses' high age difference is not among factors affecting divorce.

Hypothesis 6 :There is a significant relationship between spouses’ mental and personality problems and a tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
1/091	240	0/000

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed. That is, the mental and personality problems do affect divorce.

Hypothesis 7 :There is a significant relationship between spouses’ addiction(to alcohol or drug) and a tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
1/339	240	0/018

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than %5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed. That is, addiction of one of the spouses causes divorce.

Hypothesis 8 : There is a significant relationship between spouses' different social classes and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
1/066	240	0/000

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than %5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed. That is, spouses’ different social class affect divorce.

Hypothesis 9 : There is a significant relation between spouses' disloyalty and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
1/987	240	0/048

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed. That is, spouses’ disloyalty is of divorce factors.

Hypothesis 10 : There is a significant relation between spouses' long departure and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
3/843	240	0/000

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed. That is, spouses' long departure affect divorce.

Hypothesis 11 : There is a significant relation between not having child and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
-0/800	240	0/424

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than% 5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is confirmed and the research hypothesis H₁ is rejected. That is, absence of child does not affect divorce.

Hypothesis 12 : . There is a significant relation between spouses' type of job and the tendency to divorce. test result:

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than %5, the zero hypothesis H₀ is confirmed and the

t	df	sig.
-/0143	240	0/886

research hypothesis H₁ is rejected. That is, the spouses’ type of job does not affect divorce.

Hypothesis 13 : There is a significant relation between spouses' physical problems and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
1/998	240	0/047

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5,thus there is a significant difference among the data. That is, the zero hypothesis H₀ is rejected and the research hypothesis H₁ is confirmed.

Hypothesis 14 : There is a significant relation between close relatives' meddling and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
2/442	240	0/015

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the research hypothesis H_1 is confirmed. That is, close relatives meddling in spouses' life affects divorce.

Hypothesis 15 : There is a significant relation between type of marriage (met at street, by telephone, through internet,...)and the tendency to divorce.

test result:

t	df	sig.
-0/828	240	0/409

Since the level of significance of T test was higher than %5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is confirmed and the research hypothesis H_1 is rejected. That is, type of marriage does not affect divorce.

Hypothesis 16 : There is a significant relation between social issues (unemployment) and the tendency to divorce. test result:

t	df	sig.
-3/088	240	0/002

Since the level of significance of t test was lower than% 5, the zero hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the research hypothesis H_1 is confirmed. That is, social problems(unemployment) affect divorce.

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study indicate that economic problems, spouses' lack of understanding , mental and personality problems , addiction to alcohol or drugs , spouses different level of social classes, disloyalty, spouses' long departure, physical problems, relatives' meddling and unemployment have been the factors for spouses' tendency to divorce. Since the respondents tended to choose the options, the reasons for divorce according to their frequency is as follows:

Type of divorce factor				Factors for divorce	row
Individual-personality	Social	Cultural	Economic		
*		*		Spouses' lack of understanding	1
	*	*		Close relatives' meddling	2
		*		Spouses' different social class	3
*				mental and personality problems	4
*	*		*	spouses' long departure	5
			*	Economic problems(poverty)	6
*				Physical problems	7
*	*			Addiction to alcohol or drug	8
*		*		Disloyalty	9
	*		*	Unemployment	10

The event of divorce is a social contract widely accepted by most communities of today's world. What makes it bitter than it should be is when it is chosen as the first option by spouses while facing problems. While it is more accepted to be the last solution when facing problems. The factors causing divorce are almost common in most societies. That is because although human beings are different, the problems they face are common up to a great extent. The studies made in Iran showed almost similar results. Madadi, Zargar and Noghayee[13, p. 14] have stated the addiction of one of the spouses specially husbands as the main reasons for divorce. In study made by Zargar, Neshat and Noghayee, close relatives' meddling in spouses' life is stated as one of the main reasons for divorce. Riahi states that others' meddling in spouses' relations can increase the possibility of separation and divorce through taking spouses' power for decision making and causing family disputes. This has also been confirmed in previous studies .(Taghizade 1971, Davoodi 1977, Piran 1990 , Rahimi 2000, Shabani 2003, Tabatabaee 2004 and Ghotbi 2004)[2,pp126-135].

Lack of Understanding is the most significant cultural factor confirmed in researches made by Zargar, Neshat and Noghayee. Poverty which is regarded as economic factor has also been confirmed in Isazade et al., studies and emphasized that will be led to divorce in long time.[17,p.27]Some factors may be limited to one special geographical region. In other words economic and social conditions of a region can cause a factor. For instance, spouses being far from each other for a long time mostly happen in regions where men have to leave their wife and live apart due to economic problems and unemployment and this will lead to divorce.

Conclusion

Divorce is a social disease in which many risk factors are involved. The more these risk factors are, the higher is the risk for divorce. Fortunately a large number of these factors are known and are common in most societies. Divorce is as old as marriage. This means that any marriage has a potential for divorce in itself. Most of the factors studied in the present research potentially exist in most marriages. Since prevention is always preferable to remedy, to overcome the factors causing divorce, we should try for reducing the causing factors before even a marriage is made. Since all of us are responsible against solving social issues, we should try to prevent the dissolution of the most fundamental basis of the society that is the family. The government can play a role in reducing a great number of social problems and outcomes caused by divorce by helping young couples. Some suggestions are made in this regard as follows.

Suggestions:

1. Establishing centers for family consultation in the field of marriage, criteria for choosing mate and meddling in family crises.
2. Making young couples to pass training courses on life skills
3. Families stop imposing marriages to their children.
4. Families stop unjustified and ignorant meddling in their children's lives .
5. Offering financial support by government and families to young couples in order to reduce their financial problems
6. While accepting the fact that divorce is a social contract if it is inevitable, there is still the need to have consulting services to help divorced persons in facing their problems and solving them and starting a successful and different life. As divorce is the end for a common life not the end of life.

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