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Divorce among Parents and its Impacts on Personality and Socialization of Children in Malakand Division

ABSTRACT

Recent studies and research approve the decline in rate of marriage and increase in divorce throughout the globe. Although divorce is an abominable act both culturally and spiritually that is dealt in disgusting and almost opposing manner, yet is found vis-à-vis marriage in variety of forms following numerous causative factors. Divorce is mainly caused by the commission of adultery by one partner or both, rushing into marriage, two people simply growing apart, or ultimately, marriage not being taken seriously in the first place. Relationally, the ratio of divorce among

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Pakhtunsis also increasing due to rapid social change and modernization. However, people of the area strive to avoid the social stigma of being divorced, because it is contemptuously dealt in Pakhtun socio-cultural patterns. The current study thus investigates into the various impacts of divorce on the personality disorders and socialization of children in divorced families at Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The data has been collected through quantitative research design from 400 samples through pre-determined interview schedule using purposive sampling technique while the collected information has been analyzed through SPSS and statistical tests with .05 level of confidence. The results reveal that divorce produces several negative impacts on children that bring negative consequences in personality and socialization of children and draws pessimism in the larger spectrum of society.

Key Words: Impact, social stigma, personality disorder, divorce.

Introduction

Divorce predominantly comprises of the physical separation of the spouses (Dykeman, 2003) while Arabic Dictionary (2008) denotes that the word "Talaq" refers to devolution of bond among the married couple¹. Similarly, divorce according to Golden & Henderson, (2007) is the termination of a marital union or final legal dissolution of marriage in accordance with the law (Jeynes, 2001; Hughes, 2008) and due to such termination both husband and wife are allowed to live separately (Owusu-Bempah, 2007). However,

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analyzing the literature, such separation has multiple impacts on the couple as well as children (Owusu-Bempah, 2007) including temporary as well as life-long experiences as noted by Hughes (2008).

Globally, the trend of divorce has been on the rise and one of the factors is the economic independence of the married couple (Patterson, DeGarmo & Forgatch 2004). According to Smith, (1999) women independence in economic aspect is pivotal in divorce because financial strength allows and empowers a female to break the bond of marriage (Whitemarsh, 2008). Similarly birth control as a factor allows couples to feel less emotional pressure to live together in a compromising way (VanderValk, Spruijt, Goede, Maas & Meeus, 2005; & Wallerstein, 2005) that primarily puts children in vulnerability (Ambert, 2001).

Studies show that children of such couples have problems in adjustment, educational achievements and behavioral conducts (VanderValk et al, Amanto, 2001; Dykeman, 2003; Jeynes, 2001; and Wallenstein's, 2005). Such children suffer from emotional disorders including loneliness and depression (Furstenberg and Kiernan, 2001) while their school performance is adversely affected (Wu, 1996). Besides, a single-parent home environment has an increased risk of showing poor performance and achievements for children at school level (Akerlof, 1998; and Alesina and Paola, 2007) while the father's minimized contact with children negatively affects their life (Cohen, 2002). Furthermore, single parent may find it difficult to meet the daily demands that put the physical and psychological well being of children at risk (Chiappori, Bernard & Guy 2002, Cáceres, Julio, & Eugenio, 2008). Resultantly, many children face adjustment issues (Amato & Previti, 2003) while the gender and personality

traits are weakened down with the passage of time (Drewianka, 2004).

In addition, studies on the schools and academic performance of the children of divorce couples indicate several threatening consequences for relative children in shape of change in cognitive maturity and more sensitivity is often reported in comparison to children of paired-couples (Peck & Manocherian, 1988; Friedberg, 1998; & Jamison 2001). Similarly, the limited cognitive abilities, preschoolers are often confused by their parents' (Gray, 1998) and have very limited skills to cope with all the changes associated with schooling (Amato, 2000, Laumann-Billings and Emory, 2000). Findings of the research studies indicate that such children are in dire need of emotional encouragement (Eleoff, 2003) and they dream about bringing their parents back to the old marital relationship (Hetherington, Stanley-Hagan & Anderson, 1989).

Children at this age feel the absence of one of their parents (Gruber, 2004) and are expected to consciously express their displeasure (Johnson and Christopher, 2000). At adolescence, children of the divorced parents are more open to make up their mind about their parents and create a new identity (Ambert, 2009) while male and female react differently towards their divorced parents (Simons, Lin, Gordon, Conger, Lorenz, 1999). The reaction of girls is more anxious while boys reaction is hostile, disobedient and aggressive (McLanahan et al, 1994). Similarly, girls may become sexually active earlier than girls from intact families (Wu, 1996) and further, boys often adjust better when their mothers remarry, while girls have more difficulty and tend to have long-term adjustment difficulties (Kasen, Cohen, Brook, Hartmark, 1996). Such adjustment can be determined by the

amount of conflict the parents had before divorce (Mechoulan, 2005 and 2006, Jamison 2001) and attitude of custodial parents' attachment and sentiments (Ahrns, 2006; Wood, Repetti & Roesch, 2004). In this context, it is asserted that a child having positive relationship with their parents can reduce stress and anxiety in their daily activities (Jamison 2001) while to Page et al, (2004) such children are more open to absorb the negative consequences.

Argument of the Study

Family is the central institution in provision of peace and harmony to an individual (Moustapha, 2005) and the breakage of marital contract almost ruins the lives of children as well as spouses (Parven, 2010). The children have to live either with his/her mother or father and is deprived of love, care and affection (McIntosh, Burke, Dour & Gridley 2009) and broken families further bring deprivation, causes imbalance in society and problems in rearing and socialization of children (Parven, 2010, Peters, 1986). Besides, children and other dependents are deprived of basic needs i.e. food, shelter, clothing and physical security (Schaefer 1989) while on the social aspect, there is no stability within society as a whole (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008). In case of divorce, society suffers, and social evils such as murders and other crimes increase (Golden & Henderson, 2007), which give way to many psychological problems (Rasul, 2004). However, in some cases, divorce is thought to be the only solution (Moustapha, 2005) but still it is prohibited to be practiced (Cliquet, 2003).

In case of divorce, there are multifaceted consequences upon both children and families' i.e. divorced families have

higher rates of clinical depression (Sun and Li, 2002) and sometimes, increases the risk for long-term and major depression (Hoge, 2002). Jamison (2001) argued that divorce results in lowering the standard of life of children and to Wallterstein (1991), children become economically dependent and unable to fulfill their needs. Studies confirm that divorce rate has been increased enormously during the last few years (Cherlin, 1992) and has caused multiple consequences and harmful effects on kids as well as other family members (Grych, 2005) where the parent-child relations are weakened down (Amato, 2001; Meneghan & Parcel, 1995). As a result of divorce, most of parents experience two types of problems; one is their adjustment to their own intra-psychic conflicts (Hofferth, 2006) and secondly to their role as divorced parents (Fagan & Churchill 2012). In this context, studies have reported that children of the divorced families receive much less support from their families (Furstenberg and Kiernan, 2001) while Rotermann (2007) finds that children of the separated parents show a marked lack of confidence, pride, love and affection and hence to Potter, (2010), MacKinnon, Brody, and Stoneman (1982), it deprives children of the socio-economic & psychological needs and suffer them from inferiority complex in the rest of life. The secondary information in the context of the current study enumerate that divorce produces a variety of negative impacts in different dimensions of an individual's life and personality formation including deprivation of social affection, love, social relationship, schooling and character building. The current study thus tends to elaborate the various impacts of divorce on children's social and psychological well being in the area under study.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze various personality disorders in children of divorced couples
- To identify and examine the negative consequences of divorce in the socialization of children

Hypothesis of the Study:

H₀₁: Divorce among the couples causes many personality disorders in children

H₀₂: Divorce of parents creates numerous psychological problems for children which badly affects their growth and socialization

Methods and Procedural Process

The current study is framed under quantitative research design to investigate the various psychological problems created by divorce on children of the divorced couples. The data for the current study has been obtained from 200 hundred children (children of the divorced couple) from four purposively selected cities of Malakand division i.e. Batkhela, Saidu Shairf Swat, Timergara, and Dir Upper using pre-determined interview schedule as tool of data collection. From each of the city, a sample size of 50 children (both male and female) was selected through snow ball sampling technique. The responses were recorded on two point category scale through SPSS i.e. to some extent and to greater extent in the form of tables, percentages and discussion. Besides, statistical test i.e. chi-square (.05 level of confidence) has been used to verify the hypotheses and the

association. Besides, "Human Capital Theory" given by Tharenou, P., Saks, M. and Moore, C. (2007) has been chosen as theoretical design supported by Baland and Robinson, (2000), Canagarajah and Nielsen (2001) while similar extracts for support have also been taken from the work of Rives (2004), Grimsrud (2003), and Jafarey (2002). The extracts from theories and literary information reveal that children are productive asset of nation, which need proper socialization to produce more capital in terms of economic development as well as human capital formation.

Results and Discussion

Divorce and Personality Formation of the Children

The theoretical dimension and its analysis indicate that divorce has multiple negative impacts on personality of children living with either of the parents. Similarly, the collected information explicitly demonstrates multifaceted impacts of divorce on children's growth, personality and self-development. Linking the secondary analysis with field data, the information given in Table-01 reveals that most of the children of divorced parents have increased ratio of criminality i.e. 85% of the sample support the statement to greater extent whereas 92% of the children feel no security in their personality growth and the notion was supported by majority to a greater extent. The field analysis further indicates that such children have an obvious dependency i.e. 86% of the respondents supported the statement to a greater extent that divorce is regarded as a triggering factor in increasing child dependency while 81% of the respondents supported the statement to a greater extent that such

children have a lack of personality ownership in their future life.

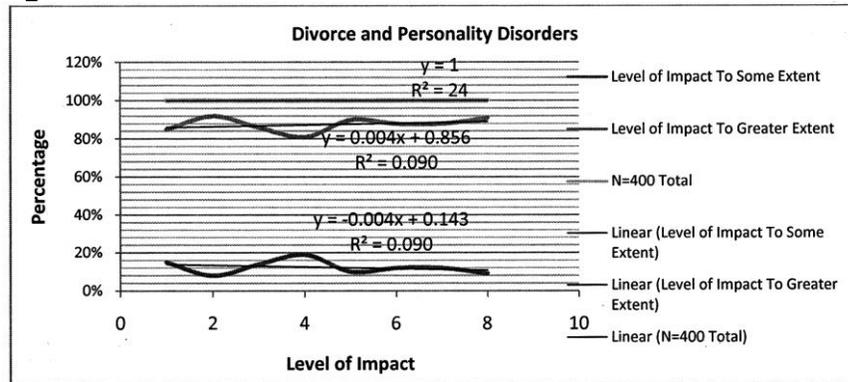
The tabular data further indicates that divorce of the parents is a major reason behind lack of love and affection in personality of children i.e. 90% of the children had such feelings while 88% of children had identity crisis. Furthermore, majority of the information reflect that most of the children i.e. 88% from the sample data support the statement to a greater extent that parental relations become secondary and divorce of the parents weakens the bonds of parents-child association, while lack of self-satisfaction has also been supported by 91% of the field respondents to a greater extent as the cause of divorce among parents. The data thus concludes that divorce is a major reason of creating many personality weaknesses for the children. The field information has also been given in table-01 below:

Table-1: Divorce and Personality Formation

Divorce and Personality Disorders	Level of Impact		N=400 Total
	To Some Extent	To Greater Extent	
Increase Criminality	15%	85%	100%
Personality Security	08%	92%	100%
Increasing dependency	14%	86%	100%
Lack of Ownership	19%	81%	100%
Lack of Love and Affection	10%	90%	100%
Creating Identity Crises	12%	88%	100%
Weakened child-parent relationship	12%	88%	100%
Lack of Self Satisfaction	09%	91%	100%

The tabular information has also been illustrated in the form of chart showing the various dimensions and aspects creating weaknesses with their level of impacts and percentage (See Figure-1 Below):

Figure-1:



The statistical tests i.e. chi-square and correlation application with the value of $P = .000^{**} < .05$ shows that the relation of divorce with causing many personality weaknesses among children is obvious and is significant with the value of $\chi^2 = 5.324$, and $D.f = 7$ and thus confirm the validity of the given hypothesis. Similarly, the correlation of the given data has also been indicated in the following table:

Correlation: Divorce and Personality Disorder

		Areas of Disorders	Personality and disorders
Divorce and its impact	Pearson Correlation	1	0.939**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Types of Personality disorders	Pearson Correlation	.939**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

(*Correlation is obviously significant for the given value of 0.01 level (2-tailed), $r(400) = 0.939^{**}$; $p < .01$. $r^2 = 0.95$) showing that the sharing is 85% of the variance for strong association

The given results as demonstrated for the correlation is 0.01 level (2-tailed), $r(300) = 0.941^{**}$; $p < .01$. $r^2 = 0.93$, while 85% of all the variance is shared. In the given calculation, the association for the analyzed variables is a strong one and the obtained graphic presentation of the statistical information further authenticates the association of the correlation.

Divorce and Children's Weak Socialization

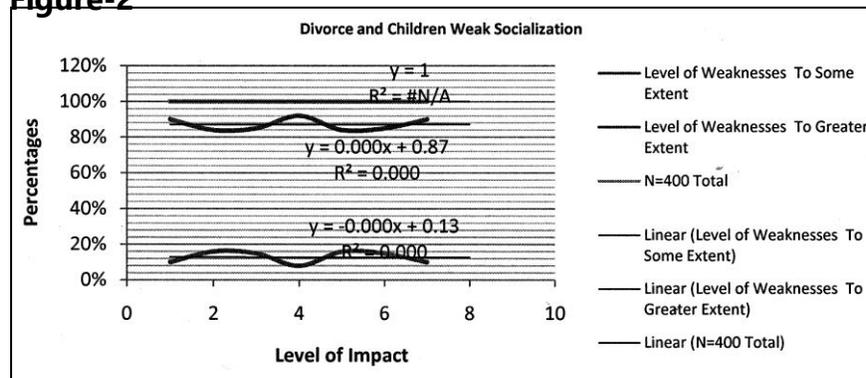
The data in respect to the given aspect has been analyzed in table-02 where the prevalence of weak areas has been found in children of divorced couple. The data in this regard indicate that 90% of the respondents agreed upon the statement to greater extent that divorce creates aggressiveness among children while creating fear and hesitation has been supported to a greater extent by almost 84% of the sample information. Besides, such children of the divorced couple have feelings of anxiety and guilt in their social relations as compared to the normal children and the notion has been supported by almost 92% of the respondents whereas majority of the children have inferiority complex as 84% of the total respondents give their opinion for greater extent. Similarly, behavioral problems were found in majority of the observed cases as the field observation of the researchers indicates (more than 70% of the observed cases show many behavioral problems in one way or the other) while the statement that divorce is creating social isolation in children was supported by 90% of the respondents to greater extent and such isolation in comparison to rest of the normal children is obvious.

Table-2: Divorce and Children's Weak Socialization

Areas of Socialization	Level of Weaknesses		N=400 Total
	To Some Extent	To Greater Extent	
Increase Aggressiveness	10%	90%	100%
Create Hesitation	16%	84%	100%
Causing Conflict in Life	15%	85%	100%
Anxiety and Guilt	08%	92%	100%
Creating Inferiority Complex	16%	84%	100%
Causing Behavioral Problems	15%	85%	100%
Social Isolation	10%	90%	100%
Chi-square = 3.521 Significance = 0.000** Lambda = 0.20 Gamma = 0.011			

Besides, the information given in the above table has been represented in the form of charts in figure-2 which further represent various aspects of socialization of children in the form of percentages and observed values (see figure-2 below):

Figure-2



While analyzing the statistics with regard to the given table (table-2) the value of chi-square test i.e. $P = .000^{**} < .05$ shows that the relation of the given values is significant for the various level of impacts on children socialization. Besides, the value of $\chi^2 = 3.521$ and degree of freedom is =07 indicate and

represent an obvious and valid indication with the strength of impacts of divorce as well.

Correlation: Divorce and weak socialization

		Areas of weaknesses	Information of socialization
Nature of Socialization	Pearson Correlation	1	0.941**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Weaknesses in personality	Pearson Correlation	.941**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

(*Correlation is obviously significant for the given value of 0.01 level (2-tailed), $r(400) = 0.941^{**}$; $p < .01$. $r^2 = 0.93$) showing that the sharing is 83% of the variance for strong association.

The given results as demonstrated for the correlation is 0.01 level (2-tailed), $r(300) = 0.932^{**}$; $p < .01$. $r^2 = 0.93$, while 83% of all the variance is shared. In the given calculation, the association for the analyzed variables is a strong one and the obtained graphic presentation of the statistical information further authenticates the association of the correlation.

Summary and Conclusion

The field information and its analysis indicate that children of the separated parents face many psychological as well as problems in their socialization and personality development. With respect to personality formation, the field information and their analysis show that divorce is the major cause of creating criminal behavior among children who are deprived from social security in life. Similarly, the research findings

reveal that children in such situation face the challenge of no ownership, lack of affection and love, crises in identity, and even dissatisfaction from self as well. In addition, the information with regard to weak socialization of the children and their analysis conclude that children have many weaknesses in their socialization process causing many psychological problems. In this regard the data asserts that divorce creates aggressiveness among children and such children feel hesitation in performing tasks. Besides, children develop inferiority complex as part of their personality which may lead to social isolation and many behavioral problems in their life. Lastly, the statistical analysis of the data with the application of chi-square test also confirms and validates the given hypothesis and it is thus concluded that divorce among parents is creating many psychological problems and deprived children to live a normal and proper life in society.

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