

## Effects of Divorce on Women and Children

Adaora Isabella Odis

*Department of Public Health, Texila American University, Nigeria*

### **Abstract**

*Divorce is a legal separation of husband and wife, leaving each other free to remarry. It is also to break off a marriage legally. Marriage is a state of being legally joined as husband and wife. A family's social support is one of the major ways that family positively impacts health. Marriage is associated with physical health, psychological well-being, and low mortality. Marriage in particular has been studied in the way it affects health. Marriage is thought to protect well-being by providing companionship, emotional support, and economic security. It was also revealed that divorce has psychological and emotional effects on women. This article review discovered that divorced women and children experience more social isolation, which makes them end up producing greater feelings of loneliness, unhappiness, and lower self-esteem. Some psychological and emotional effects of divorce on women which include factors like; low appetite, reduced physical energy and strength, chest pain, severe pressure in chest difficulty in hearing, eye pain, digestive problem, lower abdomen pain, back pain headache, sleeping disturbance, worthless, suicidal attempt, decreased level of confidence, shocked, feeling of shame, feeling of sorrow in her heart, worried, anxious, irritated towards her life, suppressed problem, feeling bad, upset, feeling of miserable life, among other things as the major emotional and psychological effects of divorce on women.*

**Keywords:** *Children, Divorce, Marriage, Mental health, Women.*

### **Introduction**

Divorce is a legal separation of husband and wife, leaving each other free to remarry. It is also to break off a marriage legally. Marriage is a state of being legally joined as husband and wife.

Family is a group of people who are closely related, especially father, mother and their children.

Infidelity means disloyalty or a state of being unfaithful to the husband or wife's sexuality out matrimonial home. Couple simply means two married people, especially a husband and wife. Youngster is a young person or young boys and girls yet to marry. Early marriage is a situation where either of the spouses is not ripe enough for marriage before getting married. Universal escape means of regaining freedom from tensions of marriage. Family goals are the aims which a family strive to achieve for better living.

Cultural expectations define appropriate potential marriage partners. Cultural rules emphasizing the need to marry within a cultural group are known as endogamy. People are

sometimes expected to marry within religious communities, to marry someone who is ethnically or racially similar or who comes from a similar economic or educational background. These are endogamous marriages: marriages within a group. Cultural expectations for marriage outside a particular group are called exogamy. Many cultures require that individuals should marry only outside their own kinship groups. For instance, In the United States laws prevent marriage between close relatives such as first cousins. There was a time in the not-so-distant past, however, when it was culturally preferred for Europeans and Euro-Americans to marry first cousins. Royalty and aristocrats betrothed their children to relatives, often cousins. Charles Darwin, who was British, married his first cousin Emma. This was often done to keep property and wealth in the family [1].

Arranged marriages were typical in many cultures around the world in the past, including in the United States. Marriages are arranged by families for many reasons: because the families have something in common, for financial reasons, to match people with others from the

**\*Corresponding Author:** *arisdobel@yahoo.com*

“correct” social, economic or religious group, and for many other reasons [1].

Divorce in the ancient times was also rare, because of penalties of proven infidelity and fear of offending with of both families.

In Nigeria, there are four clearly defined types of marriages, we have the church marriage conducted in the church, court marriage is performed at the court, then Moslem marriage conducted at the mosque and marriages contracted according to the native law and customs of any given ethnic group known as the traditional marriage.

Two essential elements of family — marriage and parenthood — reveal God’s character like nothing else in Creation. The love between a husband and wife provides a glimpse of Christ’s passionate devotion to us as His bride. In the same way, the ups and downs of parenthood offer a compelling picture of God’s tenderness and patience toward us as His children [2].

And family does more than reflect God’s character. It provides a safe place where children can experience God’s love (through their parents) and learn how to love other people [2].

The family this time needs a home to live in and feel secured, thus home is a place where a family live and also a place where one secures love. It is a place which provides all individual need, in order to fit into the society successfully. A home provides for good physical, mental, psychological and spiritual development of its members. A home built on love, mutual understanding and good planning can meet its goals, and a home where love and understanding are lacking is bound to crack in all directions. Thus, broken homes are homes or families where either the father or the mother has ceased to be a member of such home or family through divorce, desertion to mention but a few [3].

Divorce can be defined as a personal misfortune for either of the spouse in any society. But it is a universal escape for the inevitable tension of marriage. Divorce as a matter-of-fact break through bonds which once united two individual and their family. Marriage is a step-in life, in which a person plans as in a career or even business where one can either fail or succeed. This bond dissolution

can occur as a result of extra-marital practices by either the partners, early marriages [3].

The objective of the family is the proper upbringing of children, which is very important to them than the happiness of the parents. This is because the early years of child’s life are for the information of personality and these are the years that are spent mainly in association with parents, sibling and the family. The home as the child’s immediate environment forms the basis for personality development, which accompanies the individual throughout life [3].

As a result of divorce or broken home, children fail to develop ties to one or few important persons in the family and when these ties are disrupted, children are taught to be impaired in developing close relationship in adulthood. These children feel bitter and carry over the tension from home to school. As a result, they cannot think clearly or critically as a happy person and at the same time they cannot concentrate on anything taught at school, when a mother is out of a home, leaving the children under the charity and mercy of step mother, these children are made to face many problems, like emotional disturbance (fear insecurity), malnutrition, sickness and disease, negligence, and they are not likely to perform up to expectation at school. Public health is defined as the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting human health through organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private, communities and individuals. Having a close-knit and supportive family provides emotional support, economic well-being, and increases overall health. However, the opposite is also true. When family life is characterized by stress and conflict, the health of family members tends to be negatively affected [4].

### **Positive Aspects of Family Dynamics and Health**

A family's social support is one of the major ways that family positively impacts health. Social relationships which found in close families have been demonstrated to decrease the likelihood of the onset of chronic disease, disability, mental illness, and death [5]. Marriage in particular has been studied in the way it affects health. Marriage is thought to protect well-being by providing companionship, emotional support, and

economic security. Marriage is associated with physical health, psychological well-being, and low mortality [6]. One study found that “Controlling on Considering every other risk factor for death that we know, including physical health status, rates of all-cause mortality are twice as high among the unmarried as the married” [7]. Another study found that “On the whole, marriage produces a net improvement in avoiding the onset of disease, which is called primary prevention” [8]. Married people are more likely to avoid risky behavior, such as heavy drinking and high-fat diets, and married people are also more likely to see the doctor for checkups and screenings [9].

One does not have to be married to obtain the health benefits from family. Studies have also confirmed that social support from parents, friends and relatives has positive effects, especially on mental health. “Prospective cohort studies have confirmed the direct beneficial effects of various forms of social support on global mental health, incidence of depressive symptoms, recovery from a unipolar depressive episode, psychologic distress, psychologic strain, physical symptoms and all-causes of mortality” [10]. Social integration and social support like marriage have protective effects on reducing mortality risks. For example, “those reporting higher levels of support from close friends and family exhibit lower heart rate and systolic blood pressure, lower serum cholesterol, and higher immune function” [11]. Thus, available data provide evidence to support the idea that one’s social environment or family situation “does get under the skin to affect important physiologic parameters including neuroendocrine, immune and cardiovascular functioning” [12].

### **Negative Aspects of Family Dynamics and Health**

Though good familial relations and social support serve as protective factors against mortality risks and improve overall health. Studies have shown that not all familial relations positively impact health. Problematic and non-supportive familial interactions have a negative impact on health. “There is increasing evidence that poor-quality relationships can actually harm physical and mental health. Indeed, persons in unhappy marriages exhibit

worse physical and mental health than unmarried persons” [13]. Further, marriages characterized by an unequal division of decision making and power are associated with high levels of depression on the part of both spouses [14]. Growing up in an unsupported, neglectful or violent home is also associated with poor physical health and development [15].

### **Women Prevented from Accessing Health Care**

Family power dynamics and gender roles may have a negative impact on a woman’s health and her ability to seek health care. In many cultures, for a woman to access health care, she must receive permission from her husband, father or mother in-law and must be accompanied by a male to her appointments. “Researchers have noted that gender inequities play a role across many cultures in women’s ability to obtain needed medical care for sexual and reproductive health concerns, have recognized that family dynamics, in addition to institutional sources, are a key part in the practice of unequal treatment” [16]. For example, in Malawi, gender roles shape the ability of men and women to access health care. “Women in Malawi, as in several other developing countries, have less power to decide about using resources and often have to seek their husband’s approval before incurring expenses for health care” [17]. In Afghanistan, men continue to prevent women from receiving health care at hospitals with male staff, even if they have life-threatening conditions [18]. A survey conducted in Afghanistan found that 12% of women stated that their major reason for not giving birth in a health care structure was because their husbands did not allow them to access a health facility [19]. In Turkey, a pregnant woman must also seek permission from her mother-in-law or husband to seek care. However, most people in rural Turkey only seek care for serious, life-threatening conditions. Thus, some family members delay access to care for minor conditions until they worsen or signs are visible, which can have a significant negative impact on health. The National Maternal Mortality Study conducted in Turkey documents that delays in recognizing the problem and delayed health seeking by the

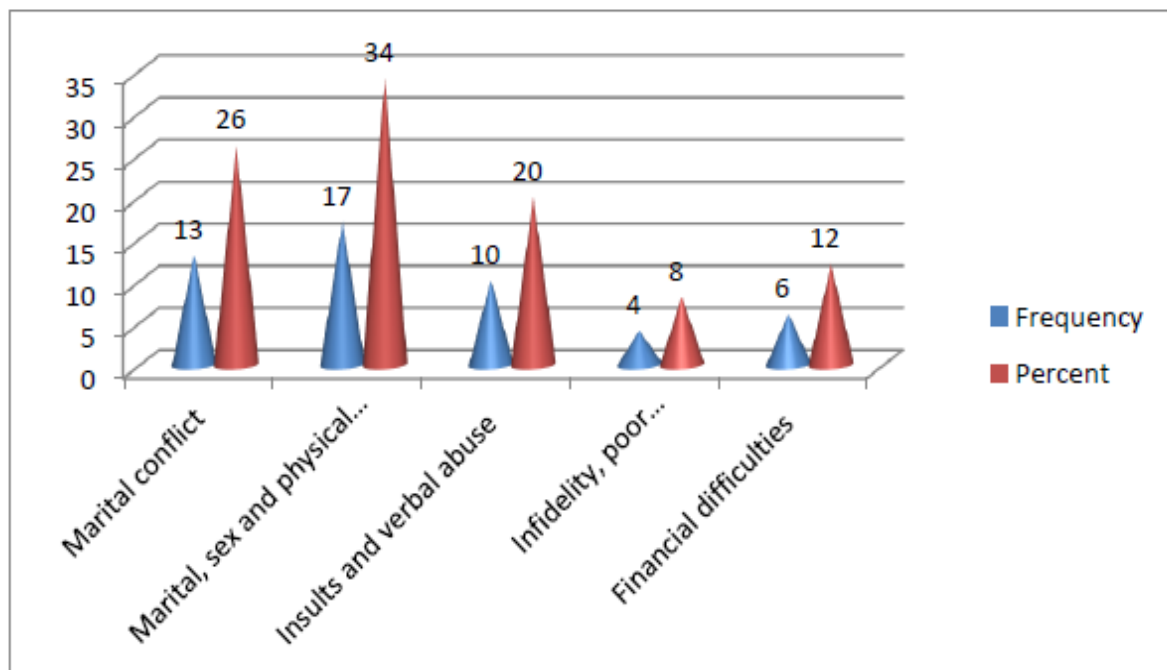
family contributed to 30% of all pregnancy-related deaths in Turkey [20].

### Family Dynamics and Children

Families characterized by conflict, anger and aggression have particularly negative effects on children. Physical abuse and neglect represent immediate threats to the health of children. In addition, “the fact that children’s developing physiological and neuroendocrine systems must repeatedly adapt to the threatening and stressful circumstances created by these environments increases the likelihood of biological dysregulation that may contribute to a buildup of allostatic load, that is, the premature

physiological aging of the organism that enhances vulnerability to chronic disease and to early mortality in adulthood” [21]. Children who grow up in risky families are also especially likely to exhibit risky behaviors such as smoking, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse. “Anger and aggression are highly noxious agents in a family environment. Conditions ranging from living with irritable and quarreling parents to being exposed to violence and abuse at home show associations with mental and physical health problems in childhood with lasting effects in the adult years” [22].

### Reasons for Divorce



**Figure 1.** Reasons for Divorce

Source: John Nachinaab Onzaberigu Research Field Work, 2014

The data in figure 1 shows that 26% (13) of the divorce broke out of marriage because of marital conflict, 34% (17) of the respondents indicated that they got divorced because of marital, sex and physical abuse, 20% (10) of the respondents cited insults and verbal abuse as the causes of divorce, 8% (4) of the respondents argued that infidelity, poor communication and lack of trust made them to divorce, whilst 12% (6) of the respondents feel that financial difficulties was the cause of their divorce [23].

The study found that marital conflict, marital, sex, physical abuse, insults, verbal

abuse, infidelity, poor communication, lack of trust and financial difficulties were the reasons why the respondent’s divorce. This means that marriages that suffer from these factors are more likely to end up in divorce, as respondents cited these factors as the cause of divorce [23].

This finding is in line with the views of [24], that sexual and physical abuse, insults, verbal abuse, infidelity, poor communication, lack of trust and financial difficulties are the common causes of divorce in many marital unions [23].

## **Identification of concepts**

### **Financial Distress**

A woman may suffer financially after divorce, particularly if she is the primary caregiver to the children. Without her husband's salary, she will have less money to cover bills and household expenses. The average divorced woman has less money than the average married woman and women don't completely recover from the financial consequences of divorce until they remarry, note Pamela J. Smock, Wendy D. Manning and Sanjiv Gupta, in "The Effect of Marriage and Divorce on Women's Economic Well-Being," a 1999 article published in the "American Sociological Review" [25].

### **Emotional Distress**

Divorce may leave a woman feeling hurt, lonely and unhappy. Even if it was her choice to end the marriage, she may bear the scars of the broken relationship for a long time. According to the Short-Term and Decade-Long Effects of Divorce on Women's Midlife Health, an article published in the Journal of Health and Social Behavior in 2006, divorced women reported significantly higher psychological distress levels than married women in the years following the divorce. The stresses of being in an unhappy marriage may simply be replaced by different worries, such as not being able to trust a man again, struggling to find her perfect partner or a fear of being rejected [25].

### **Freedom**

Despite the potential negative effects of divorce on a woman, there are many cases in which divorce leads to a happier, healthier life. If a woman is getting out of a marriage fraught with conflict or violence, she will be happier in the long term, say Alan Hawkins, Tamara Fackrell and Brian Higginbotham, developers of the Utah Divorce Orientation program. A woman may still require professional help to get over the unhealthy relationship and subsequent breakdown of the marriage, particularly if she was the victim of domestic violence [25].

### **Taking Control**

For a divorce to have more positive effects on a woman than negative, she must make the

most of the chance to change her life for the better. Some women say that the first few years after divorce are a time of significant personal growth with greater independence and more personal choices. It is crucial to work to create a better life, say Hawkins, Fackrell and Higginbotham. Every single decision a woman makes after divorce, from where to live to how to increase her income, is an important part of this process [25].

### **Insecurity in children**

Step mother or step father show little love and affection to their step children, which makes them suffer from mental retardation and miserable. They show behavioral responses like lying, stealing, playing, truant in school etc [3].

### **Children's poor academic performance**

Many problems are associated with divorce or a broken home, which reflects on the performance of children in schools. It has been observed that children from broken homes suffer. Some of these problems are non-provision of some basic necessities like clothing, food, learning materials, etc. There is an increase in domestic work and redistribution of household chores, which leaves the children with little or no time for their studies [3].

### **Critical analysis of these concepts**

Women Forced into Prostitution due to financial distress, emotional distress, freedom and taking control. Young girl children are also pushed into prostitution due to insecurity and poor academic performance.

As Nicholas Kristof and his wife, Sheryl WuDunn explain in their book "Half the Sky as Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide", "it's not hyperbole to say that millions of women and girls are actually enslaved today. The term that is usually used for this phenomenon, 'sex trafficking,' is a misnomer. The problem isn't sex, nor is it prostitution. In many countries China, Brazil, and most of sub-Saharan Africa prostitution is widespread but mostly voluntary (in the sense that it is driven by economic pressure rather than physical compulsion). In those places, brothels do not lock up women, and many women work on their own without pimps or brothers. Nor is the problem exactly 'trafficking' since forced prostitution doesn't

always depend on a girl being transported over a great distance by a middleman. The horror of sex trafficking can more properly be labeled slavery” [26].

The number of women who are forced into prostitution is hard to estimate. However, the Lancet calculates that 1 million children are forced into prostitution every year and the total number of children forced into prostitution could be as high as 10 million. The problem is particularly great in South East Asia, where up to a quarter million women and girls are forced into prostitution each year. These girls are often raped, locked up, denied food, water, medical care and are drugged if they refuse to comply with the brothel owners wishes. Most girls are lured away by promises of jobs as domestic workers, restaurant workers, or educational opportunities only to end up in brothels. In India, it is estimated that there are two million prostitutes and at any one time 20,000 girls are transported from one part of the country to another. Research also shows that around 5,000 to 7,000 Nepalese girls are trafficked yearly into India [28]. In addition to the horrendous human rights violations that these adolescent girls suffer, they are also highly susceptible to contracting HIV and other STDs. For example, in Indonesia, HIV prevalence was nearly 20% among trafficked women who had been sexually exploited for a year or more. In Cambodia, 73% of women and girls tested positive for sexually transmitted infections.

Sex trafficking and forced prostitution is a large economic industry. The industry has grown in recent years because it is extremely profitable and the risk of prosecution is low since most countries have weak laws on trafficking. An analysis of the Thai economy shows that earnings from trafficking, Thai women are close to \$3 billion annually. In addition, the U.S data suggest that traffickers earn about \$60 million a year from trafficking women and children [29]. Thus, “the economic approach to forced prostitution indicates that, because of the profit margins at stake and the large number of beneficiaries involved, it will not wither away. Rather, its existence must be actively assailed by addressing the supply as well as the demand side” [30].

## **Psychological and Emotional Effect of Divorce on Women**

A large number of studies published during the 1990s found that divorced individuals compared with married individuals, experience lower levels of psychological wellbeing including less happiness, more symptoms of psychological distress and poorer self-concepts [31].

Women undergoing divorce often exhibit marked emotional liability characterized by euphoria and optimism alternating with anger, irritability, anxiety, loneliness, sadness, depression, suicidal, associated changes in self-concept and self-esteem. Divorce is generally viewed as a prominent cause of depression in adults [32]. A review of sex differences in a depressive reaction to major life stressors found males and females were equally likely to experience depression following marital breakdown [33]. Single mothers (including those who are separated and divorced) have consistently been found to evidence higher rates of depression and psychiatric illnesses, relative to their married counterparts. Reasons cited include differences in stress and social support.

Women are particularly likely to experience negative effects of divorce. A pervasive problem is suffering of loneliness caused by the feeling that they have lost their children and feelings of inadequacy about their role as a parent.

Women undergoing separation and divorce also tend to avoid problems rather than to face them. They tend not to express their concerns and are reluctant to seek help (if they do; it is from friends or relatives rather than from professionals). Women appeared to be generally unaware of and unprepared for separation, often ‘shut down’ their feelings about the relationship. As a consequence, women often carry unresolved feelings of bitterness, grief and hurt for many years after the initial separation, which may impact on their physical and mental health. Other studies have found that females tend to experience higher rates of distress than males. In addition, ‘leavers’ initially often fare better in terms of emotional wellbeing than those who have been ‘left’ and who often feel rejected [34].

Parents who divorce also experience adverse effects on their physical, emotional, and financial well-being which may also in turn affect their children.

Married (male/female) people are more likely to have better physical health.

1. Married people smoke and drink less [35].
2. Married men are less likely to commit suicide than men who are divorced or separated [36].
3. Married individuals have the lowest incidence of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease [37].
4. Married men are more likely to live longer after a diagnosis of cancer, especially prostate cancer [38].
5. Married men live longer than men who never married.

a. In the Framingham Offspring Study, married men had a 46 percent lower rate of dying from cardiovascular disease than unmarried men.

Married (male/female) people are more likely to have higher incomes [39].

1. Individuals who are married have greater wealth.
2. The longer they stay married, the greater the wealth accumulation [40].
3. Women who experience divorce face a 27 percent decrease in their standard of living [41].

Married women are more likely to be physically safer than divorced or separated women in terms of abuse at workplace, society and rape.

Divorce may have adverse long-term emotional effects for parents.

1. In Wallerstein's long-term study, half of the women were still very angry with their former spouses [42].
2. One-third of the women felt that life was unfair and disappointing [43].

Each child and each family are obviously unique with different strengths and weaknesses, unique personalities and temperaments and varying degrees of social, emotional and economic resources as well as differing family situations prior to divorce. Despite these differences, divorce has been shown to diminish a child's future competence in all

areas of life, including family relationships, education, emotional well-being, and future earning power. One review of the literature conducted in the United Kingdom found that "although children are at increased risk of adverse outcomes following family breakdown and that negative outcomes can persist into adulthood, the difference between children from intact and non-intact families is small and the majority of children will not be adversely affected in the long-term" [44]. There is much research, however, that offers evidence to the contrary.

Two large meta-analyses, one reported in 1991 and the other reported ten years later in 2001, showed that "children with divorced parents continued to score significantly lower on measures of academic achievement, conduct, psychological adjustment, self-concept, and social relations" [45, 46].

A research states that, when a child experiences parental divorce, there are significant losses that must be acknowledged [47].

The child may lose time with each parent

1. Parents must adjust to their own losses as well as to their new role as a divorced parent. Thus, parents may not have as much emotional strength and time to invest in parenting. i.e., the parents experience a "moratorium on parenting."
2. Although laws are gradually changing, most children spend more time with one custodial parent and obviously have less time with each parent overall.
3. For most children, this means much less time spent with their fathers.
4. The child may also spend less time with their mother, as she may need to work longer hours to support the family [47].

The child may lose economic security

1. Custodial mothers experience the loss of 25–50 percent of their pre-divorce income.
2. Children living with single mothers are much more likely to live in poverty than children living with both married parents [48].
  - a. In 2009, children living with a divorced parent were more likely to live in a household below the poverty level (28%) compared with other children (19%) [49].

3. Unmarried women are more likely to remain in poverty compared with married individuals and unmarried men.
  - a. Approximately 32.2% of people in single-mother families in poverty during the first two months of 2009 continued to be in poverty for 36 months. In contrast, only 18.7 percent of people in married-couple families in poverty during this same time remained in poverty for 36 months [49].
4. Children living with single parents are less likely to experience upward financial mobility.
  - a. The fraction of children living in single-parent households is the strongest negative correlate of upward income mobility, according to one study [50].
  - b. The percentage of married families in a community also contributes to future upward economic mobility of all children in the community [50].

The child may lose emotional security [51]

1. The child may have a weakened relationship with his/her mother.
  - a. Divorced mothers are less able to provide emotional support [52].
2. The child may have a weakened relationship with his/her father.
  - a. Divorced fathers spend less time with their children.
  - b. A study in 1996 found that fewer than half of children living with a divorced mother had seen their fathers at all in more than one year, and only one in six saw their fathers once a week [53, 54].
  - c. Divorced fathers are rated as less caring by their adolescents.[55].
  - d. The child may find it more difficult to trust his/her father [56].
3. The child may have a weakened relationship with grandparents or relatives—especially the parents of the noncustodial parent [57].
4. The child may lose family traditions, celebrations and daily routines. Even adult children whose adult parents divorced later in life experienced the loss of family traditions and disruption of celebrations [58].

5. The change in residence may lead to loss of friends, school environment, and other support systems [47].

The child may have decreased social and psychological maturation

1. College students whose parents were divorced were more likely to experience verbal aggression and violence from their partner during conflict resolution [59].
2. Children of divorced parents may have lower scores on self-concept and social relations [60].
3. Anxiety and depression seem to worsen after the divorce event.

The child may change his or her outlook on sexual behavior [61]

1. There is increased approval (by children of divorced parents) of premarital sex, cohabitation and divorce [62].
2. There is earlier sexual debut [63].
3. Girls whose fathers left the home before they were five years old were eight times more likely to become pregnant as adolescents than girls from intact families [64].
4. Boys similarly have earlier sexual debut and higher rates of sexually transmitted disease when they have experienced divorce in their family.
5. As adults, the female children of divorced parents experience less trust and satisfaction in romantic relationships [65].
6. The children of divorced parents are less likely to view marriage as permanent and less likely to view it as a lifelong commitment [66].
7. The children of divorced parents are two to three times more likely to cohabit and to do so at younger ages [45].

The child may lose his/her religious faith and practice [67]

1. Following a divorce, children are more likely to abandon their faith [68].
2. As adults, those raised in step-families are less likely to be religious than those raised by both biologic parents [67].
3. Since religious practice has benefits in areas such as sexual restraint, the child of divorce may lose this protection [69].

The child may lose cognitive and academic stimulation

1. Children in divorced homes have less language stimulation.
2. Children of divorced parents are more likely to have lower grade point averages (GPAs) and be asked to repeat a year of school [70].
3. A study of eleven industrialized countries showed that children living in two-parent families had higher math and science scores [70].
4. Children in single-mother families were twice as likely to have been absent from school for eleven or more days in the past year due to illness or injury (6%) compared with children in two-parent families (3%) [71].
5. Children of married parents attained higher income levels as adults.

The child may be less physically healthy

1. Fewer children in nuclear families were considered being in poor health than children in non-nuclear families (12% of children in nuclear family versus 22% of children of single parent) [72].
2. Children living with married parents are less likely to be abused or neglected. In one study, the relative risk that children from a single-parent family would be physically abused or neglected more than doubled [47].
3. Children living with divorced Mum may not be able to vaccinate their children

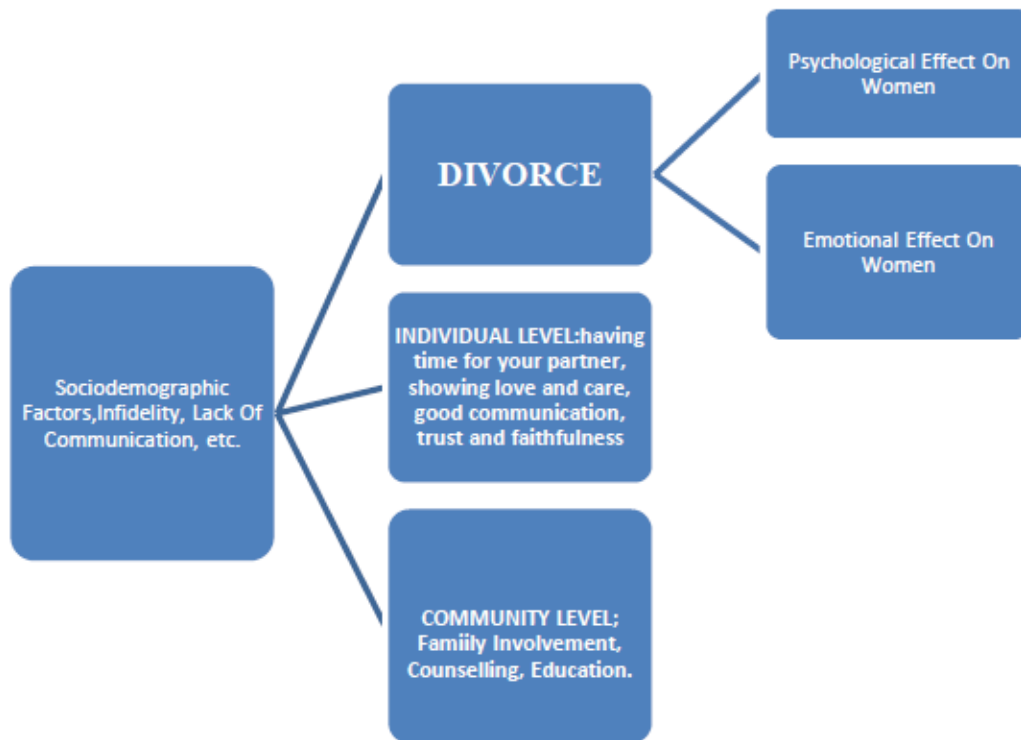
against diseases because of cost. Likewise, Single fathers may not remember to follow his child's vaccine schedule religiously.

4. Children who are on medication may miss their dosage because of cost of drugs and emotional imbalance of his Mother or Father.
5. Children living with divorced parent may be overweight or underweight because the parent may not have time to prepare proper meals for children and cost of food.

The child may have a higher risk of emotional distress

1. A study of almost one million children in Sweden demonstrated that children growing up with single parents were more than twice as likely to experience a serious psychiatric disorder, commit or attempt suicide, or develop an alcohol addiction [73].
2. Children of single parents are twice as likely to have emotional and behavioral problems—8 percent versus 4 percent for children from two-parent households [74].
3. The CDC reported on adverse family experiences among children in nonparental care. The study found, "Children living with one biological parent were between 3 and 8 times as likely as children living with two biological parents to have experienced neighborhood violence, caregiver violence, or caregiver incarceration or to have lived with a caregiver with mental illness or an alcohol or drug problem" [75].

## The Application of the Concept to the Real World



**Figure 2.** Divorce Conceptual Framework

Source: John Nachinaab Onzaberigu Research Field Work 2014

From the construct above, it is clear that divorce is as a result of factors such as socio-demographic characteristics of the individual, infidelity of the part of one partner in a relationship, poor or lack of good communication amongst couple, etc.

Most marriages end up in divorce because of the socio-demographic characteristic such as couples' level of education, income status, age/years of marriage, the socio-cultural background of couple, etc. Equally, extra-marital affair is one major cause of the increase in divorce in recent times. Also, many relationships failed because of poor communication. Many couples find it hard to express how they feel for each other. They do not know how to verbalize their needs, and they do not know how to listen carefully. Poor communication can be a major cause of divorce.

Divorce has both psychological and emotional effect on women. Women are mostly affected by divorce psychologically and emotionally. They feel guilt, anxious, distress, depress, grieve, etc. The reasons might be that most women less expect divorce, suffer in child

caring, or are mostly dependent on their husband, such that separation or divorce leads to greater psychological and emotional bearing on the women.

Divorce can be minimized by addressing it from the individual and community or societal level. Within the individual level, couple should learn how to trust their partners, develop good communication, avoid extra-marital affairs, show love and care for their partners, etc. The society or the community can as well help in reducing divorce by organizing educational programs on divorce effects so as to lighten couples on the negative side of divorce. Counseling program should be made available to couples facing marital problems to help them cope with their problems. Family members should also help by conducting a proper investigation on to family their children will be marriage to help in the selection of proper spouses for their children to avoid reduce divorce.

## Conclusion

It was also revealed that divorce has psychological and emotional effects on women. This contextual project discovered that divorced women and children experience more social isolation, which makes them end up producing greater feelings of loneliness, unhappiness and lower self-esteem. Some psychological and emotional effects of divorce on women which include factors like low appetite, reduced physical energy, strength, chest pain, severe

pressure in chest, difficulty in hearing, eye pain, digestive problem, lower abdomen pain, back pain headache, sleeping disturbance, worthless, suicidal attempt, decreased level of confidence, shocked, feeling of shame, feeling of sorrow in her heart, worried, anxious, irritated towards her life, suppressed problem, feeling bad, upset, feeling of miserable life, among other things as the major emotional and psychological effects of divorce on women.

## References

- [1] Gilliland M. K., (2018). Family and marriage, [https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-esc-culturalanthropology/chapter/family\\_and\\_marriage/](https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-esc-culturalanthropology/chapter/family_and_marriage/).
- [2] Bruner Kurt, 2017, The purpose of the family, <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/the-purpose-of-the-family/>.
- [3] Effect of divorce on the academic performance of students in some selected secondary schools in Oredo local government area of Edo state <https://www.grossarchive.com/upload/1416644906.htm>.
- [4] <http://www.uniteforsight.org/gender-power/module1>.
- [5] George, L. K., & Durham, N. C. (2016). The health-promoting effects of social bonds.
- [6] Ross, C., Mirowsky, J., and Goldsteen, K. "The Impact of the Family on Health: The Decade in Review." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 52. (1990):1059-1078.
- [7] George, L. K., & Durham, N. C. (2016). The health-promoting effects of social bonds.
- [8] Ross, C., Mirowsky, J., and Goldsteen, K. "The Impact of the Family on Health: The Decade in Review." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 52. (1990):1059-1078.
- [9] Huliappa, Deepadarshan and Hiremath, Shweta, "Lifestyle factors and lifestyle diseases among rural population of Bengaluru rural district", *International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health* (2017) Volume 4 (5):1558. 10.18203/2394-6040.ijcmph20171763.
- [10] Broadhead, W., Kaplan, B., James, S., et. al. "The Epidemiologic Evidence for a Relationship Between Social Support and Health." *American Journal of Epidemiology*. 117.5 (1983).
- [11] Seeman, T. (1996) "Social ties and health: The benefits of social integration." *Annals of Epidemiology*. 6.5.
- [12] Yang, Y. C., Boen, C., Gerken, K., Li, T., Schorpp, K., & Harris, K. M. (2016). Social relationships and physiological determinants of longevity across the human life span. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 113(3), 578–583. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1511085112>.
- [13] George, L. K., & Durham, N. C. (2016). The health-promoting effects of social bonds.
- [14] Ross, C., Mirowsky, J., and Goldsteen, K. "The Impact of the Family on Health: The Decade in Review." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 52. (1990):1059-1078.
- [15] George, L. K., & Durham, N. C. (2016). The health-promoting effects of social bonds.
- [16] Regmi, K., Smart, R., & Kottler, J. "Understanding Gender and Power Dynamics Within the Family: A Qualitative Study of Nepali Women's Experience." *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*. 31.2 (2010).
- [17] Department for International Development. (1 Jan. 2005) "REACH: Challenging Barriers to Health Care." <https://www.gov.uk/dfid-research-outputs/reach-challenging-barriers-to-health-care-in-malawi>.
- [18] Synovitz, R. (3 Mar. 2004) Afghanistan: Gender Taboos Keep Women from Seeking Medical Care." *Radio Free Europe*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/1051746.html>.
- [19] IbnSina and ICRH. (Oct. 2002) "KAP Survey regarding reproductive health." <http://icrh.org/sites/default/files/KAPsurveyKabulICRHibnSina.pdf>.
- [20] Ay, P., Hayran, O., Topuzoglu, A., et. al. "The influence of gender roles on health seeking behaviour during pregnancy in Turkey." *The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care*. 14.4 (2009).
- [21] George, L. K., & Durham, N. C. (2016). The health-promoting effects of social bonds.

- [22] Repetti, R., Taylor, S., and Seeman, T. "Risky Families: Family Social Environments and the Mental and Physical Health of Offspring." *Psychological Bulletin*. 128.2 (2002): 330-366.
- [23] Nachinaab J. (2014). "Psychological and emotional effects of divorce on women". (DOC) PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN | john onzaberigu nachinaab - Academia.edu.
- [24] Wolcott and Hughes, (1999), "Towards understanding the reasons for divorce" (Working Paper No. 20). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.  
<https://aifs.gov.au/publications/towards-understanding-reasons-divorce>.
- [25] Giles C. (2018). "The Effects of Divorce on Women; Our everyday life: Relationships and family" <https://oureverydaylife.com/the-effects-of-divorce-on-women-5050311.html>.
- [26] Kristof, N. & WuDunn, S. "Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide." (New York: Random House, 2009).
- [27] Lyn, T. (12 Aug. 2009) "Trafficked women face high HIV infection risk." Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/idINIndia-41716620090812>.
- [28] Chatteraj, B. "Sex related offences and their prevention and control measures: an Indian perspective." [https://www.unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS\\_No72/No72\\_13VE\\_Chatteraj.pdf](https://www.unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS_No72/No72_13VE_Chatteraj.pdf).
- [29] United Nations, 2008, "An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action" [https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An\\_Introduction\\_to\\_Human\\_Trafficking\\_-\\_Background\\_Paper.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/An_Introduction_to_Human_Trafficking_-_Background_Paper.pdf).
- [30] Kempadoo, K. "Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered: New Perspectives on Migration, Sex Work, and Human Rights." *Canadian Journal of Sociology Online*. (2007).
- [31] Demo, D.H. & Acock, A.C. (1988). The Impact of Divorce on Children. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 50, 619-648.
- [32] Tennant C., 2002. Life events, stress and depression: A review of recent finding. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36, 173 – 182.
- [33] Maciejewski PK, Prigerson HG, Mazure CM. Sex differences in event-related risk for major depression. *Psychol Med* 31: 593-604.
- [34] Brickman, P., Rabinowitz, V. C., Karuza, J., Jr., Coates, D., Cohn, E., & Kidder, L. (1982). Models of helping and coping. *American Psychologist*, 37, 368-384.
- [35] ChildStats.gov. 2013. America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2013: Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties (2013) <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/health3.asp>.
- [36] Schoenborn C.A.2004. Marital status and health: United States, 1999–2002. In *Advance data from Vital and Health Statistics*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, No. 351. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [37] Kposowa A.J.2000. Marital status and suicide in the National Longitudinal Mortality Study. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 54: 254–61. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [38] Pienta A.M.2000. Health consequences of marriage for the retirement years. *Journal of Family Issues* 21: 559–86. [Google Scholar].
- [39] Goodwin J.S., Hunt W.C., Key C.R., and Sarmet J.M. 1987. The effect of marital status on stage, treatment, and survival of cancer patients. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 258: 3125–30. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [40] Marriage and Men's Health. 2010. Harvard Men's Health Watch (2010) Harvard Health Publications.[http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/Harvard\\_Mens\\_Health\\_Watch/2010/July/marriage-and-mens-health](http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/Harvard_Mens_Health_Watch/2010/July/marriage-and-mens-health).
- [41] Stratton L.S.2002. Examining the wage differential for married and cohabiting men. *Economic Inquiry* 40: 199–212. [Google Scholar].
- [42] Keyes C.L.M.2002. Social civility in the United States. *Sociological Inquiry* 72: 393–408 As cited in *The Family in America New Research*, November 2002. [Google Scholar].
- [43] Wallerstein J.S., and Blakeslee S. 2004. *Second chances: Men, women, and children a decade after divorce*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin. [Google Scholar].
- [44] Mooney A., Oliver C., and Smith M. 2009. *Impact of family breakdown on children's wellbeing evidence review DCSF-RR113*. London: University of London, Institute of Education, Thomas Coram Research Unit. [Google Scholar].
- [45] Amato P.R., and Booth A. 1997. *A generation at risk: Growing up in an era of family upheaval*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. [Google Scholar].
- [46] Amato P.R., and Keith B. 1991. Parental divorce and the well-being of children: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin* 110: 26–46. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].

- [47] Anderson J. (2014). The impact of family structure on the health of children: Effects of divorce. *The Linacre quarterly*, 81(4), 378–387. <https://doi.org/10.1179/0024363914Z.000000000087>.
- [48] Edwards A.N. 2014 Dynamics of Economic Well-being: Poverty, 2009–2001: Household Economic Studies (2014) United States Census Bureau Web Site. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/p70-137.pdf>.
- [49] US Census Bureau. 2011. Divorce Rates Highest in the South, Lowest in the Northeast, Census Bureau Reports United States Census Bureau Web Site. [http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/marital\\_status\\_living\\_arrangements/cb11-144.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/marital_status_living_arrangements/cb11-144.html).
- [50] Chetty R., Hendren N., Kline P., and Saez E. 2014 The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States (2014) Harvard University. [http://obs.rc.fas.harvard.edu/chetty/mobility\\_geo.pdf](http://obs.rc.fas.harvard.edu/chetty/mobility_geo.pdf).
- [51] Amato P.R., and Afifi T.D. 2006. Feeling caught between parents: Adult children's relations with parents and subjective well-being. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 68(1): 231. [Google Scholar].
- [52] Miller J.E., and Davis D. 1997. Poverty history, marital history and quality of children's home environments. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 59: 996–1007. [Google Scholar]
- [53] Popenoe D. 1996. *Life without father*. New York, NY: The Free Press; As quoted by Fagan, P.F., and A. Churchill. The effects of divorce on children. *Marri Research* January 11, 2012: 6. [Google Scholar].
- [54] Fagan P.F., and Churchill A. The effects of divorce on children. *Marri Research*. January 11, 2012. [Google Scholar].
- [55] Dunlop R., Burns A., and Bermingham S. 2001. Parent-child relations and adolescent self-image following divorce: A ten-year study. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 30: 117–34. [Google Scholar].
- [56] King V. 2002. Parental divorce and interpersonal trust in adult offspring. *Journal of Marriage Family* 64(3): 642–56. [Google Scholar].
- [57] Kruk E., and Hall B.L. 1995. The disengagement of paternal grandparents subsequent to divorce. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 23: 131–47. [Google Scholar].
- [58] Pett M.A., Lang N., and Gander A. 1992. Late-life divorce: Its impact on family rituals. *Journal of Family Issues* 13: 526–52. [Google Scholar].
- [59] Billingham R.E., and Notebaert N.L. 1993. Divorce and dating violence revisited: Multivariate analyses using Straus's conflict tactics subscores. *Psychological Reports* 73: 679–84. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [60] Amato P.R. 2001. Children of divorce in the 1990s. An update of the Amato and Keith (1991) meta-analysis. *Journal of Family Psychology* 15: 355–75. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [61] Strohschein L. 2005. Parental divorce and child mental health trajectories. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 1286. [Google Scholar].
- [62] Jaynes W.H. 2001. The effects of recent parental divorce on their children's sexual attitudes and behavior. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 35: 125. [Google Scholar].
- [63] Strohschein L. 2005. Parental divorce and child mental health trajectories. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 1286. [Google Scholar].
- [64] Ellis B.J., Bates J.E., Dodge K.A., Fergusson D.M., Horwood L.J., Pettit G.S., and Woodward L. 2003. Does father absence place daughters at special risk for early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy? *Child Dev* 74: 810–1. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [65] Jacquet S.E., and Surra C.A. 2001. Parental divorce and premarital couples: Commitment and other relationship characteristics. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63: 627. [Google Scholar].
- [66] Weigel D.J. 2007. Parental divorce and the types of commitment-related messages people gain from their families of origin. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 47: 23. [Google Scholar].
- [67] Myers S.M. 1996. An interactive model of religiosity inheritance: The importance of family context. *American Sociological Review* 61: 864–5. [Google Scholar].
- [68] Feigelman W., Gorman B.S., and Varacalli J.A. 1992. Americans who give up religion. *Sociology and Social Research* 76: 138–43 [Google Scholar].
- [69] Rostosky S.S., Regnerus M.D., and Wright M.L.C. 2003. Coital debut: The role of religiosity and sex attitudes in the add health survey. *Journal of Sex Research* 40: 358–67. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].
- [70] Jaynes W.H. 2000. The effects of several of the most common family structures on the academic achievement of eighth graders. *Marriage and Family Review* 30: 88. [Google Scholar].
- [71] Pong S.L., Dronkers J., and Hampden-Thompson G. 2003. Family policies and children's school achievement in single-versus two-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65: 681–99. [Google Scholar].

[72] CDC/NCHS National Health Interview Survey. 2012. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web Site (2013). [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr\\_10/sr10\\_258.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_258.pdf).

[73] Brown J., Cohen P., Johnson J.G., and Salzinger S. 1998. A longitudinal analysis of risk factors for child maltreatment: Findings of a 17-year prospective study of officially recorded and self-reported child abuse and neglect. *Child Abuse Negl* 22: 1065–78. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].

[74] Kelleher K.J., McInerny T.K., Gardner W.P., Childs G.E., and Wasserman R.C. 2000. Increasing identification of psychosocial problems: 1979–1996. *Pediatrics* 105: 1313–21. [PubMed] [Google Scholar].

[75] Bramlett M.D., and Radel L.F. 2014 Adverse Family Experiences Among Children in Nonparental Care, 2011–2012. National Center for Health Statistics, n. 74, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr074.pdf>.