

WOMENS PSYCHO-SOCIAL EFFECTS OF DIVORCE AND SEPARATION

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ABSTRACT:

Divorce and separation have complex psychological and sociological effects on individuals, families, and society. This paper explores the immediate and long-term consequences of marital dissolution, drawing from legal, psychological, and sociological perspectives. Divorce and separation can cause emotional responses such as grief, anger, anxiety, and depression. These reactions can affect individuals' self-esteem, relationships, and mental well-being. Children of divorced parents may face developmental challenges, including academic setbacks and psychological distress. Divorce and separation can cause financial strain and legal battles, leading to social isolation and identity crises. The legal frameworks that govern divorce and separation are crucial in shaping the emotional landscape of these experiences. Traditional divorce proceedings were prolonging emotional distress because of their adversarial nature. Therefore, it's important to have alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation and collaborative law, to encourage peaceful resolutions and minimize negative outcomes. Furthermore, legal policies and interventions that prioritize the well-being of children and vulnerable individuals are necessary to reduce the negative emotional and psychological effects of marital breakdown. This paper aims to shed light on the intricate interplay of psychological, social stigma, and legal factors involved in navigating the aftermath of a failed marriage.

INTRODUCTION

“Divorce is the death of a dream you thought was going to last,⁶⁵⁴ Divorce is like death without a burial you can't underestimate how traumatic divorce is for the child Love, the quest Marriage, the conquest Divorce, the inquest⁶⁵⁵” In Indian culture marriage is a spiritual obligation and divorce is an evil thing the term separation also leads to divorce but both the terms are different, nowadays the breakdown of marriage has been increased highly in our society. Hindu marriage ideologically and in practical terms is a sacramental union. No personal laws encourage this term, divorce. In Muslim law, this dissolution of marriage was considered as a sin. In Christian law, during marriage, they take an oath. And so, while they joined their hands the

priest said whatever “God decided the people cannot separate it.” Divorce and separation have complex psychological and sociological effects on individuals, families, and society. This paper explores the immediate and long-term consequences of marital dissolution, drawing from legal, psychological, and sociological perspectives. Divorce and separation can cause emotional responses such as grief, anger, anxiety, and depression. These reactions can affect individuals' self-esteem, relationships, and mental well-being. Children of divorced parents may face developmental challenges, including academic setbacks and psychological distress. Divorce and separation can cause financial strain and legal battles, leading to social isolation and identity crises. The legal frameworks that govern divorce and separation are crucial in shaping the emotional landscape of these experiences. Traditional

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SOCIAL STIGMA AND SUPPORT SYSTEM:

In our country we have cultural diversities and traditional practices, no religion accepted this divorce, it was seen as a sin in Muslim law. Likewise, no religion and followers of particular religious people also find it harder to accept this breakdown of marriage. In the olden days in our country, an evil practice is they're that is 'sati', it was later abolished. As this traditional background, we cannot criticize our traditional society. Apart from today, most marriage was broken down. And most of them were entered into the divorce. The people around us are another thing, at first our family members did not accept it and were unable to move on. Everyone has the right to live a dignified and peaceful life and everyone should be treated equally without gender bias, so they have a right to decide authority to sustain the marital life or to quit it too. So, the judiciary or the government cannot be involved because we are living in a Democratic country. In society we are already in a lot of trouble among them they are treated very badly the divorced people especially women are getting huge suffrage in this society daily, mostly they are cheated by male members around them in places, and residences.

The children were physiologically and physically affected highly by their parents' divorce. Children were treated very badly in this society.

So, society isolated them when they entered into any wedding function or family functions, they thought that the divorcee would get jealous while seeing them they thought wrongly about them. This society makes them more negative and it leads to mental sickness and depression⁶⁵⁶. Already they physically get hurt they make them mentally pressured, if they talk to anyone of the opposite sex, they connect them and speak and they create new relations about them. Or if she or he avoids such social Drama she only talks with the same person means they say she is lesbian, due to this kind of evil thing some people are alone, and out of this society mourning and not giving space to anyone in their life. They forget everything and they try to focus on their career also they face many problems in working places too. Divorce and separation are highly emotional Distress. A lot of women face the financial strain in their life. Next, they face legal problems like, a long time of divorce proceedings, divorce and separation are significant life events that can have profound implications for individuals' psychological well-being, social relationships, and overall quality of life.⁶⁵⁷ The dissolution of marriage or long-term partnership can disrupt one's scene of self and further prospects, leading to existential concerns and existential crises. Divorce and separation can trigger a range of emotional responses, including grief, anger, anxiety, and depression. Individuals may struggle with feelings of rejection, failure, and loss of identity.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN:

Three factors determine the psychological impact on children: the type of family relationship; the intensity and length of family conflict; and the coverage of children's needs after a divorce. Successful children after a divorce have strong personalities and sufficient wisdom and experience. They face a lot of challenges and difficulties in fitting into a

⁶⁵⁶ David Frost: Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 5/11, 824-839, 1751-9004. (2011)

⁶⁵⁷ Aishwarya Sandeep: Dealing with social stigma post-divorce, volume 9 ISSN:2320-2882.IJCRT2107097, (2021)

traditional society because of the stigma of divorce.⁶⁵⁸ Generally, children who witness their parents' divorce tend to have lower educational outcomes than intact children because they can't cope with their family environment. The physiological behavior of a child is the most visible influence within a family. Some children remain within the family after a divorce. Some children feel guilty that their parents divorced because of them. Some children are regularly witnesses to their parents' quarrels.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS FACED BY DIVORCED WOMEN:

The psychological problems faced by women more the men, directly or indirectly them. Because the failure of marriage causes depression and health problems. The following are the problems held by women after divorce:

- **HEALTH:** Due to the break of wedlock their present and future will be turned into a lot of worries about their future life, children, financial struggle, insecurity, etc., causes mental depression, thyroid problems, leads to many other problems, some of them they cannot accept it and they struggled a lot to move on.⁶⁵⁹
- **SUICIDE:** Some of the Women are not able to come out from the marital breakdown, it turns into an ocean of pain, and they think there is nothing more than their marital life. So, they commit suicide.
- **FEELING LONELY AND ALONE:** The other form of psychological consequence faced by divorced women is loneliness, after this marital problem they always find some space so they isolate themselves do not mingle with anyone, scold themselves overthinking about the breakdown think more and more without solution, some of them they don't believe anyone after divorce and live separately. They often feel lonely because they have no partner to share their emotions, or some of them ask everything and try to abuse them in any way. A lot of problems will be held to them mentally

and physically. In those situations, they need more counseling to move on.

- **FEAR:** Divorce can be terrifying you feel fearful of small, immediate issues and fearful of distant problems yet to arrive. Easily said, harder to do choose not to worry credit yourself for the things you have already overcome, and realize they are the practice steps you took to tackle larger, more frightening issues ahead. Every time you feel that knot in your stomach or rapid breathing that signals panic, remember that fear is a response to unknowns, and could be the cause of anger.
- **ANGER:** Anger generally stems from fear. If the divorce is protracted, unpleasant, or charged with emotion, anger is a common reaction, to protect them from insecurity they use anger as a tool to shut out someone's mouth.
- **GUILT:** For the Partner who instigated the divorce, second-guessing is common. But whether you initiated proceedings or had them forced upon you guilt is common. Did you work hard enough to save your marriage? Did you hasten its demise by something you did, or did not do? Have you Scarred your children? These negative thoughts will eat at you and cripple your ability to respond the new situations, as your brain is forever dwelling on old issues.⁶⁶⁰
- **DEPRESSION:** Women, generally, respond more viscerally to trauma than men, though both parties will feel devastated by the loss of their marriage. Withdrawal and depression are common relations. Women, more than men, are more likely to suffer depressive episodes as much as three years after a divorce. While prescription medicines and counseling can help, you will do well to change routines so that the feelings associated with the old environment fall into more positive feelings about a new job or circle of friends.

LEGAL AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES:

- Either party doesn't attend court processes.
- Irregular or no payments of alimony.

⁶⁵⁸ Joseph Guttman, *Divorce in Psychosocial Perspective: Theory and Research*, ISBN 1135694567, (1993)

⁶⁵⁹ Pooja Rathi and Pachuri, *Problems faced by divorced women in their Pre- and Post-Divorce period.* (2000)

⁶⁶⁰ Mohua Chinappa, *Divorce is almost Equal to Death for women in India,* (2022)

- Collecting the belongings back from their ex.
- Financial instability creates a barrier to finding a new and decent job.
- Encountering inappropriate job offers due to the status of a divorced women
- Dealing with the society and social stigma around this matter.
- Difficulties engaging in a new relationship and creating a new family especially when one already has children from a previous marriage.

- Child custody by both parents
- RIGHTS OF THE DIVORCED WOMEN:

Divorced women have some special concerns that are ensured by the constitution of India by Article 21 I, e,

- Right to Alimony and Maintenance in Divorce
- Right to have child custody.
- Right to have a share in marital property
- Right to get back the Streedhan

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES:

Divorce and separation can often cause financial strain, especially for those who rely on their spouse or partner for financial support. The splitting of assets, alimony, and child support payments can result in economic instability and affect a person's quality of life.

IMPACT ON SOCIAL IDENTITY:

The societal attitudes and beliefs that surround divorce and separation can have a profound impact on an individual's emotional well-being and social standing. The negative stigma that is often attached to these life events can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, and low self-esteem, which can in turn cause people to hide their marital status and withdraw from social interactions. This can further exacerbate their sense of isolation and prevent them from accessing the support networks that they may desperately need during this difficult time.

IMPACT OF DIVORCE ON MENTAL HEALTH:

The dissolution of a marriage is not typically a happy event. Divorce often comes

with feelings of disappointment, shattered dreams, and lowered expectations. It also brings a host of legal, financial, parental, emotional, and practical issues that require the affected spouse to significantly alter their responsibilities and routines, which can take years to recover from. Divorce has been identified as a risk factor for mental health problems⁶⁶¹ and has been associated with negative mental health outcomes. In particular, divorce can harm a family's financial stability and social environment.

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:

Divorce and separation can be emotionally distressing experiences for individuals involved, impacting them in various ways. Here are some common emotional challenges people may face during divorce or separation:

1. **Grief and Loss:** Divorce often involves the loss of a significant relationship, leading to feelings of grief similar to those experienced after a death. People may mourn the loss of their marriage, dreams, and expectations for the future.
2. **Anger and Resentment:** Feelings of anger and resentment towards one's former partner are common during divorce or separation, especially if there are issues like betrayal or infidelity. These emotions can be directed towards the ex-spouse, oneself, or even circumstances.
3. **Sadness and Depression:** Divorce can trigger feelings of profound sadness and depression as individuals come to terms with the end of their marriage and the changes it brings to their lives. It may also be accompanied by feelings of loneliness and isolation.
4. **Anxiety and Fear:** Uncertainty about the future, financial concerns, and worries about the impact of divorce on children can lead to anxiety and fear. Individuals may be anxious

⁶⁶¹ Shelley Day Sclater, A Psychosocial Study (2017)

about starting over, coping with single parenthood, or being alone.

5. **Guilt and Shame:** Many individuals experience feelings of guilt and shame during divorce, whether it's about the failure of the marriage, the impact on children, or perceived mistakes they've made. These feelings can be debilitating and may affect self-esteem.

6. **Confusion and Identity Crisis:** Divorce can shake one's sense of identity and purpose, leading to confusion about who they are and what they want from life. Individuals may struggle to redefine themselves outside of the context of their marriage.

7. **Stress and Overwhelm:** The divorce process itself can be stressful and overwhelming, with legal proceedings, financial negotiations, and co-parenting arrangements adding to the emotional burden. Managing these practical aspects while dealing with intense emotions can be challenging.

8. **Social and Relationship Changes:** Divorce often brings significant changes to one's social circle and relationships, as friendships may shift, and family dynamics may change. Adjusting to these changes can be difficult and may further contribute to feelings of loneliness and isolation.

9. **Hopelessness and Despair:** At times, individuals may feel hopeless about their prospects for happiness and fulfillment, particularly if the divorce was acrimonious or if they're facing significant challenges like financial instability or custody battles.

10. **Relief and Acceptance:** Despite the pain and turmoil, divorce can also bring a sense of relief and acceptance, especially if the marriage is toxic or unhealthy. Over time, individuals may come to see divorce as an opportunity for personal growth and a chance to create a new, more fulfilling life for themselves.

It's essential for individuals experiencing emotional distress due to divorce or separation to seek support from friends, family, therapists,

or support groups. Processing emotions, seeking professional guidance if needed, and focusing on self-care can aid in healing and moving forward after divorce.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In another country, divorce is a common occurrence in our country it is still a taboo subject in our society today. As I conclude my research divorce and separation are the huge painful factors that affect their life as their children and so their family, especially the women get highly disappointed they struggle a lot in this society. Much legislation has been enacted for the protection of women from physical and mental struggle. The Constitution of India protects women from various infringements like Article 14, 39(a)(b), (c), Art 21, Art 15(3), and Art 42,⁶⁶² Dowry Prohibition Act, Protection of Muslim women (protection of rights on marriage) 2019, etc. provided and protected women. Many alternative methods were handled to shout out the marital problems between the spouses. Because the children are highly affected by this irrecoverable breakdown. After that, they face many problems in society so they know that there is some problem arising between them they have to find the solution between them or by being some expert opinion to sort out the basic problem itself means they can mostly avoid the breaking of a tie between them. In some reasonable cases, the court itself recommends divorce because of extreme cruelty. They have to understand that they have to live for each other and to create good children for a better nation. However, the support system plays a crucial role in mitigating their new environment. Anyway, they have to move on even though it is a hardship. The laws can only protect them they only have to decide because everyone has a Right to live a Dignified life. To break the marital life there is thousands of ways to be together the only way is Love. Now a days the legal methodology was also increased apart from traditional way to handle

⁶⁶² Indian constitution. Article 14, 15(3), art. 21, art. 42, art. 39(a), (b) & (c). 1950 (India)

the divorce in better way like family dispute resolution mechanisms to Ahear the family problems. Maintenance separately to the children and so the child custody was formalized

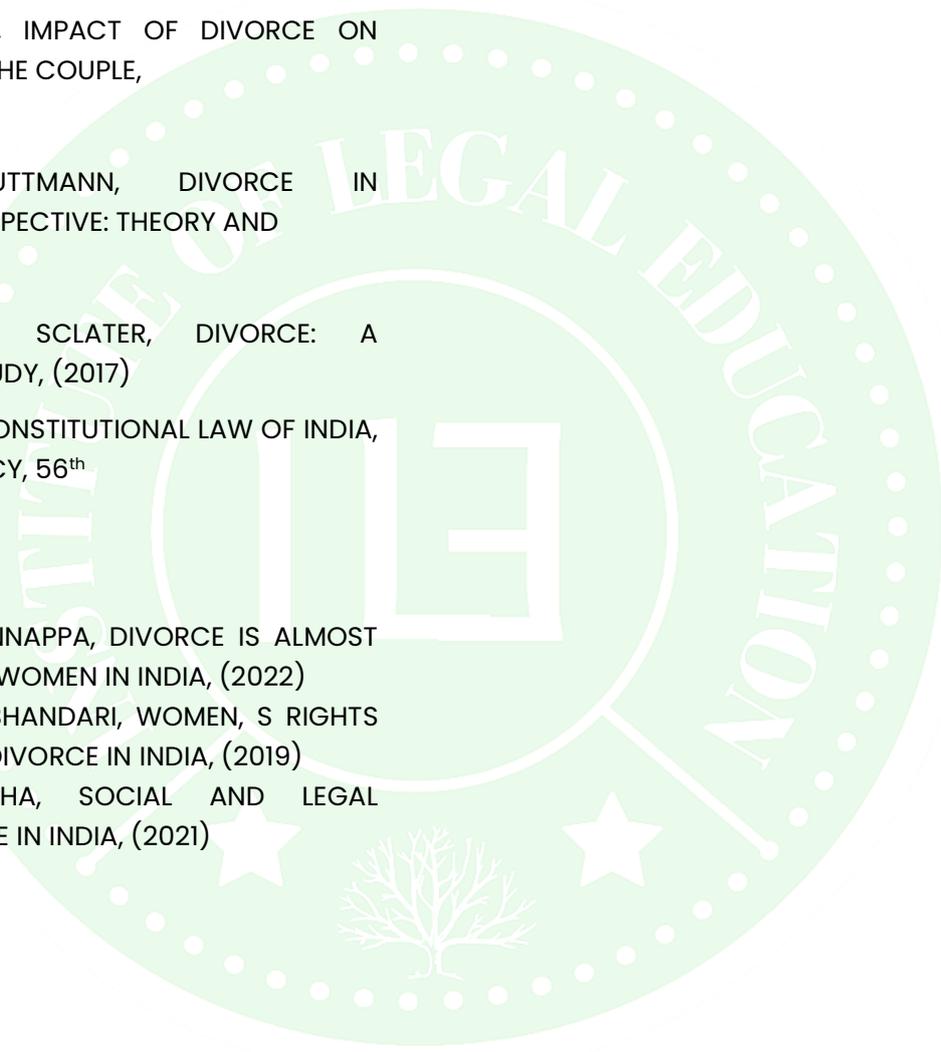
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