

# Divorce Status and Its Major Reasons in Pakistan

Shazia Ramzan<sup>1</sup>, Saira Akhtar<sup>2</sup>, Shabbir Ahmad<sup>3,\*</sup>, Muhammad Umar Zafar<sup>4</sup>, Haroon Yousaf<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Islamic Studies, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Sub Campus Burewala, Pakistan

<sup>4</sup>Department of Sociology, Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

Copyright©2018 by authors, all rights reserved. Authors agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

**Abstract** The family is the fundamental unit of society. It creates tribes, clans, communities, societies and nations. Moreover, family is responsible for the wellbeing, personality development, and progress of the individual. Divorce, on the other hand, produces chaos in the family life and instead of achieving the above cited objective vitally damages the social life of the conjugal partners along with the children and the families of both partners. Divorce is not a desirable act in any religion of the world. Islam is the major religion of the world and dislike divorce that is why there is a considerable difference in the divorce rate in Islam as compared to the other religions of the world. Present study was conducted in Pakistan. Punjab province was selected randomly. Three districts were selected from the Punjab province by simple random sampling technique. A total of two hundred affected persons/informants (130 males and 70 females), and 100 unaffected informants/persons (50 males and 50 females) (300 in total), were interviewed including. The informants were selected randomly, and no appointment was made prior to the visits. Informant Consensus Factor (ICF), The Fidelity Level (FL), Direct Matrix Ranking, and Preference Ranking (PR) were employed during the data analysis process. As far as the results of this research study are concerned we came to know 9.66 % respondents were of the view that financial problems, 14.83% blamed unemployment, 5.62% pointed out lack of trust, 6.74% said higher education, 5.17% informed religious conflict, and 5.62 said misunderstanding were the major reasons of their respective divorces. The study concluded that divorce rate in Pakistan is increasing gradually which will be a devastating thing for the survival of family life.

**Keywords** Divorce, Misunderstanding, Unemployment, Depression, Extramarital Affairs, Conjugal Conflict

## 1. Introduction

The family is the fundamental institution and it is not

static but always dynamic and responsible for the growth of human beings via conjugal relationships. It is possible if marriage remains intact but in the recent decades, marriage rates have collapsed, divorce rates have risen, and the defining characteristics of marriage have changed. Divorce is a complex event that can be viewed from multiple educational perspectives. For example, sociological research has focused primarily on structural and life course predictors of marital disruption, such as social class, and age at first marriage (1, 2). As compared to sociological research, the psychological research has focused on dimensions of marital interaction, such as conflict management or on personality characteristics, such as anti-social behavior or chronic negative behavior (3).

At the global level, the trend of divorce is rising continuously and gradually. It is a very alarming situation for the survival of the familial institution. Divorce rate in Belgium is 70 %, in Portugal, Luxembourg, the Czech Republic, and Hungary it is 60 % and in the United States of America (it has been estimated that the USA has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest divorce rate in the world) it is 60% respectively. The lowest divorce rate has been officially observed in Chile which is 3% (4).

Extramarital relationship, financial disputes, lack of communication, constant arguing, weight gain, unrealistic expectations, undesirable sexual abuse, lack of intimacy, lack of equality, not being prepared for marriage, etc. are some of the major reasons of divorce in the world (5).

As we are familiar with the Islamic doctrines that Islam tries to preserve family at any cost. That is why the rate of divorce is considerably low in the Islamic countries as compared to non-Islamic countries around the world. The trend of taking Khula (a right given by Islam to women to take divorce if they are not happy from their marriage) in Pakistan is rising. Data shows that in Pakistan 13,299 Khula cases were reported in the Punjab Province in 2012. In 2013 it rose to 14,243, and in 2014 the Khula cases were 16,942. In 2016, 18,901 cases were reported. It shows that the divorce rate is on the rise in Pakistan (6).

The divorce rate is on the rise in the Pakistani society and the reason is attributed to the attitude of the West

towards Pakistani women. The developed countries are offering scholarships to women along with jobs in the multinational companies. The inculcation of the western values and trends are straining the relations of the conjugal partners and ultimately divorces are happening (7).

The major reasons of divorce in the Pakistani society are; short temperament, lack of patience, lack of trust, joint family system, forced marriages, differences in social status, extramarital affairs, and second marriage of the husband are some of the major reasons of divorce (8).

In our public, the idea of separation is far expelled from what Islam enlightens us concerning it. Allah despises separate, says the Quran. Separation, as per Islam, isn't a demonstration of vengeance or scorn that it has moved toward becoming in our public. The delayed consequences of separation on a lady particularly, are annihilating. Separation is quite often considered lady's blame and even in the west lady is considered primarily in charge of the disappointment of a marriage. Social disgrace of being a divorced person impacts lady in all circles of life. This makes it a daunting task to lead to an existence of respect and respect. The authority of kids after separation is additionally a prickly issue (9).

### Major Contribution of this Research Study

Kitson (1992), Bloom, Niles and Thatcher (1985), Cleek and Pearson (1985), and Levinger (1966) have discussed some of the reasons of divorce such as personality clashes, sexual abuse, rowdy behavior on the part of both spouses and financial problems as some of the major reasons of divorce (10). There are numerous reasons of divorce which have been discussed above and most of the people are very much familiar with them. But there are some hidden other reasons which are generally not known to the people and it was the primary purpose of writing this research paper so that the people should come to know about these reasons and steps should be taken to make the people aware about them. Higher education of the female spouse, sectarian differences, geographical factors, ethnic differences, language differences, impotency on the part of the male partner and most important cultural dissimilarity are some of the reasons which contribute in the increasing divorce rate in the Islamic countries of the world generally and Pakistan in particular. This research study is unique in its perspective that it has investigated 25 distinct reasons of divorce which has not earlier been identified by any other research publication. It gives a panorama of the whole social, psychological, cultural, economic, religious and political factors which are the major reasons of divorce in a country like Pakistan. In the field of social sciences, the researcher usually tries to investigate some of the emerging issues and leaves the rest to be explored by other researchers but in this paper all the important aspects which ultimately break the nuptial bond are investigated.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### Social Status of Pakistan

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is situated in the South Asia covering an area of 796,096 km. It is divided geographically and ethnically into four provinces such as The Punjab, Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and federally administrated areas like FATA, Frontier Agencies and Gilgit Baltistan. The major languages which are spoken are over Pakistan are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Urdu and Balochi. Islamic is the state religion and there are minorities which are leading their lives according to their respective religious doctrines in this country. The country mostly depends on the agriculture sector and industrialization is also on the rise leading to the country towards modernization.

### Data Collection

The target population in this research study was the Islamic Republic of Pakistan which is the largest Islamic country in the South Asia. There are four provinces which are geographically, culturally, socially, and linguistically different from one-another. For sampling, the most populous Province of Pakistan (Punjab) was selected by using simple random sampling techniques. From the Punjab province by using simple random sampling Lahore (Upper Punjab), Faisalabad (Central Punjab), and Multan (Southern Punjab) were selected. A well-structured interview schedule which was based on closed-ended questions containing questions on the distinct reasons of divorce and it was personally administered on the respondents in the form of face to face interview. The divorced, widows, and the people who were married for the second, third and fourth times were the target respondents of this research study and the data was collected by random and planned visits during June 2013 to October 2014. For area selection, the researchers visited the Rural and Urban areas of the Punjab Province. The researcher surveyed the lowest, mediocre and well-established families of the Punjab Province. Illiteracy was the main factor for the reason of divorce. The researchers met middle pass, matric, Graduate, an M. A. and those people who were holding professional degrees. Some families were of religious bent of mind and some did not follow religion in their respective lives. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, conversations with the informants were held to elaborate the objective of the study. A total of two hundred affected persons/informants (130 males, 70 females), and including 100 unaffected informants/persons (50 males, 50 females) (300 in total), were interviewed. The informants were selected randomly, and no appointment was made prior to the visits.

### Data Analysis

The data which was collected was grouped into 25 categories based on information gathered from the interviewees in the face to face interviews. These categories were illiteracy, misunderstanding, financial problems, no baby, no boy child, girlfriend, religious conflict, no tolerance, no awareness of his/her rights, and marriage is only source of sexual demand. Lowest social rights, lack of patience, lack of trust between life partners, higher education of women, joint family system, unemployment, depression, panic, anxiety, blame, fear, feeling of helplessness, unequal financial, pre-marital issues.

### Informant Consensus Factor (ICF)

Informant consensus factor was calculated for testing homogeneity on the informant knowledge for each use category and to check the reliability and validity of the work by using the following formula:

$$ICF = \frac{n_{ur} - n_t}{n_{ur} - 1}$$

Where  $n_{ur}$  is the number of use-reports in each category,  $n_t$  is the number of species used.

The factor provides a range of 0 to 1 (Heinrich *et al.* 1998).

### The Fidelity Level (FL)

The fidelity level (FL), the percentage of informants claiming the divorce due to the certain reasoning was calculated with the help of the following formula (11).

$$FL = \frac{N_d}{N} \times 100$$

Where  $N_d$  is the number of informants that claim for the divorce and  $N$  is the number of informants that vote for the divorce causes.

### Direct Matrix Ranking

Direct matrix ranking was conducted following for different causes of divorce. For these 10 informants were preferentially selected and asked to give value to each attribute.

### Preference Ranking (PR)

Preference ranking was made using 10 selected key informants (10, 11) for threats to economic plants in the study area. This information is useful to determine the leading threats to native flora and helps to suggest the necessary appropriate conservation measures.

## 3. Results

A total of 300 informants of both affected and non-affected persons including males and females were interviewed during the collection of the data. The data generated was based on 25 distinct reasons based on information gathered from the interviewees. The informant consensus analysis showed that illiteracy was the leading factor that has the maximum ICF value (77.68 %). Other leading factors with high ICF value were, unemployment, financial problems, lack of trust and tolerance and joint family systems (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Informant Consensus Factor (ICF)

S. No.	Reasons	No. of persons	All species (%)	ICF (%)
1	Illiteracy	79	17.75	77.68
2	Misunderstanding	25	5.62	23.00
3	Financial problem	43	9.66	41.42
4	No Baby	25	5.62	23.00
5	No Boy Child	10	2.25	6.50
6	Girl Friend	17	3.82	14.53
7	Religious conflict	23	5.17	20.91
8	No tolerance	29	6.52	27.14
9	No awareness of his/her rights	20	4.49	17.75
10	Sexual demand	10	2.25	6.50
11	Lowest Seal Right	5	1.12	-1.00
12	Lack of Patience	20	4.49	17.75
13	Age factor	14	3.15	11.21
14	Lack of trust between life partners	25	5.62	23.00
15	Higher education of women	30	6.74	28.17
16	Joint Family System	28	6.29	26.11
17	Unemployment	66	14.83	64.62
18	Depression	12	2.70	8.92
19	Panic	5	1.12	-1.00
20	Anxiety	6	1.35	0.83
21	Blame	4	0.90	-3.25
22	Fear	6	1.35	0.83
23	Feeling of helplessness	29	6.52	27.14
24	Unequal financial	15	3.37	12.33
25	Pre-marital issues	16	3.60	13.44

The fidelity test showed that illiteracy, financial problems, unemployment and lack of patience were the factors which obtained the maximum fidelity level (i.e., 100%), followed by misunderstanding (90%), lack of tolerance (80%), and lack of the trust between two partners (70%). Other factors also existed but with least fidelity levels (Table 2).

**Table 2.** The Fidelity Level (FL)

S. No.	Reasons	Fidelity level (Fidelity) (%)
1	illiteracy	100
2	Misunderstanding	90
3	financial problem	100
4	No Baby	50
5	No Boy Child	50
6	Girl Friend	60
7	Religious Conflict	40
8	No Tolerance	80
9	No awareness of his/her rights	30
10	Marriage is only source of sexual demand	30
11	lowest Seal Right	40
12	Lack of Patience	100
13	age factor	75
14	lack of trust between life partners	70
15	higher education of women	54
16	Joint Family System	47
17	Unemployment	100
18	depression	43
19	panic	29
20	anxiety	27
21	blame	25
22	fear	25
23	feeling of helplessness	15
24	Unequal financial	35
25	pre-marital issues	30

Direct Matrix Ranking (DMR) was performed to assess the multiple factor involved during the process of divorce and their impact on the other aspects of the society. The result of the DMR showed that unemployment was the leading factor that directly cause depression and fear among the society members and often lead to the unequal financial problem in the family. Blame and unequal financial states were the main factors which were found in the joint family system which stands second in the overall categories (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Direct Matrix Ranking

S. No.	Threats	Respondent (R1-R6)										Total	Percentage (%)	Rank	
		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10				
1															
2	Illiteracy	8	4	5	5	6	6	5	4	3	6	52	34.21	5th	
3	Unemployment	7	5	4	6	4	6	6	6	6	8	58	38.16	1st	
4	No Tolerance	6	6	4	3	5	6	6	6	6	6	54	35.53	4th	
5	Joint Family System	3	3	4	5	4	6	5	3	3	3	39	25.66	9th	
6	Unawareness of Islamic Education	4	6	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	48	31.58	7th	
7	Religions Conflict	2	2	3	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	24	15.79	10th	
8	Outside Affaires	6	4	5	5	6	4	4	4	4	4	46	30.26	8th	
9	Age Factor	2	5	4	6	8	7	6	6	6	6	56	36.84	2nd	
10	lack of trust	6	6	5	3	5	6	6	6	6	6	55	36.18	3rd	
11.	financial problem	7	5	6	4	3	2	8	5	7	2	49	32.24	6th	

In preference ranking I asked 10 persons about the preferred reasoning of divorce. The most preferred reason was unemployment followed by age factor lack of trust, no tolerance and illiteracy respectively (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Preference Ranking (PR)

S. No.	Reasons	Illiteracy	Financial problem	Unemployment	Joint family system	Age factor	Religious Conflict	Miss-understanding
1	Depression	6	8	7	2	6	7	3
2	Anxiety	4	2	2	3	2	3	6
3	Blame	1	3	4	8	3	2	6
4	Fear	3	3	9	5	6	4	4
5	Feeling of helplessness	5	3	4	3	1	1	3
6	Unequal financial	3	4	6	7	3	3	3
7	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>
8	Rank	5th	4th	1st	2nd	6th	7th	3rd

## 4. Discussion

It has been indicated by research conducted during the last decade of this present century that the children with divorced parents when compared with children with married parents, obtained lower scores on a variety of behavioral, emotional, social, health, and educational attainments. It is due to the fact that the married parents try to provide all the provisions of life and they take full responsibility to equip them with all the modern paraphernalia in order to develop them as the respectable citizens as compared to the separated parents. It is also a universally acknowledged fact that the people who take religion a serious element of their respective life do not like to break the family and try their utmost to continue their married life because they take it a religious obligation to nourish their children and provide their respective families a healthy life as compared to the people who give no importance to religion such as atheists (12).

The informant consensus analysis showed that illiteracy, unemployment, financial problems are the main factors which play a leading role towards the divorce. It has been found that different medical problems such as prolonged illness, infertility, handicapness, chronic diseases and mental problems also some of the major reasons of divorce in the South Asian societies such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The fidelity test of our results also confirmed that many factors such as illiteracy, financial problems, unemployment and lack of patience, misunderstanding, lack of tolerance and lack of the trust between two partners are the main contributors of divorce causes. Another major cause of divorce is the lack of communication between the conjugal partners. The positive communication patterns play a vital role in strengthening the married lives of the persons involved. Communication provides an outlet to the suppressed feelings of the marriage partners (13).

## 5. Conclusions

The statistical analysis shows that the major cause of

divorce is illiteracy among the masses of Pakistan. The ICF (Informant Consensus Factor) value (77.68 %) relates to illiteracy and the other factors are following suit. Education can play a significant role to mitigate the devastating influence of other factors such as extramarital affairs, infertility and other issues that are becoming the cause of high divorce rate in Pakistan. The Fidelity Level (FL) also presents a very staunch picture of the rising divorce rates by showing 100% results related to the major reasons of divorce which are Illiteracy at the top and misunderstanding, financial problems and other reasons subsequently. It is the need of the hour that the educational curriculum must be revised, and ethical education must be imparted to the students so that they must learn the human virtues to lead a healthy life. The govt. must provide opportunities of employment to the people so that the financial problems may not lead to the bickering between the conjugal partners consequently, resulting in the disintegration of the familial life compelling the children to lead a miserable life in the long run.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bumpass LL, Martin TC, Sweet JA. The impact of family background and early marital factors on marital disruption. *Journal of family issues*. 1991;12(1):22-42.
- [2] Horwitz AV, White HR, Howell-White S. The use of multiple outcomes in stress research: A case study of gender differences in responses to marital dissolution. *Journal of health and social behavior*. 1996:278-91.
- [3] Leonard KE, Roberts LJ. Marital aggression, quality, and stability in the first year of marriage: Findings from the Buffalo Newlywed Study. The developmental course of marital dysfunction. 1998:44-73.
- [4] Engel P. MAP: Divorce rates around the world. *Business Insider*. 2014 May 25, 2014.
- [5] Warren S. 10 Most Common Reasons for Divorce 2017 [Available from:

- <https://www.marriage.com/advice/divorce/10-most-common-reasons-for-divorce/>.
- [6] Anonymous. Rising Divorce Rates. The Nation. 2016 June 27, 2016.
- [7] Haider M. The US is making Pakistani wives divorce their husbands. Dawn. 2015 August 26, 2015.
- [8] Altaf A. Why divorce rate increasing in Pakistan? News Pakistan. 2011 October 22, 2011.
- [9] Jallendhary AR. Islamic laws and women in the modern world. Pakistan's view. 2011;7(1):24-7.
- [10] Paul R. Amato and Denise Previti. People's Reasons for Divorcing: Gender, Social Class, the Life Course, and Adjustment. JOURNAL OF FAMILY ISSUES, Vol. 24 No. 5, July 2003 602-626
- [11] Alexiades MN, Sheldon JW, Miguel NA. Selected guidelines for ethnobotanical research: a field manual 1996.
- [12] Martin GJ. Ethnobotany-A People and Plants conservation manual. Parthenon publishing group Casterton hall, Cornforth Lancashire, England LA6 2LA; 1995.
- [13] Mahoney JL. A Critical Commentary on the National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. A newsletter for the school of the 21st century (pp, 1-6). New Haven: School of the 21st century. Yale: Yale University; 2003.
- [14] Panse S. Common Causes and Reasons for Divorce 2007 [Available from: [www.buzzle.com/articles/common-causes-and-reasons-for-divorce.html](http://www.buzzle.com/articles/common-causes-and-reasons-for-divorce.html)]