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## Impact of divorce on Muslim women in Kashmir

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### Abstract

The present study was an attempt to observe the impact of divorce Muslim Women in Kashmir irrespective of their dwelling, work status and motherhood. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling technique. For the sample 600 divorcee women were selected from urban and rural areas of Kashmir. The sample was collected with the help of self-constructed questionnaire. The study shows that the majority of divorcee women are careless about themselves after divorce. Greater number of divorcee women are overburdened as a single parent. Most of the divorcee women's children are rejected by father.

**Keywords:** divorcee, impact, Kashmir

### Introduction

Divorce is the legal dissolution of socially and legally recognized marital relationship that alters the obligations and privileges of the two persons involved. It is also a major life transition that has far reaching social, legal, personal, economic and personal consequences (Sharma, 2011) [12]. In common terms it is considered as the ending of a marriage. A breakup in relationship is obviously the most awful situation for a person that results into emotional setback. The mental health indicators which are affected by divorce relate to depression, anger, low self-esteem and anxiety. The person affected may blame himself/herself for such a blunder. There is no doubt, adapting to divorce can be a tedious process despite seeking relief of termination of problematic marriage. Many a times proceeding in a disparaging and dissatisfied marriage has had greater effect on the psyche of spouse and children rather than opting to be parted amicably or through court (Nayak, 2014) [9]. Divorce usually takes place due to the disparity in gender roles, when the rewards for maintaining a relationship are lower and the costs higher than those available in another relationship or by living alone then it results in divorce (Naz *et.al*, 2012) [10]. Divorce has achieved remarkable attention in many developed, least developed and under developed countries because of its visible effects on individuals and society (Rahman *et.al*, 2013) [11]. Its impact is not equal for both men and women but varies according to gender, ethnicity, life style, social support, social network, continued attachment to ex-spouses and institutional arrangements of a country (Uunk, 2004) [14]. In regions where there is more disapproval of divorce, both men and women experience greater decline in friends, relatives and neighbourhood contact after divorce (Kalmijn and Uunk 2007) [5].

### Review of literature

Mecheser *et al.* (2014) [8] conducted a study on assessment of psychosocial aspects of divorcees employed in some institutes and colleges of the foundation of technical education in Baghdad city. Divorced women in large numbers revealed that they were happier than they were while married. It was found that divorce women faced difficulties in communicating and sharing their thoughts fearing they wouldn't be able to trust anybody again. Women after divorce faced lack of interaction and interest. Teenagers who go through divorce procedure get involved in drugs, alcohol and other harmful activities. Drastic effects of divorce was found on the families begin with financial crisis. Aside from emotional damage victims of divorce had health complications.

Cohen and Savaya (2003) [2] undertook a preliminary study on adjustment to divorce among Muslim Arab citizens of Israel. The findings revealed that both universal and cultural specific

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variables contributed to the post-divorce adjustment in Muslim divorced women. Of the universal variables, education, being employed, satisfaction with the court hearing, fewer stressful events around the divorce, and improved living conditioned afterwards were associated with the positive post-divorce adjustment, while giving up was associated with poorer adjustment. The results found that the higher the level of education, the better the individuals general mental health and specific adjustment to the divorce itself. In this study divorced women who believed that Arab society sees the divorced person in a less negative light may actually have experienced greater social acceptance.

Jesmin and Salway (2000)<sup>[4]</sup> in a study of marriage among the urban poor in Dhaka. The results found that marital breakdown was relatively more common among urban people than in rural areas, and that it might be increasing. The findings revealed that reduced social control against divorce and weaker familial ties because of increased female labour participation had given more freedom to women. Consequently women were more likely to be able to escape out of domestic violence by rejecting unfavourable marital ties or re-partnering. At the same time, this study found that women appeared to be suffering under the increasingly unstable and uncertain nature of marriages. Hence, on the one hand, separation from kin and familial ties gives urban slum women more freedom to decide marriage dissolution and re-partnering, on the other hand, the nature of marriage among urban slum dwellers was increasingly unstable.

Krenawi and Graham (1998)<sup>[7]</sup> reported that divorce among Muslim Arab women in Israel suffer from Psycho-social problems brought on by social censure, restricted liberty and reduction in social status. The results highlighted that divorced women struggled against their society's frequent views of them. It was found that divorced women facing emotional distress and decreased socioeconomic status. Majority of the divorced women moved back to their parental home. Levels of unemployment were high, perceived family support was high, and perceived community support was variable.

Kitson and Morgan (1990)<sup>[6]</sup> argued that consequences of divorce are multidimensional and may vary according to gender, ethnicity, life cycle, social support, and social networks. Heightened levels of psychological and physiological risks for divorced and separated were found. The findings also showed sudden decreases in the standard of living of divorced women and face high level of economical problems as compared with their counterparts. They also found difficulties in the performance of social roles for both partners at divorce

### Objectives

The present study is based on the following objectives

1. To study the Impact of Divorce on Muslim Women in Kashmir.
2. To assess Self-realization after Divorce among Muslim Women in Kashmir.

### Material and Methods

The present study was an attempt to study impact of divorce on Muslim women in Kashmir irrespective of their dwelling, work status and motherhood. The information was gathered from divorcee women from urban and rural areas of Kashmir region. The study was investigated through multi stage sampling technique. This type of sampling was taken because the size of population (i.e. Kashmir) was very large and was

scattered as per socio-economic characteristics of divorcee women. The sample selected by this method was more representative of population. It permitted the fieldwork to be concentrated and yet large area covered. Sample was selected from Kashmir region-600 divorcee women were selected for the purpose, 300 divorcee women from urban areas and 300 divorcee women from rural areas. The tool used for the study include a detailed questionnaire. The data obtained was carefully scrutinized, categorized and coded in order to fulfill the objectives. The data was analysed applying appropriate statistical measures.

### Results and Discussion

The divorce rate in India has been steadily increasing. Divorce has its impacts pre disruption as well as post disruption- Divorce have a specific and long term impact on mental health. Divorce has also destructive impacts on individuals and society in economic situation, it reduces house hold income and deeply cuts individual earning capacity.

### Impact of divorce on Muslim women

Table 1 shows impact on self-care of women after divorce in rural and urban area. It is found that 38.3 per cent (f = 115) rural divorcee women and 37.4 per cent (f= 112) urban divorcee women are distressed about their present marital status. However, 31.7 per cent (f = 95) rural divorcee women and 34 per cent (f = 102) urban divorcee women are satisfied about their present marital status. Moreover, 16.7 per cent (f = 50) rural divorcee women and 13.3 per cent (f = 40) urban divorcee women are ashamed about their present marital status. About 13.3 per cent (f = 40) rural divorcee women and 15.3 per cent (f = 46) urban divorcee women are proud about their present marital status. Such opinion shows insignificant differences among rural and urban divorcee women  $\chi^2(3,600) = 1.818, p > 0.05$ . Dwelling shows negatively insignificant correlation with this attitude  $r(600) = -0.001, p > 0.05$ . Furthermore, it is proved that 51.7 percent (f = 155) rural divorcee women and 51.3 per cent (f = 154) urban divorcee women are careless about themselves after divorce. While as 48.3 percent (f = 145) rural divorcee women and 48.7 per cent (f = 146) urban divorcee women are taking care about themselves after divorce. Such attitude reveals insignificant differences among rural and urban divorcee women  $\chi^2(1,600) = 0.007, p > 0.05$ . Negatively insignificant correlation is found between dwelling and this notion  $r(600) = -0.003, p > 0.05$ . Brinig and Allen (2000)<sup>[1]</sup> assessed that divorced women in large numbers revealed that they are happier than they were while married. Moreover, it is found that divorcee women reported relief and certainty after leaving their marriages. Thus, it is found that divorcee women are satisfied with their present marital status as compared to their past marital status.

Table 2 depicts impact on self-care of women after divorce as per work status. It is found that 40 per cent (f = 120) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 25.7 per cent (f = 77) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are satisfied about their present marital status. However, 31 per cent (f = 93) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 44.7 per cent (f = 40) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are distressed about their present marital status. Furthermore, 13.7 per cent (f = 41) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 16.3 per cent (f = 49) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are ashamed about their present marital status. Moreover, 15.3

per cent ( $f = 46$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 13.3 per cent ( $f = 40$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are proud about their present marital status. Opinion between working and non-working divorcee women are found highly significant  $\chi^2(3,600) = 17.921, p < 0.01$ . Positively insignificant correlation is observed between occupation and this attitude  $r(600) = 0.090, p > 0.05$ . Furthermore, 53.3 per cent ( $f = 160$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 43.7 per cent ( $f = 131$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are taking care of themselves after divorce. While as, 46.7 per cent ( $f = 140$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 56.3 per cent ( $f = 169$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work are careless about themselves after divorce. Such opinion shows significant differences among working and non-working divorcee women  $\chi^2(1,600) = 5.612, p < 0.05$ . Similarly positively significant correlation is found and this attitude  $r(600) = 0.001, p < 0.05$ .

Table 3 reveals impact on self-care after divorce as per motherhood. It is found that 38 per cent ( $f = 114$ ) childless divorcee women and 37.7 per cent ( $f = 77$ ) divorcee women having children are distressed about their present marital status. However, 31.3 per cent ( $f = 94$ ) childless divorcee women and 34.3 per cent ( $f = 103$ ) divorcee women having children are satisfied about their present marital status. Furthermore, 17.7 per cent ( $f = 53$ ) childless divorcee women and 12.3 per cent ( $f = 37$ ) divorcee women having children are ashamed about their present marital status. Moreover, 13 per cent ( $f = 39$ ) childless divorcee women and 15.7 per cent ( $f = 47$ ) divorcee women having children are proud about their present marital status. Opinion between divorcee women with or without live children are found insignificant  $\chi^2(3,600) = 4.004, p > 0.05$ . Negatively insignificant correlation is observed between motherhood and this notion  $r(600) = -0.025, p > 0.05$ . Furthermore, 52.3 per cent ( $f = 157$ ) childless divorcee women and 44.7 per cent ( $f = 134$ ) divorcee women having children are taking care of themselves after divorce. While as, 47.7 per cent ( $f = 143$ ) childless divorcee women and 55.3 per cent ( $f = 166$ ) divorcee women having children are careless about themselves after divorce. Such opinion shows insignificant differences among divorcee women with or without live children  $\chi^2(1,600) = 3.530, p > 0.05$ . Positively insignificant correlation is found and this attitude  $r(600) = 0.077, p > 0.05$ . Symoens *et al.* (2013) [13] studied characteristics of the divorce process and well-being after divorce. The results found that divorcees who initiated the divorce themselves feel less depressed and are currently more satisfied with their lives than those who did not. Furthermore, it is found that women who have not initiated divorce alone reported more feelings of depression than men

Table 4 shows self-realization after divorce in rural and urban area. It is found that 48.6 per cent ( $f = 146$ ) rural divorcee women and 51 per cent ( $f = 153$ ) urban divorcee women agree that women suffer more than men. Such opinion shows insignificant differences among rural and urban divorcee women  $\chi^2(2,600) = 0.331, p > 0.05$ . Negatively insignificant correlation is found between dwelling and this attitude  $r(600) = -0.023, p > 0.05$ . Furthermore, it is proved that 37.7 percent ( $f = 113$ ) rural divorcee women disagree that women feels free after undertaking divorce process. While as, 39 per cent ( $f = 117$ ) urban divorcee women agree that women feels free after undertaking divorce. However, such attitude depicts significant differences among rural and urban divorcee women  $\chi^2(2,600) = 9.109, p < 0.05$ . Attitude related to feeling free after undertaking divorce shows negatively

insignificant correlation with dwelling of divorcee women  $r(600) = -0.073, p > 0.05$ . Moreover, 59.7 per cent ( $f = 179$ ) rural divorcee women and 60.7 per cent ( $f = 182$ ) urban divorcee women disagree that women prefer suicidal tendency after divorce. However, such attitude reveals insignificant differences among rural and urban divorcee women  $\chi^2(1,600) = 0.063, p > 0.05$ . Dwelling observes positively insignificant correlation with this notion  $r(600) = 0.010, p > 0.05$ . Cutright *et al.* (2007) [3] undertook a study on marital status integration, suicide disapproval and societal integration as explanations of married status differences in female age specific suicide rates. The findings found that divorced women conduct most suicides. Married women are less prone to suicide than single and divorced women.

Table 5 shows self-realization after divorce as per work status. It is found that 49.3 per cent ( $f = 148$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 50.3 per cent ( $f = 151$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work agree that women suffer more than men. Such opinion shows insignificant differences among working and non-working divorcee women  $\chi^2(2,600) = 1.824, p > 0.05$ . Negatively insignificant correlation is found between occupation and this perception  $r(600) = -0.027, p > 0.05$ . Furthermore, it is proved that 38.7 percent ( $f = 116$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work agree that women feels free after undertaking divorce process. While as, 40.6 per cent ( $f = 122$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work disagree that women feels free after undertaking divorce. However, such concept reveals highly significant differences among working and non-working divorcee Women  $\chi^2(2,600) = 16.422, p < 0.01$ . Attitude related to feeling free after undertaking divorce shows positively insignificant correlation with occupation of divorcee women  $r(600) = 0.029, p > 0.05$ . Moreover, 60.3 per cent ( $f = 181$ ) divorcee women who earn cash for their work and 60 per cent ( $f = 180$ ) divorcee women who don't earn cash for their work disagree that women prefer suicidal tendency after divorce. However, such notion depicts insignificant differences among working and nonworking divorcee women  $\chi^2(1,600) = 0.007, p > 0.05$ . Occupation shows negatively insignificant correlation with this notion  $r(600) = -0.003, p > 0.05$ . Wanta *et al.* (2009) [15] studied the burden of suicide in Wisconsin's older adult population. It is found that compared to married individuals, divorced women had a 2.5 to nearly 5 fold increase in risk of suicide death i.e., divorced women are at greater risk of completing suicide. Furthermore, it is found that most of the victims had documented alcohol toxicology screening. Moreover, the deaths due to suicidal attempt were due to firearm.

4.2.11. Self-realization after divorce as per motherhood. Table 4.6 shows self-realization after divorce as per motherhood. It is found that 47.7 per cent ( $f = 143$ ) childless divorcee women and 52 per cent ( $f = 156$ ) divorcee women having children agree that women suffer more than men. Such opinion shows insignificant differences among divorcee women with or without live children  $\chi^2(2,600) = 2.940, p > 0.05$ . Negatively significant correlation is found between motherhood and this notion  $r(600) = -0.023, p < 0.05$ . Furthermore, it is found that 34.3 percent ( $f = 103$ ) childless divorcee women are neutral about that women feels free after undertaking divorce process. While as, 36 per cent ( $f = 108$ ) divorcee women having children agree that women feels free after undertaking divorce. However, such attitude depicts insignificant differences among divorcee women with or without live children  $\chi^2(2,600) = 1.474, p > 0.05$ . Perception

related to feeling free after undertaking divorce shows negatively insignificant correlation with motherhood of divorcee women  $r(600) = -0.041, p > 0.05$ . Moreover, 57 per cent ( $f = 171$ ) childless divorcee women and 63.3 per cent ( $f = 190$ ) divorcee women having children disagree that women

prefer suicidal tendency after divorce. However, such idea seems insignificant differences among divorcee women with or without live children  $\chi^2(1,600) = 2.510, p > 0.05$ . Motherhood reveals positively insignificant correlation with this attitude  $r(600) = 0.065, p > 0.05$ .

**Table 1:** Impact on self-care after divorce (as per dwelling)

Variable	Rural (n=300)		Urban (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Opinion regarding present marital status ( $\chi^2 = 1.818, df = 3, p = 0.611$ ) ( $r = -0.016, p = 0.694$ )				
Satisfied	95	31.7	102	34
Distressed	115	38.3	112	37.4
Ashamed	50	16.7	40	13.3
Proud	40	13.3	46	15.3
Care of self after divorce ( $\chi^2 = 0.007, df = 1, p = 0.935$ ) ( $r = -0.003, p = 0.935$ )				
Taking care	145	48.3	146	48.7
Careless	155	51.7	154	51.3

**Table 2:** Impact on self care after divorce (as per work status)

Variable	Earn for cash (n=300)		Don't earn for cash (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Opinion regarding present marital status ( $\chi^2 = 17.921, df = 3, p = 0.000$ ) ( $r = 0.090, p = 0.27$ )				
Satisfied	120	40	77	25.7
Distressed	93	31	134	44.7
Ashamed	41	13.7	49	16.3
Proud	46	15.3	40	13.3
Care of self after divorce ( $\chi^2 = 5.612, df = 1, p = 0.018$ ) ( $r = 0.097, p = 0.018$ )				
Taking care	160	53.3	131	43.7
Careless	140	46.7	169	56.3

**Table 3:** Impact on self care after divorce (as per motherhood)

Variable	Rural (n=300)		Urban (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Opinion regarding present marital status ( $\chi^2 = 4.004, df = 3, p = 0.261$ ) ( $r = -0.025, p = 0.541$ )				
Satisfied	94	31.3	103	34.3
Distressed	114	38	113	37.7
Ashamed	53	17.7	37	12.3
Proud	39	13	47	15.7
Care of self after divorce ( $\chi^2 = 3.530, df = 1, p = 0.060$ ) ( $r = 0.077, p = 0.060$ )				
Taking care	157	52.3	134	44.7
Careless	143	47.7	166	55.3

**Table 4:** Self realization after divorce (as per dwelling)

Variable	Rural (n=300)		Urban (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Women suffer more than men ( $\chi^2 = 0.331, df = 2, p = 0.847$ ) ( $r = -0.023, p = 0.575$ )				
Agree	146	48.6	153	51
Disagree	56	18.7	54	18
Neutral	98	32.7	93	31
Feeling free after undertaking divorce ( $\chi^2 = 9.109, df = 2, p = 0.011$ ) ( $r = -0.073, p = 0.072$ )				
Agree	85	28.3	117	39
Disagree	113	37.7	85	28.3
Neutral	102	34	98	32.7
Suicidal tendency ( $\chi^2 = 0.063, df = 1, p = 0.802$ ) ( $r = 0.010, p = 0.803$ )				
Agree	121	40.3	118	39.3
Disagree	179	59.7	182	60.7

**Table 5:** Self realization after divorce (as per work status)

Variable	Earn for cash (n=300)		Don't earn for cash (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Women suffer more than men ( $\chi^2 = 1.824, df = 2, p = 0.402$ ) ( $r = -0.027, p = 0.509$ )				
Agree	148	49.3	151	50.3
Disagree	50	16.7	60	20
Neutral	102	34	89	29.7
Feeling free after undertaking divorce ( $\chi^2 = 16.422, df = 2, p = 0.000$ ) ( $r = 0.029, p = 0.482$ )				
Agree	116	38.7	86	28.7

Disagree	76	25.3	122	40.6
Neutral	108	36	92	30.7
Suicidal tendency ( $\chi^2 = 0.007$ , $df = 1$ , $p = 0.934$ ) ( $\gamma = -0.003$ , $p = 0.934$ )				
Agree	119	39.7	120	40
Disagree	181	60.3	180	60

**Table 6:** Self-realization after divorce (as per motherhood)

Variable	Childless (n=300)		Having children (n=300)	
	F	%	F	%
Women suffer more than men ( $\chi^2 = 2.940$ , $df = 2$ , $p = 0.230$ ) ( $\gamma = -0.023$ , $p = 0.571$ )				
Agree	143	47.7	156	52
Disagree	63	21	47	15.7
Neutral	94	31.3	97	32.3
Feeling free after undertaking divorce ( $\chi^2 = 1.474$ , $df = 2$ , $p = 0.479$ ) ( $\gamma = -0.041$ , $p = 0.319$ )				
Agree	94	31.4	108	36
Disagree	103	34.3	95	31.7
Neutral	103	34.3	97	32.3
Suicidal tendency ( $\chi^2 = 2.510$ , $df = 1$ , $p = 0.113$ ) ( $\gamma = 0.065$ , $p = 0.113$ )				
Agree	129	43	110	36.7
Disagree	171	57	190	63.3

## Conclusion

The results found that majority of divorcee women are distressed about opinion regarding divorcee. Clearly, the results of the study, indicates that the divorcee women are overburdened as a single parent. Greater number of divorcee women face difficulties in social contacts. Society needs to understand the problems of divorcee's rather than to criticize her and blaming her on her decision of divorce. So there is need for awareness and conversion in the minds of people to do not stress her, recognize her condition and must embolden her to begin her life again.

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