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THE COMPARISON OF DIVORCEMENT CAUSES, ATTITUDE TOWARD DIVORCE AND MENTAL HEALTH IN UNCONTESTED AND CONTESTED DIVORCE OF AHVAZ METROPOLITAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This study compared the causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health in women with uncontested divorce and contested divorce. Population of this study were all women in Ahvaz city. Sample was 60 women with uncontested divorce and 46 women with contested divorce which were selected from the population by available sampling. The instrument used in this study was general information questionnaire, the scale of divorce causes, divorce Attitude Scale and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28). After selecting the subjects into two groups of uncontested and contested divorce, questionnaires were distributed between two groups. Research methodology was casual post-event method. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and post-hoc test (LSD) in $p > 0.05$ significance level was used. Results of this research showed that there are no significant differences in the causes of divorce, attitudes toward divorce and mental health between both groups.

Keywords: *Causes of Divorce, Attitudes to Divorce, Mental Health, Contested Divorce, Uncontested Divorce*

INTRODUCTION

Family is a building that husband and wife form its foundation and collapsing the foundation will lead to instability and rupture of the building (Mohaghegh, 2013). Five major theoretical perspectives influence the research about the marriage. Based on the social exchange theory, the marriage ends when the attractions are few, barriers to left the relation are poor and there are glamorous alternatives for a relationship. Behavioral theory focuses on behaviors that are exchanged during the discussion of the problem and they are based on the assumption that rewarding and positive behavior will improve overall evaluation of marriage, while punishment or negative behavior can hurt. Attachment theory emphasizes that satisfaction from the relationship depends largely to satisfaction of basic needs, care and satisfaction of the sexual (Hazan & Shaver, 1994).

Crisis theory emerges to explain how families react to stressful events. According to this theory, low satisfaction of marriage and separation or divorce indicates the inability to overcome the crisis. The theory of cognitive dissonance shows the individual efforts to establish a balance or adaptation among beliefs, emotions, perceptions and behavior. Possible loss of emotional commitment may be denied to avoid cognitive dissonance. Continued denial of dissonance is impossible when depression and feelings of loss of meaning and purpose of life prevails. This reaction is common in the erosion of marital relationship (Karney and Bradbury, 1995).

Though all the people who are experiencing divorce face personal and social problems, but given the cultural characteristics of the Iranian society, divorced women experience worse outcomes (Houshang, 2014). Divorced women are considered as a threat to family relationships and life of friends and relatives and this will make them isolated and lonely. In total, the loss of social support, isolation, reduction of social relationships, insecurity, rejection, negative moral attitudes of society, social stigma, negative feedback from others, overt and covert harassment and gender violence are among the harms women experience, especially after divorce. Responsibilities of women increase after the divorce in all dimensions, especially if the woman is responsible for the children, providing financial and emotional needs of children will impose greater responsibility to them (Akhavan, 2003).

Research Article

Small children feel loneliness because of their parents' separation (Talebian, 2014). Currently, the uncontested divorce is the most common form of divorce. In this case, the spouses agree to divorce in order to separate quickly. Unfortunately, since the women have no means to satisfy their husband, they usually obtain agreement of their husbands for divorce by donating all their privileges and rights. Because men must pay all the rights of their wife during divorce, they usually did not ask for divorce and try to annoy the woman to ask for divorce and forgive the bulk of their rights. For this reason, more divorce and separation is by women as uncontested divorce. In this type of divorce, nothing is asked from the spouses and simply order is issued. Also, a couple are not well- guided and there are less sympathetic advisors for them (Kaveh, 2013).

While in the past, there was a lot of sensitivity about the divorce which prevent the issuance of divorce decree, today uncontested divorce decree is easily issued. That is why we are observing an increase in the uncontested divorce. Since this request is common and with the agreement of the parties, and judgment is final and there is no appeal, these divorce proceedings will be faster than others (Bahrami, 2013). According to the statistics, uncontested divorce rate is higher than contested divorce. Perhaps the most important reason for uncontested divorce is legal challenges. These challenges also create problems for the wife and for the husband that makes people prefer uncontested divorce instead of spending huge sums of money for a lawyer, or more years in the legal maze, and constantly go up and down the steps of the court, because they think that by doing so they also save money and are psychologically more comfortable.

Another reason for the uncontested divorce is the fear of the bitter experiences that others had due to legal challenges of contested divorce. While uncontested divorce takes place in a short time, the problem is that it will not give time to remedy. While many people find out of the challenges that the courts make them that there is yet a way of continuing marriage (Kaveh, 2004). In modern society, according to Statistics, most divorces are asked by women and obscenity of divorce has been removed and laws don't meet the needs of modern families (Navabinejad, 2014).

During the eleven months of 2014, a monthly average of 13384 cases, 438 cases a day and at any hour, 18 cases of divorce have been recorded that this figure has %8.2 increase compared to the same period in the previous year. More reviews showed that the number of registered divorces has increased in the last 5 years (Mahzoon, 2014) According to the national survey, 5 main reasons for divorce from the 36 cases are drug addiction, family intervention, beatings, hatred and apathy and suspicion (Haj, 2014).

Kelly (1982) found that women often complain about the feeling of not receiving love and humiliation of their intelligence and competencies their husbands. In Amato and Previti' research (2003), infidelity was announced as the most common reason. Incompatibility, alcohol or drug consumption and being away from each other were the following reasons. In Gigy and Kelly research (1992), women are more likely mention factors such as the not appreciating or violence, injustice, the inability or reluctance of husband to meet basic needs, feelings of humiliation, role conflict, unreliable husbands, illicit relationships, abuse of alcohol, violence and drug abuse as reasons for divorce.

Kalmijn study (2004) in connection with the divorce highlighted the role of cultural and economic grounds. Chlen and Mustafa (2008), in a study in Malaysia, stated three major reasons for divorce as infidelity, emotional problems and the loss of love. Nassehy (1991) classified the reasons for divorce Iranian women as: economic, sexual incompatibility and marital strife, age differences and conflicts between personalities. One of the factors that can be raised as a ground for the divorce is attitudes to divorce and the orientation and overall mental state that individual has about the divorce and can have some or all of the cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects (Parham, 1998).

Research has shown that our basic attitude toward divorce and family is effective in the incidence of divorce in our marital life. In fact, those who have more positive attitude to divorce are more likely to turn to divorce in their marriage (Bakhshi, 2005). In a study titled "different attitudes towards divorce in the world," it was shown that:

1. Individualist societies compared to pluralistic societies have a more favorable view of the issue of divorce;
2. Relationship curve between culture and society's view about the divorce, whether

Research Article

individualistic societies or pluralistic societies, is same in their current structure toward divorce (Toth, 2009). Some studies have shown psychological problems in people who are divorcing (Karimi, 2013). Mental health is used to refer to someone who has high level of emotional and behavioral adaptability, not just someone who is not mentally ill (Karimi, 2011).

Lundblad and Hansson (2005) concluded in their study that mental health and physical health are linked both to marital status. Whisman and Snyder (2007) showed that some mental disorders are linked with marital problems. Research entitled "Comparison of psychological well-being, social anxiety and anger in women, divorce and ordinary residents of the city of Ardebil" was conducted.

Findings showed that there is significant difference between women asking divorce and ordinary women regarding general mental well-being, social anxiety and anger and women are disappointed about their marital status and experience more social anxiety and anger. As a result, these factors lead to lower psychological well-being of the women (Rezaie, 2014). According to the research findings mentioned above, this study aims to determine the differences in causes of uncontested and contested divorce in women regarding causes of divorce, attitude to divorce and mental health in Ahvaz city.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Research Method

Statistical Population and Sampling Method

Statistical population of this study was all women asking divorce who have referred family court, counseling centers and divorce registration office in the city of Ahvaz in 2014. To select a sample, available sampling method was used. Sample in this study included 106 women who want divorce in Ahvaz city (60 in uncontested divorce and 46 contested divorce). With the permission of university, court and Welfare Organization and preliminary interviews, if participants want to cooperate with the researcher, the questionnaires were provided to them. Since the most applicants had uncontested divorce, 6 months was spent to get acceptable samples for the study.

Research Tools

Scale Causes of Divorce

This scale is made by Khojastehmehr and Takrimi (1998). Original sample included 592 women demanding divorce in Khuzestan who were selected by multistage sampling. Interview was conducted with 200 divorced women about causes of her divorce. These face-to-face interviews were conducted in the family courts and consultation rooms. In the end, a 145-point scale questionnaire was obtained based on the responses of women to interviews and four factors extracted: ignoring the demands of the women (40 items), lack of social skills of husband and his family (33 items), social disorders of husband (10) and personal and family conflicts (without spouse) (10 articles). Any item was ranked on the 5-point Likert scale from 0 to 4 by respondents. Internal consistency was obtained for 145 items using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as 0.6 (Khojasteh and Takrimi, 2009). In the present study, in order to determine reliability of questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was used which was 0.97 and indicates the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire.

Scale Attitudes to Divorce

This scale was made by Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) and in Iran for the first time was used in research by the Khojasteh *et al.*, (2013). This scale includes 12 items that evaluate positive and negative attitudes to divorce. Focus of this scale is on the happiness, marriage, loyalty and the importance of marriage until death. Questions of the scale were score in Likert spectrum from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and the some items are scored in reverse order. Higher scores indicate the more positive attitude to divorce.

Moats (2004) have described reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The reliability of this questionnaire in Iran was calculated by the Khojastehmehr *et al.*, (2013), using Cronbach's alpha and split-half as 0.88 and 0.89, respectively (Khojastehmehr *et al.*, 2013). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of inventory which is 0.40 for attitude towards divorce was used for questionnaire.

Research Article

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28)

GHQ was developed first by Goldberg (1972). The original form has 60 questions and short forms that are 12 to 28 questions. This questionnaire has been translated into 38 languages and psychometric study was conducted on it in 70 countries. This test has evaluated person's symptoms until one month before the assessment (self-test).

Likert scale is the most common method of scoring. Goldberg and Williams (1989) investigated Psychometric properties of different versions of the test in 43 studies worldwide and showed that a version of 28 questions has higher credit, better sensitivity and specificity. Four factors were extracted from this version, according to factor analysis by Goldberg and Healer (1979), including somatic symptoms, anxiety symptoms and sleep disorders, social dysfunction and depression scale.

Questions of the General Health Questionnaire (28-GHQ), which includes 4 subscales and 28 items, used to evaluate the mental health of the person in recent month.

Each subscale consists of 7 questions that were related to subscales of physical symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and depression. All questions have 4 alternatives and scoring was done by traditional methods or Likert method. Several studies have shown that Likert method has increased screening indicators of this test (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2007). Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28) which was 0.88 and indicates the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

In this section, using relevant statistical methods, data were collected and analyzed. This research questions are:

- is there any difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce, and mental health?
- is there any difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of causes of divorce?
- is there any difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of attitudes to divorce?
- is there any difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of mental health?

Table 1 shows Comparison of uncontested and contested divorce in terms of variables causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health.

Table 1: Results of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) on scores of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health in the uncontested and contested

Name of test	Significant level	F	DF error	DF Hypothesis	Value
the effectiveness Pillai Test	0.270	1.28	99	6	0.072
Wilks lambda test	0.270	1.28	99	6	0.928
Hotelling trace test	0.270	1.28	99	6	0.078
The biggest test root	0.270	1.28	99	6	0.078

As shown in Table 1, significance levels of all tests indicate that women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of any of the dependent variables (Causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health) have no significant difference ($p = 0.270$ and $F = 1.28$). So the answer to the first question is no. To

Research Article

ensure that there is no difference; results of the one variable analysis in the context of MANOVA are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of variance analysis of a variable in the MANOVA on the causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health of uncontested and contested divorce

Variables	Significant t level	F	Average square	of Freedom degree	Total square
Ignoring the demands of women	0.783	0.076	84.56	1	84.56
Lack of social skills husband and family	0.205	1.62	1290.15	1	1290.15
Social disorders of husband	0.285	1.15	112.38	1	112.38
Family and personal conflicts couple	0.260	1.28	122.56	1	122.56
Attitude to divorce	0.271	1.22	23.60	1	23.6
Mental Health	0.963	0.002	0.395	1	0.395

As can be seen in Table 2, there is no significant difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of ignoring the demands of women ($p=0.783$ and $F=0.076$). In other words, according to the average of the two groups, women with uncontested and contested divorce are same in terms of ignoring their demands. There is no significant difference between the husband and his family in terms of lack of social scales ($p= 0.205$ and $F=1.62$) between women with uncontested and contested divorce.

In other words, according to the average of the two groups of women with uncontested and contested divorce from the absence of social skills husband and his family are almost the same. Between w women with uncontested and contested divorce, in terms of social wrongs husband difference is not significant ($p =0.285$ and $F =1.15$).

In other words, according to the mean of the two groups of women with uncontested and contested divorce, the husband almost equally important social anomalies. Also between women with uncontested and contested divorce, in terms of personal and family conflicts, there is no significant difference between husband and wife. ($p= 0.260$ and $F =1.28$) In other words, according to the mean of two groups, there is no significant difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce, have same family conflicts. In other words, according to the mean of two groups, women with uncontested and contested divorce, causes of divorce, attitudes toward divorce and mental health are almost the same. Also between women with uncontested and contested divorce, there is no significant difference in attitude toward divorce ($p =0.271$ and $F= 1.22$). So, answer of third question is negative. In other words, according to the average of two women with uncontested and contested divorce, divorce is almost equally important attitude. Between women with uncontested and contested divorce, in terms of mental health, the difference is not significant. ($p =0.963$ and $F =0.002$) So answer the fourth question is negative. In other words, according to the average of the two groups of women with uncontested and contested divorce, mental health is almost the same.

Discussion and Conclusion

The First Question

The findings suggest that women with uncontested and contested divorce have no difference in term of divorce causes, attitudes to divorce and mental health. In other words, according to the mean of the measurements, causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health are almost the same. Therefore, differences in terms of divorce, divorce and mental health attitudes among the population studied has not approved. Therefore, answer to this question would be negative.

The Second Question

In the findings about the causes of divorce, four components were examined that include ignoring the demands of women, lack of social skills of husband and family, social disorders of husband, family and

Research Article

personal conflicts According to findings in the tables, there is no difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of measured mean. So answer of second question is negative.

The Third Question

This study showed that there is no significant difference between women with uncontested and contested divorce in terms of attitude toward divorce. In other words, according to the mean of the measurements, the two groups have similar attitudes about divorce. Therefore, difference in attitude between the two communities in divorce cases was not confirmed. So, answer to this question would be negative.

The Fourth Question

Findings of this research suggest that women with uncontested and contested divorce have no significant difference in terms of mental health. In other words, according to the mean of the measurements, these two groups of mental health are almost equal and the difference between them is not found. Accordingly, answer to this question is also negative.

It is noteworthy that there was no consistent with answers to questions by researcher, except answer of the second question which is consistent with research Khojastehmehr research (2014) about the reasons for divorce in ethnic groups in Ahvaz. Researcher, based on interviews and observations in connection with the divorce of women referred to family court and psychological counseling centers and marriage registration offices as well as officials and experts, has reached to this result that what attracts more than anything else is the high degree of similarity in the two study groups, namely women with uncontested and contested divorce and lack of significant difference between the two groups in terms of variables (causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health).

Most divorce that comes under the uncontested divorce, in terms of nature and type of divorce in the divorce is contested and more couples to achieve its goal of complete separation is and escape from the difficult path of contested divorce, with a formal agreement (not real) of their divorce agreement called passing the difficult and requires a long time to be rescued contested divorce. So there may be no difference between the two groups back to the story. According to studies carried out, the role of factors such as age, education, occupation, type of marriage (traditional or non-traditional and family or non-familial being married) In terms of causes of divorce, attitudes to divorce and mental health in both women with uncontested and contested divorce is almost identical and there was no significant difference.

On the other hand, in view of the number of children of divorced women in the two groups, there was difference. According to the results, women with uncontested and contested divorce without children as well as women who have more than 2 children are in both groups from motivation and positive attitude to divorce than women in both groups having 1 and 2 children. About the first part, we can say that women, who have no children, can easily decide to separate than women who are responsible for the lives and future of their children. Many parents, especially mothers ignore their goals in life for the benefit of the children, or they did not divorce for the sake of children.

This review is consistent with Ghiyasi research (2009). But about second part, the results obtained cannot be justified or there are no solid evidences that prove the positive attitude of women to divorce with more than 2 children.

The role of counseling before a divorce was examined in the attitude towards divorce and mental health of both women with uncontested and contested divorce. In about both the groups of women who received counseling and have a more positive attitude to divorce before divorce than women who have not passed before the meetings are divorced, we can say that one of the reasons for the positive attitude of this group of women, mandatory counseling before a divorce is the family courts, despite the heart of many couples is done willingly.

As it has been observed in accordance with the order of the Family Court, for 2 to 4 sessions, consultations and accepted the vast majority of them vote for separation or divorce counselor after the end of the meeting having approved or issued. Because going to this meetings and pass this route in accordance with a legal procedure is done, so it seems that the final decision on the part of couples to divorce before their counseling sessions and just for an earlier release of this life and what the law tells

Research Article

them to this set the tone and also advice from consultants centers introduced by the Family Court during this process have more formality to the basic job done. Even in some cases it was observed that despite the court order to undergo counseling, couples do not do it through his lawyer without spending even a single consultation, are separated.

These conclusions, based on interviews with couples to have research and also with the opinions of consultants and experts of counseling centers often working in these centers had been done. Therefore, according to the described positive attitudes of both groups of women qualified divorce counseling, may be due to the divorce final decision before going to the meetings and sessions is obligatory, despite the desire of their heart, and even disbelief advice and knowledge towards the center. In the meantime, family problem-solving skills professionals and relevant centers of gravity, behavioral and personality consultants can affect such a decision. A high score on the mental health component of somatization, depression, anxiety and social dysfunction women with uncontested and contested divorce before the divorce, counseling sessions have passed, perhaps it can be said that the group of women before the divorce, counseling sessions dropped, to prove that they do not have to consult, pretending to have mental and psychological health, and have refused to tell the truth. On the other hand giving realistic awareness about mental psychology consultants to their clients, can explain the reasons for these results. Sometimes they assume level meetings by their advisors and less effort to fix the problem and can influence to achieve this result. From limitation of this study is that because this study was limited to women, in generalizing the results to the entire population should be considered gender. It is recommended that the study of cities, ethnic groups and different cultures is repeated with an interview, people who are really the uncontested divorce than those for contested difficult divorce, divorce contested, they separated. Appropriate workshops to develop good marriage can be a second marriage, to be commissioned and the law firm and serious psychological counseling before marriage issue as much as possible to prevent the occurrence of hasty marriages.

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Research Article

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