



Divorce: An International Multi-dimensional Challenge

Saleh Jafarian Dehkordi, Masoud Amiri*

¹Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Health, Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences, Shahrekord, Iran

Abstract

Divorce is one of the most important public health problems which may affect many people especially parents, children, and their close relatives. To emphasize the importance of divorce worldwide, the world figures of some countries have been compared. According to transition from a traditional society to an industrial society and modern family, potential problems of divorce would be the most important difficulties of the families. Divorce is the outcome of the most acute and serious communication problems of the family. There are too many reasons for it, including: absence of compatibility and understanding, absence of securing psychic needs, violence, sexual problems, rising housing costs, high unemployment, inflation, immorality, family interference, and so on. Families are recommended to create more moral and mental familiarity situations for girls and boys before marriage, so that they would be able to somehow hinder divorce incidence through knowing each other better.

Keywords: Marital status, Divorce, Family, Psychosocial, Social, Behavioral

*Corresponding Author:

Masoud Amiri, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Health, Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences, Shahrekord, I.R. Iran. Tel: 0098383333710, Email: masoud.amiri@yahoo.com

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Introduction

Divorce is one of the family and social crises and in most cases causes unbalance in the family and as a stressful factor destroys the consistency of the family and harms the health psychic of members of the family.¹ The adverse effects of divorce are imposed on both somatic and mental health.² Divorce brings a series of pragmatic changes, that can be stressful, as an illustration: adjusting to living alone, making new financial arrangements, dividing consumption goods, informing families and friends and so on.³ Research has found highly endorsed reasons for divorce including: marriage at too young age, communication problems, incompatibility, spousal abuse, drug and alcohol use, religious differences, failure to get a successful love, lack of love, lack of obligation, childlessness, and so on).⁴

Divorce is an international crisis, and 20 places where divorce is most prevalent have been shown in Figure 1. As the table indicates, Maldives has the highest divorce rate, with 10.97 annual divorces per 1000 residents.

According to the most recent figures available, the location of other countries has been presented below in the map. Those countries displayed in darker colors have the highest rate; those in lighter hues the lowest; there were no figures accessible to those in grey.⁵

During the last 2 decades, a huge rise in divorce rate has been observed in Iran.⁶ In terms of divorce ratio, Iran is one of the seven countries in the world that have

high divorce rate.⁷ In Iran, divorce was ranked in the list of 10 stressful events.¹ Since 1994, Iran has experienced a higher divorce rate compared to the years before this date.⁸ The crude divorce rate (per 1000 population) in Iran has increased from 0.50 in 1993 to approximately 2.1 in 2014. The trend of divorce from 1959-2014 is shown in Figure 2.⁹

In addition, the ratio of divorce to marriage that was 6.9% in 1980, has reached to 8.24% in 2000 and 12.29% in 2012. A recent statistics provided by the Iran's National Organization for Civil Registration displays that on average 16 divorce cases were registered every hour in Iran in 2013.⁶ During the years 2004-2010, most of the divorces were in the ages of 25-29 years and 20-24 years among males and females, respectively.¹⁰ Some factors of divorce are related to unfavorable economic status like: rising housing costs, high unemployment, and inflation.⁶ Economic hardship that adds stress to marriages, also increases the risk of marital conflict and dissolution.¹¹ Others are psychosocial and social factors including: absence of compatibility and understanding, absence of securing psychic needs, violence, personality problems, immorality, parsimony, condescension, problems with children, absence of responsibility, family interference, cultural differences, education level differences,¹ drug and alcohol use,¹⁰ falling in love with someone else,¹² and sexual dissatisfaction.¹³

In the divorce rate formula, the numerator is the number



Figure 1. International Ranking of Divorce.

of divorces per year and the denominator is average population in that year.⁹⁻¹⁴ The families are recommended to create more moral and mental familiarity situations for girls and boys before marriage; thus they would be able to somewhat prevent divorce incidence through knowing each other better.¹ The average level of education in the community can also affect the divorce rate.¹⁵ Reducing the interference of other family members in the life of new couples should be educated.¹⁶ Premarital education can also decrease the rate of divorce.⁴ Awareness of women and men who just want to get married about the reasons for divorce should be raised.¹⁷ Successful marriages are the best interests of families and the breakdown, when children are involved, should be avoided whenever possible.¹⁸ Consulting services in the field of marriage should be strengthened.¹⁹ Reduction and prevention of drug abuse must be a priority for the government and health systems.¹⁶

Relating to the rising housing costs, it is highly recommended the redefinition of tax systems on property transactions in a way that frequent actual estate trading and speculations be hindered. Moreover, introducing a

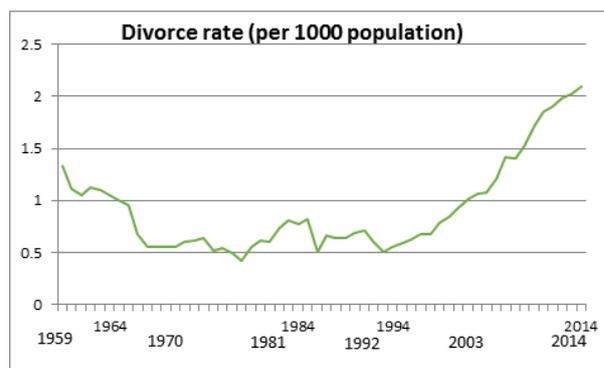


Figure 2. Total Number of Divorces in Iran (per 1000 population), 1959–2014.

system to recognize long-term empty houses and impose tax on them may also help to increase housing supply.⁶

Ethical Approval

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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