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Family Disorganisation: A Study Of The Causes And Consequences Of Divorce In Karnataka

Surendra.k and Ramadevi.k

Dept of Sociology P.G.Center BIDAR

Dept of Sociology G.U.G

Abstract:

This paper is the report of a study carried out on the causes and consequences of Divorce in Karnataka India. Four hundred and thirty (430) people, who were randomly selected from amongst male and female teachers, business literates, social welfare officers and public servants responded to the researcher -made questionnaire on the topic. A 24-item questionnaire was administered to the four hundred and thirty (430) people. Three hundred and eight (380) questionnaires were properly filled and used for the study. The result of the study revealed that among other factors, interference of in-law in the matrimonial homes of the couples, denial of sex satisfaction, inability of the husband to meet the financial obligation in the home, short courtship before marriage and engagement in extra-marital sex affairs are some of the causes of divorce in the study area. Also, the study came out with some of the consequences of divorce both on the men, women, children and society. On the women, it can cause prostitution and suicide; on the children it can cause deviant behaviors, while it can cause a lot of social menace like juvenile delinquency and high way robbery on the society. Some recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

INTRODUCTION

From the creation of man, family has been the basic unit of social organization. It is a great circle where all moral upbringing of life is transmitted. Family remains the life wire of any society. Children spend their formative years in the family. It is there, in family that children receive their early education which serves as foundation for subsequent education. Owing to the important position of the family, the success, progress or failure of any society depends solely on families within such society.

Family is the focus of the most intimate relationships in which personality of man is most profoundly expressed and most thoroughly tested, James (1980), Bell (1963), Werwick (1974) were of the opinion that family is the primary agent and it is the center of the most impressive celebrations and rituals. Those associated with marriage, births, deaths and with the initiation of the child into the beliefs and ways of the community. Kumuyi (1988) opined that the family is alleged to be natural and help in character, formation, prior to all organised society.

Gibson (1979) asserted that the family is the guide of a child in his infancy youth and his insurance and social security in old age. The role of family is moulding the child is so enormous and for it to be able to carry out this enormous role, the family should be stable and well organized.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We live in an era characterized by change which is the essence of life. Our family form today is not the same as the form we used to have in the earlier period of our country.

The study of changing family structure can be said to be the study of social process. Cathleen and Robert (1979) observe that the traditionalists held the opinion of the wife giving up her career goals and returning to the home "where she belongs". Some wives find the hassle of job, house and family overwhelming and they react by opting out of the superman syndrome. As a result of this and other factors, there are lots of problems confronting the modern family – economic, social, political and religious problems which may result in the disorganization of the family.

This study was therefore carried out to find out some of the causes and consequences of divorce which is one of the major factors of family disorganization. The study which was carried out in Karnataka State raised two questions which run thus:

1. What are the causes of divorce in Karnataka State.
2. What consequences can divorce have on the children, the parents and the society?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Divorce rate has been found to be at an accelerated rate throughout the world. According to the Almanac Book of facts (1977), there were 12,000 cases of divorce reported every year in Nigeria since 1975.

Mbiti (1982) claimed that marital failure is a delicate accident in marital relationship. He observed that one of the aspects of family life that cannot be ignored is the increasing tendency for marriage to end in divorce. This according to Mbiti (1982) have great repercussions on the family. There are myriads of problems which face the modern marriage which are both intrinsic and extrinsic. Barry (1968) opined that marriages contracted at an early age are much likely to end in divorce than those contracted by people who are more matured and whose personalities are more completely developed.

Goods (1970), looks primarily to change in economic organization to understand the changes in family disorganization. He is of the opinion that many factors have contributed pressure and have led to break-up of many families. He highlights some of these factors to include:

- (a) Industrial society which requires movement from one locality to another. This movement may not allow couples to live together which may end up in family disorganization.
- (b) Industrial society makes it possible for some people to rise socially more than others. This creates social gap between the husband and the wife and this tends to stain the relationship between the couple and it can lead to divorce.

Bell (1971) opined that inability of the man to provide the much needed apparatus in the home had been seen as a one-sided contribution not only resulting in direct clashes but which can lead to divorce. Childlessness and extra marital relationship can cause divorce. Mibit (1982) claims that in the traditional setting, when the husband is impotent or sterile, his brother can perform the sexual duties and fertilized the wife. If a wife is barren, the husband may take another wife and may divorce the first wife.

Some of the consequences of divorce have been highlighted by many people including Cox (1968), James and Hesting (1980), and Max (1972). Some of the consequences include family disorganisation, juvenile delinquency, weakening of the socio-economic stability of most families and existence of more criminals in the society.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The choice was considered appropriate because the study requires the opinion of people to describe prevailing circumstances. According to Kerlinger (1973) and Best (1971) survey research is a useful scientific tool to employ when investigation is made into the opinion of representative sample of the target population so as to have the rough perception of the entire population. Three Hundred and eighty people were randomly selected from teachers, business men and women, public servants and social welfare officials. A 24 item questionnaire titled "Causes and Consequences of Divorce" was administered. The respondents was to indicate their responses to each of the statements. The reliability of the instrument was 0.78.

Table 1: The Characteristics of Respondents Who Took Part in the Study

Occupation	Sex			%
	Male	Female	Total	
Teaching	90	110	200	52.6
Business	30	50	80	21.0
Public Service	30	32	62	16.4
Welfare Officer	28	10	38	10.0
Total	178	202	380	100.0

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Analysis of responses to the statements on causes and consequences of divorce involved the use of non-parametric technique of statistical treatment as the data are purely ordinal. Frequency counts and percentages of responses were calculated.

RESULTS

As shown in Table 2, the percentage of respondents' agreement to some of causes of divorce are high. These causes are unnecessary interference of in-laws into homes of their children, engagement in extra marital relationship, inability of the husband to meet the financial obligation in the home and inability of the couples to satisfy each other sexually. Each of these causes attracted 85%, 74.2% and 68.9% agreements respectively. The study also revealed that the society can experience a lot of menace like thuggery, high way robbery as a result of divorce and that divorce can lead women to prostitution.

Table 2: Frequency Counts and Percentage of Responses to the Statements on Causes and Consequences of Divorce

	Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %
1.	Engagement in extra-marital affairs can cause divorce	282 74.2	52 13.7	46 12.1
2.	Marriage contracted at an early age are much likely to cause divorce	248 65.3	48 12.6	84 22.1
3.	Differences in religious inclinations of couples is likely to cause divorce	204 53.7	34 8.9	142 37.4
4	In-law's unnecessary interference into the couples matrimonial home in a strong factor that can cause divorce	325 85.5	22 5.8	33 8.7
5	Unemployment of one or both couple can cause divorce	224 58.9	40 10.5	46 27.9
6	Inability of the husband to meet the financial obligation at home can lead to divorce	269 70.8	44 11.6	67 17.6
7	Drug addiction can cause divorce	175 46	20 5.3	185 48.7
8	Bareness can be a major divorce	187 49.2	48 12.6	145 38.2
9	Divorce is more frequent where bride price is low	188 49.5	47 12.3	145 38.2
10	Intolerance can lead to divorce	192 50.5	50 13.2	138 36.3
11	If the wife is more successful than the husband, divorce can set in	188 49.4	50 13.2	149 36.8
12	Couple that are highly educated have constant conflicts and divorces often	196 51.6	60 15.8	124 32.6

13	Frequent misunderstanding can cause divorce	170	44.7	70	18.4	140	36.9
14	Inability of the spouses to satisfy each other sexually can cause divorce	260	68.4	30	7.9	90	23.7
15	Absence of a male child in the family may cause divorce	211	55.5	50	13.1	119	31.4
16	Long separation of spouse can cause divorce	172	45.3	30	7.9	178	46.8
17	Constant obligations rendered to relatives can cause divorce	200	52.6	50	13.2	130	34.2
18	Divorce can lead to deviant behaviour in the children	160	42.1	70	18.4	150	39.5
19	The education of the children can be disturbed and therefore they join bad companies	182	47.9	43	11.3	155	40.5
20	The children of divorce may be denied of some basic needs	114	30	51	13.4	21.5	56.6
21	Divorce can cause drunkenness for affected men	180	47.4	70	18.4	130	34.2
22	Divorce can lead the affected women to prostitution	200	52.6	40	10.5	140	36.8
23	The society can suffer a lot of menace like thuggery, juvenile delinquency from children of the divorce	300	78.9	30	7.9	50	13.2
24	The divorce can generally caused breakdown of law and order in the society	211	55.5	44	11.6	125	32.9

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Separation and divorce have become part and parcel of the life of the society today and people are no longer attaching great importance to the essence of marriage today many people do not feel concerned about the social stigma which divorce places on separated couples, the children of the divorcee and the entire society. Divorce creates social instability and survival problem for the society. Some children from divorced homes grow up to become social misfits and later graduate into delinquents and criminals that may pose insecurity problems for the nation. Such children may also tarnish the image of the country abroad through non-compliance with the norms and value of the nation Wallenstein (1988) found that, for virtually all the children who are involved, divorce exerted "Powerful and wholly unanticipated effects".

The children from divorced home are almost likely to be maladjusted in the society. This is because, there may be loss of adult role model for the children to follow.

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