



## The Psychology and Challenges of Men after Divorce

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### Abstract

Divorce is the formal termination of the relationship between a married woman and a man. As it is known, divorce is a situation that affects both sides both negatively and positively. Generally, the focus is on the difficulties experienced by women in society. Even in the studies carried out, this situation is parallel. However, this article will focus on the difficulties experienced by men after divorce. First of all, the psychological and relational problems experienced by divorced fathers during the post-divorce process will be discussed. Then, the problems experienced by men without children will be the subject. Afterward, a comparison will be made with women in this situation. In another comparison, the psychology and health of undivorced men and divorced men will be compared. According to research, divorced men have problems with their children. In addition, there are states of not feeling well mentally; such as loneliness, feeling unwell, and feelings of inadequacy. Also, divorced men face economic problems.

**Keywords:** Divorced Man; Post-Divorce; the Divorced Woman; Challenges of Divorced Fathers; Comparison of Divorced Man and Woman

### Introduction

Divorce is the decision and separation of two married men and women not to live together anymore. They also make their decision official, support it with a court decision, and declare that they are no longer married. Divorce has skyrocketed in recent years. For example, the divorce rate in the USA in 2011 was 6.8 per 1000 people. In fact, it has been recorded that almost half of the marriages end after 10 years [1]. In Turkey, this situation is not encouraging at all. The crude divorce rate, which expresses the number of divorces per thousand population, was 1.62 per thousand in 2020 [2]. Although extraordinary circumstances affect divorce rates, there are some opinions about the reasons for divorce. These extraordinary situations; There may be pandemic processes such as Covid-19. One of these views is that marriage can be dissolved when one of the married individuals encounters a better match. Another reason is that the spouses are not fully

informed before marriage; both about marriage education and about each other. Couples who realize a bad match over time divorce [3]. 90% of divorces in Turkey are the name of violent incompatibility [4]. In addition, among the reasons for divorce, there are factors such as abandonment, infidelity, socioeconomic inadequacy, murderous intent, ill-treatment, mental illness, glory, and fame. In addition, most of the divorces in Turkey, 44.8% occur in the first five years [5]. This is why the first five years are significant in marriages. Some unpopular factors increase divorce. These are marriages made at a young age, lack of sufficient economic income, having divorced parents, low education level, low religious belief, having a baby before marriage. Some characteristics of the spouse may also cause divorce: substance use, psychological problems, violence, cheating, unequal division of labor in the house [1]. A significant portion of divorces consists of families without children. It can be said that the majority of divorces are from families without children, and

the child is an important factor in marriage and preserves the family [5].

The main focus of this paper is on the problems men face after divorce. These two focal points will be identified and explained: divorced fathers and divorced non-fathers. Divorced men will be examined in terms of social environment, close relationships, and career. In addition, the comparison of divorced men and divorced women will also look at what difficulties men experience. Particularly, divorced fathers had difficulties in obtaining custody of the child and having close relations with the child. Problems such as loneliness, the tendency to depression, and the inability to perform life skills were encountered in divorced men without fathers.

### **Divorced Fathers**

As mentioned earlier, the situation of divorced fathers has been overlooked, as studies have generally focused on divorced mothers and women. However, fathers play an important role in the lives of children after divorce, whether they are good or bad fathers. It affects them emotionally, developmentally, economically, and in their relationships with others. While tangible assets such as furniture, property, house, and land owned by the couples during the divorce are shared, unfortunately, the children also have to be shared. In this regard, issues such as custody, visitation, and alimony come up. In addition, most sociological studies consider that parents' behaviors and actions affect children's success, desires and behaviors.

### **A- Divorced Fathers Living Separately from Their Children**

Compared with the children living apart from their fathers, the children living with their mother and father; face economic and social problems that increase the risk of school failure, behavioral problems, and emotional problems [6]. In the Longitudinal Youth Study, King [6] looked at the rate at which children older than 4 see their father, and the results are not bright: 27% see their father at least once a week, while 31% never see them. The longitudinal study by King [6] focuses on five aspects of fatherhood; these are intimacy, communication, activities together, relationship, and alimony payment.

Focusing on the relationship and the visit, the importance of the quality of the time spent is emphasized rather than the quantity of time spent during the visit. It has even been stated that visits can be neutral, negative, or positive depending on the course of the father-child relationship [6]. Divorced fathers are more tend to depression than married ones, and fathers who cannot obtain custody feel guilty. This guilt causes longing, sadness, anxiety, and loneliness [4].

Children who have custody of their mothers can be affected by their mothers' views and anger. The anger of the ex-wife does not subside in a short time against the divorced father, and this affects the relationship between the child and the father and may even lead to restrictions in visiting hours. As a result, I think that fathers who are divorced and living separately from children have a lot of obligations. First of all, there is an important economic factor such as alimony and this negatively affects the economic situation of divorced and separated fathers and they fall back from the economic welfare they were in when they were married. In addition, they are affected emotionally because there is already the negativity of divorce, of losing a companion and giving up habits. As if these weren't enough, they start living separately from their children and it is a big blow for an adult. Finally, divorced fathers experience psychological problems, as a society and the family on both sides hold the fathers responsible for the dissolution of the marriage.

### **B- Divorced Fathers Living with Their Children**

In the literature review, there is not much research on fathers who take custody. The reason for this is that mothers are more deserving of the custody right and the prejudice that the father cannot fulfill the parenting qualification alone. Article 2 "The minor child is under the custody of the parents. If the parents are not married, the custody belongs to the mother. Unless there is a legal reason, custody cannot be taken from the parents. The provisions of articles 335-351 of the Turkish Civil Code shall apply to custody"(TURKISH CIVIL LAW).

According to Article 336, "The custody belongs to the survivor in the event of the death of one of the parents, and to the party to whom the child is left in divorce" (TURKISH CIVIL LAW). Despite being supported by law, the rate of fathers' custody is very low. As a result of the divorce cases that were finalized in 2020, 124 thousand 742 children were given custody. It was seen that most of the custody was given to the mother. 75.8% of the custody of the children was given to the mother and 24.2% to the father. I think the reason for this is entirely the gender roles formed in the minds of people and large communities. Gender roles impose that men should be responsible for discipline and the economy of the house, while women are responsible for housework management and child care, even if they work. And the sexes develop themselves under the pressure of these social chains. The results show that single fathers have a high degree of nurturing. Compared with fathers and mothers in a two-parent environment, any group in a two-parent family environment pays more attention to the nurturing aspect of parental roles than any group in a two-parent environment [7]. It has been observed that fathers who receive custody have more lucrative jobs, are more educated, and have higher status than mothers. In addition, single-parent fathers

complained less and enjoyed parenting more than single-parent mothers respect was observed [8].

### Divorced Non-Father Men

In E. Mavis Hetherington's research, men and women followed six paths after divorce. These are; the enhancers, the good-enough, the seekers, the libertines, the component loners, and the defeated. 40% of men and 38% of women were classified as job seekers. However, as people found new partners, remarried, and became safer and more satisfied with living alone, this category shrank and became dominated by men [1].

Men and women had the same experience in terms of the meaning and rationale for divorce, but they differed in how they gained that experience. This difference was especially important in terms of divorce outcomes and compatibility. For men, the consequences of divorce are more pronounced in terms of emotional and personal aspects, while for females, the social and cultural aspects are emphasized. In addition, divorce tends to be seen as an internal problem for men and an external problem for females [9].

Men often see divorce as a liberating factor, and few men consider it a last resort. Men in this area will have a more comfortable experience, as women consider social and cultural impacts more than men, and post-divorced women have higher social, cultural, and economic interests than men. I think I'm doing it. So the social and cultural aspects are important in shaping the gender aspects [9]. For example, while a woman is called a "widow" in Turkish culture, such a label is not attached to a man, and men are more socially inferior than women. It is comfortable. Also men remarry earlier than women after divorce, and high-income men are more likely to remarry than low-income men [1]. Generally, divorced men who are not fathers tend towards second marriage and have fewer responsibilities and stress than their father-divorced counterparts. However, divorced men who are not fathers have also faced major stress, mental problems, anxiety, and anxiety brought on by the divorce.

### Comparison of Divorced Women and Divorced Men

Both genders face some problems after divorce. Divorced adults have higher rates of depression, anxiety, suicide, certain physical illnesses, accidents, addictions, and death. Especially in the first two years after the divorce, depression, feeling lonely, loss of self-esteem, difficulty in entering new relationships, and worrying rates are higher than their married peers [1]. Compared to men, women experience economic problems [1]. Although this is known socially, most of the men have started to suffer from economic problems due to the alimony problem. If women are educated and have any job, they do not face economic problems. In addition,

although women are not willing to remarry after divorce, men tend to want a second marriage [10].

As ways to overcome the divorce, both sexes have resorted to similar and different ways. Psychologist/Psychiatrist support, family support, work, circle of friends, children, reading books, listening to music, hope is the most popular methods used by divorced couples [10]. There are of course differences in coping.

While women especially gained strength from family support and the presence of children, men used their circle of friends and their hope skills to overcome divorce [10]. In the studies carried out, especially men stated that religious groups and religious beliefs helped to overcome divorce and mentioned the importance of praying function [10]. For women, it is of great importance in the way of coping with children after divorce. This is where men and women separate. While the woman finds strength and recovers from her children, she does not get custody of her son, but she may also have trouble seeing her child due to the ongoing hatred of her ex-wife. This leads divorced men to loneliness and not enjoying life.

Men talked extensively about the problems stemming from loneliness. However, most of them are better off because they got divorced despite the problems they had [10]. In addition, men, too, maybe concerned about the quality of their ex-partner's marriage Child care, their ability to take care of children, and their exclusion from parental activities [11].

### Conclusion

In spite of the fact that the separation is legitimately considered as the end of the marriage of the two couples; Concurring to Bohannon, separation may be a process and comprises of six stages; the primary of these stages; emotional separation, the latter; legitimate divorce, third; financial divorce, the fourth; family separate, fifth; social separate and at last separate psychological [12-14]. Both couples are affected by the divorce process and the post-divorce process. However, most of the research is aimed at women, due to the growing wave of feminism and the popularity of women's rights. In this study, it was tried to address the problems experienced by men after divorce. First of all, if we look at the difficulties faced by divorced fathers, divorced fathers have difficulties in terms of custody and alimony. Fathers who lost custody of the child, on the other hand, have difficulties in visiting, parenting, and overcoming the post-divorce process. On the other hand, divorced fathers living with their children also face some difficulties. They go through the whole single parent thing and worry about parenting well enough and feeling competent. Divorced men without children are generally inclined to second marriage, but they are also more

likely to encounter mental problems. These psychological problems are mostly related to loneliness. Finally, when comparing divorced men and women, it was found that both genders had difficulties. However, while it is assumed that women have problems and precautions are taken, the problems experienced by men after divorce are ignored.

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