

أثر الطلاق على الأبناء في المجتمع البحريني دراسة ميدانية

إعداد

إدارة الدراسات السياسية والاستراتيجية ومسوحات الرأي

فبراير 2009

Executive summary

Divorce has become a disruptive element in the Gulf community especially in Bahrain. Due to developments seen over the last few decades in information transmission and the increase use of data analysis, Specialized Centers concerned with social research have improved records indicating a marked increase in the percentage of divorce and that it continues to rise.

Based on the reasons behind divorce and the magnitude of the impact on women and their children in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the **Bahrain Centre for Studies and Research** was contracted by **Supreme Council for Women (SCW)** to conduct this study.

The importance of this study is based on the concern of the Council on how to handle the problems of Bahraini divorced women, as well as to find measures that would reduce the psychological damage on children due to divorce.

The key purpose for conducting this study was to investigate factors regarding the influence of divorce on children and divorced women from a number of different positions such as school grade performance, financial status, health, psychological and social life.

The study sample was identified in cooperation with SCW. A group of divorced Bahraini women were selected from SCW registers and consisted of 220 women.

In order to achieve the aims of this study, the research team used a **Descriptive Approach** by analyzing previous research, reports and studies conducted on similar issue. The team additionally used an **Applied Approach** methodology by interviewing divorced mothers conducting “face to face” interviews. The interview questions aimed to assess the children's situation before and after divorce, as well as its influence and outcomes on mothers.

Data was collected through using a questionnaire survey specifically designed for the purpose of this study.

The results have been divided into several chapters to reflect the questionnaire. Base line questions covered status information such as age, level of education, occupation and monthly income. 62% of the study participants were aged between 31-45 years and 49.5% had completed secondary school, 55% of the participants were retired or unemployed, and 60% had a monthly income of less than BD. 200.

At a later stage, this study aimed to identify the main reasons behind divorce. Results indicated that family factors were the primary cause (60%), secondly came the financial factors (18%) and thirdly were cultural differences (12%).

The critical factor of wife abuse is important as it infers the existence of behavioral issues that can be classified with "women rights". These issues require further investigation in a separate study to identify motives behind wife abuse, and to recommend solutions on reducing such behavior.

The influence of the reasons behind divorce were related to child behavior, with regard to their study performance, and their mental status. The study showed that children of 67% divorced mothers under perform at school. On the other hand, 51% of divorced mothers were positively affected in regard to parenting due to having a problem-free environment. However, 46% of divorced women acknowledged that divorce had negatively affected their children's study performance, and 30% of them admitted that their children's health was also affected in different ways such as: mental health disease and other chronic sickness.

In addition, children of 46% divorced mothers studied had shown changes in their behavior with 29% developing behavior such as screaming and bullying other students at school and 56% exhibiting similar behavior at home.

Regarding the financial position of the divorced the study found that 50% of the study sample had a low income. The other 50% varied between an average and high income. The study showed that there was no any improvement in their financial status after divorce. Thus, 47% remained with on a low income, 50% on average income and only 3% advanced

to a higher income. 47% of divorced from the children didn't receive life expense from the father and only 9% receive it on regular basis. Because of this, mothers found it difficult to meet their children's needs.

The study also made an evaluation of the relationship between parents after divorce. Most of the study participants said that they had an unstable and turbulent relationship. 31% of them suggested that occasionally they communicate to discuss simple issues regarding their children's life. Data analysis indicated that 52% of children had negative feelings towards their fathers, some of them preferring not to meet them at all. Those feelings were likely a result of events that have been stored in their memories, and that reflect their fathers lack of support after divorce which came as a complete disappointment to children of 47% divorced mothers.

The study revealed that there were remarkable discrepancies between girls and boys when comparison was made on divorce influences. The effect on girls was worse than boys, since their health deteriorated and girls of 61% divorced mothers suffered from depression, whereas, boys of 76% showed only minor effects.

Interestingly, the study revealed that in the absence of daily marital problems and conflicts, after divorce, 47% of mothers directed their energy solely towards their children's health care and towards their jobs. 79% of divorced mothers admitted that their psychological state had been affected negatively and in a harmful manner, although, 74% stated that their divorce decision was in retrospect, the right decision. Moreover, there were numerous obstacles and problems facing divorced mothers, as they feel isolated in difficult and strained circumstances both financial-wise and social-wise. Due to the lack of financial support from their ex-husbands and considering themselves castaways from society, they felt rejected from their own community.

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were compiled in order to reduce parent's conflict that may lead to divorce, such as moving all divorce cases to the **Family Guidance and Accommodation Unit** under the supervision of Ministry of Justice

and Islamic Affairs, so that the Unit can play a middle man role between husband and wife, to give marriage consultation, and to play an important role in solving problems when a divorce is filed through lawyers.

Another recommendation is to issue a new decree that modifies procedure by-laws that will guarantee divorced women rights to life expense and child custody according to Islamic legislation. Moreover, to support divorced women and assist them to blend normally in to the society.

As far as children are concerned, families should bring up their children with constructive values and teach them how to respect and cope with married life. Teachers at school should pay more attention to student of divorced parents in order to maintain and support their study performance.