

## FAMILY ATTITUDE, COGNITIVE ERROR AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT IN DIVORCED FEMALES

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### Abstract

*This study explores the relationship between family attitude, cognitive error and social adjustment in divorced females. The divorce rate is increasing day by day in Pakistan. In Pakistan, there is collectivistic culture, so it is important to determine the underlying causes of the divorce and the behavior of the family members with the divorced females. Moreover, the other important factor is person's own perception towards himself and towards others. Everyone has different cognition and the cognition also play a vital role in any relationship. The role of family and the cognition of person is very important to survive in the society. The aim is to highlight the importance of family attitude, cognitive error and social adjustment in divorced females. The data of the current study was collected from divorced females. The correlational research design was used to conduct the research. The research was conducted in community and court. The snowball sampling method was used. The research was conducted on 150 divorced females. These participants were chosen from different area of Sialkot. The age range of participants were 21 years to 60 years. The following scales were used to assess findings. Demographic form, Attitudes towards Divorced Female Scale, Cognitive Distortions related to Relationship Scale and Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale Short. The Pearson Correlation and Simple Linear Regression were used to analyze the data that was collected.*

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage can be simply defined as the state of being married when two individuals are legally and socially decided to accept each other in an intimate way that is made according to different rules, belief, laws and each defines the basic responsibility of person they had for each other (Calantha, 2023).

Every country has different rules and age limits of marriage. Generally, the average age limit to get married is at the 18 but still there is slight variation as in Islam, the person can get married if he or she

reaches the puberty nearly at the age of 15. In Islam if you want to get married you have to follow the few conditions, the consent of guardian of woman, presence of witness, offering and acceptance and mahr(dower). The marriage will be valid only if these conditions are fulfilled (Ahmad, 2023).

In Pakistan, according to Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, the minimum age of boy to get married is 18 while the minimum age for girl to get married is 16. People who doesn't follow the rules will be strictly

punished in prison for six months and has to pay the fine also. But in Sindh province, the minimum age of marriage is eighteen years for both boys and girls (Pakistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2015).

In such situations, in which the marriage remains unsuccessful and the relationship end this is called divorce. Divorce is defined as “the termination of marriage by a legal action” (APA,2018).

The research will be conducted to determine will the family and the females own thought enables her to adjust in the society. It is hard for both men and women to move forward after the traumatic event of divorce. The divorced men also have the feeling of loss of partner, showed aggression, feeling sad while the divorced females also have the issues of insecurity, fear, loss of partner. In this dreadful situation, the family members, friends help to overcome the problems (Faizan, 2021).

Social Adjustment can be defined as accommodation to the demands, restrictions, and mores of society, including the ability to live and work with others harmoniously and to engage in satisfying interactions and relationships (APA, 2018).

The family support system plays a significant role in socially adjustment of divorced females. Family support system also plays a greater role in developing low self esteem of divorced females and those whose faces rejection from family and society had developed mental health issues while the support family system and society helped the divorcee to cope with mental health and other challenges of life (Mezalan, & Mohd Juaini, 2023).

The psychological impact of divorce was anger, fear, ashamed, grief, feeling of lonely, regret. The divorced women also reported that their family support and society support had finished after getting divorce because their family and social system didn't accept her because of having divorce and these divorcees were neglected by their family and society, that caused them great stress and disturbed their psychological well being. The financial problems were the major problem for many divorced women they even had to face poverty and this problem caused them great stress (Mulugeta, 2020).

As divorcee feels loneliness, sadness, and many financial issues which increases the irrational beliefs of divorces and if these negatives thoughts were not resolved and the coping strategies were not adopted

by divorcee then divorcee had extremely difficulty in spending life in society (Damato, 2019).

### Research Question

What is the relationship of family attitude, cognitive error and social adjustment in divorced females?

### Hypothesis

- There will be significant positive relationship exists between family attitude and social adjustment in divorced females
- There will be significant negative relationship between cognitive error and social adjustment in divorced females.

### Research Objectives

- To explore relationship between family attitude, cognitive errors and social adjustment in divorced females
- To investigate relationship between family attitude and social adjustment in divorced females
- To explore relationship between family attitude and cognitive error in divorced females

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the chapter of methodology, the researcher explained the whole method by which the research was conducted. The researcher explained the its sample the number of participants, the researcher also explained the settings of collecting data, the research design used in research. Moreover, the researcher also explained the whole procedure of conducting research and also explained the ethics that were followed by researcher to conduct research.

### Research Design

The correlational research design was used to conduct the research. As in correlational research design, the researcher investigates relationship between variables without controlling or manipulating any of them. A correlation reflects the strength and/or direction of the relationship between two or more variables. The direction of a correlation can be positive or negative.

### Sampling Techniques

The snowball sampling method was used. The snowball sampling is the non-probability approach. In non-

probability technique of sampling, the probability of a person being chosen is unknown or unequal.

### Participants of Study

The research was conducted on 150 divorced females. These participants were chosen from different area of Sialkot. For this purpose, different villages, towns were visited to approach participants for data collection. Moreover, family courts were also visited for the purpose to approach participants. The age range of participants were 21 years to 60 years. The data was collected from only divorced females.

### Inclusion Criteria

- The divorced females having age more than eighteen years had been selected.
- Only those divorcee females were selected whose duration of divorce was more than one year.

### Exclusion Criteria

- Those females who get remarried after divorcee wasn't selected.
- Those females weren't selected who got divorce more than one time.
- Those females were not selected, whose divorce duration was less than one year.

### Measures

The data collection was done through interview the divorced females by asking them different questions. The questions were asked in Urdu to make it clearly understandable.

### Socio-demographic Questionnaire

The socio-demographic questionnaire was used in research. The demographic form was included information age, type of marriage, duration of marriage, number of participants having children, psychological issue of ex-husband.

### Family Attitude Scale

Attitude towards Divorced Females scale was developed by Comrey (1988). It consists of 16 items, 6- point Likert type response set was used on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The scale has three subfactors are negative perception, strength and social norms. The value  $\alpha = .89$ , reliable because they were higher than .70 which is accepted

as Cronbach alpha cutoff value. The subscale factor alpha values were .89, .73, and .91 respectively.

### Cognitive Error Scale

Cognitive Distortion Related to Relationship Scale was developed by Zeynep Hamamci. It consists of 19 items. There are three subscales in the scale avoidance of intimacy, unrealistic relationship expectation and mind reading. It is five-point Likert scale 1 for do not agree at all to 5 for totally agree. The reliability of the scale was established by performing a test-retest correlation .74, Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was .67.

### Social Adjustment Scale

The Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale is a self-report questionnaire created by Fisher in 1978. The scale was converted into Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale Short Form by Monica Guzman- Gonzalez. It consists of 22 items, having six subscales, self-worth, disentanglement from the relationship, anger, grief, trust and intimacy, and social self-worth. It is 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (almost always) to 5 (hardly ever).

### Procedure

The researcher informed the participants about her research. The researcher described her aim to conduct research. The research guided the participants also research process. The research was conducted in different areas, villages, and towns of Sialkot through snow ball sampling. The data was collected through home survey. When participants agreed to participate in research, the informed constant were given to them. The researcher maintained the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and also provided counseling to the participants if necessary. The researcher provided counselling to the participants if it should be needed during this process. Almost forty minutes were required to solve questionnaire. The debriefing had been taken place to clear the misconceptions about research. Participants who were educated and were filling to solve questionnaire by themselves were given questionnaire. The participants who were not educated or the participants who were not solved questionnaire by themselves their questionnaire was solved by researcher and data was collected through interview. The questions were asked

in Urdu and still allow participants to ask question if they had any confusion. The participants of the research study were fully respected and admired as they also utilized their precious time.

### Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations were given first priority and were followed by researcher to conduct research. The ethics for research conduction were also explained in APA that should be used by researcher to conduct research (APA, 2010). Firstly, the letter was issued by the department to allow research to conduct research on the divorced females. The permission to use scale was also taken from author of the scales. After granting their permission the scale was used as researcher followed and respected the ethical considerations. After that, the researcher also took permission from participants to freely participate in research without any pressure nor they were forcefully treated to participate in research. Participants who were permission were warmly welcomed to participate in research. The complete and clear information was given to participants. The informed consent was taken from the participants. The information of the participants was not be shared with common people.

The participants were had given right to withdraw from the study.

### Statistical Analysis

The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for the analysis by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-V.20). The Pearson Correlation and Simple Linear Regression were used.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results presents the findings from the research conducted. Its primary purpose is to provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data collection thorough out the research purpose. The research questions and objectives outlined in previous chapters will be addressed as the findings are presented and examined in detail. The results will enhance our understanding of the topic under investigation and offers insights into the implication and significance of the findings. Additionally, the chapter will discuss the limitations of the study sand the purpose suggested for future research. The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for the analysis by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-V.20). The demographic questionnaire was used. The Pearson Correlation and Simple Linear Regression were used. Discussion provided the findings of research work, so this chapter of discussion will provide the detailed information about the results of the study by different researches.

**Table 1:** Frequencies, Percentage of Demographic Variables of Participants

Demographic Variables	f	%
Age		
21-30	71	47.3
31-40	56	37.3
41-50	14	9.3
51-60	9	6.0
Type of Marriage		
Arrange	96	64.0
Love	54	36.0
Participants having Child		
No Child	73	48.7
Having Child	77	51.3
Psychological issue of ex-husband		
Yes	94	62.7
No	56	37.3
Area		
Urban	97	64.7

Rural	53	35.3
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Note. f= Frequency and % = Percentage

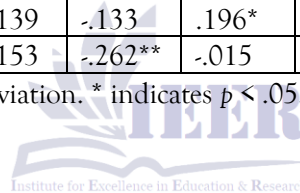
The table above presents the distribution of demographic factors observed among the 150 participants described. Out of the total, participants having age between 21- 30 were 71 (47.3%), participants were having age between 31 - 40 were 56 (37.3%), participants having age between 41 - 50 were 14 (9.3%), and participants having age between 51 - 60 were 9 (6.0%). This means that the divorced women having age less than thirty were in great number while the number of divorced women having age more than fifty were very few, Participants having arrange marriage were 96 (64.0%), and participants having love marriage were 54 (36.0%). The rate of divorce was high in arrange marriage. After that, it shows the duration of marriage and duration of divorce of participants. Moreover, participants having no child were 73 (48.7%) and participants having child were 77 (51.3%). Participants belonged to urban area were 97 (64.7%) and participants belonged to rural area were 53 (35.3%). The rate of divorce is higher in urban areas as compare to rural areas.



**Table 2:** Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations of model variables

Variables	M	SD	A1	A2	A3	AT	C1	C2	C3	CT	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	FT
ADWNPT	29.58	6.774	—													
ADWST	11.31	2.836	-.200*	—												
ADWPSNT	22.45	3.866	.138	-.244**	—											
ATDWST	62.60	8.515	.786**	.026	.448**	—										
CDAIT	27.67	4.118	-.155	-.215**	.359**	-.033	—									
CDURET	29.41	3.586	-.001	-.091	.420**	.075	.208*	—								
CDMRT	8.04	2.652	.015	-.027	.149	.062	.190*	.413**	—							
CDST	65.10	7.421	-.082	-.171*	.460**	.042	.717**	.747**	.670**	—						
FDAFSWT	15.61	2.095	-.063	.391**	-.351**	-.088	-.367**	-.278**	-.074	-.361**	—					
FDADLRT	20.00	4.475	-.165*	-.087	.084	-.133	.048	.125	.150	.143	-.055	—				
FDAFAT	15.09	2.195	-.144	-.043	.040	-.153	-.044	.030	.084	.023	.085	.660**	—			
FDASGT	11.20	2.559	-.015	.241**	-.251**	-.046	-.474**	-.307**	-.232**	-.494**	.345**	.174*	.232**	—		
FDARST	6.57	2.001	-.058	.047	-.092	-.139	-.133	.196*	.111	.065	-.167*	.151	.187*	.137	—	
FDARSTT	68.35	8.322	-.140	.108	-.089	-.153	-.262**	-.015	.053	-.130	.319**	.793**	.755**	.563**	.359**	—

Note. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation. \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ .





The table shown above presents the correlations among variables in a study. The variables are family attitude, cognitive errors and social adjustment. The dimensions of attitude scale were Attitude Towards Negative Perception of Divorced Women Total (ADWNPT), Attitude Towards Strength of Divorced Women Total (ADWST), Attitude Towards Prescriptive Social Norms for Divorced Women Total (ADWPSNT), Attitude towards Divorced Females Total (ATDWST). The dimensions of cognitive distortion scales were Cognitive Distortions of Avoidance of Intimacy Total (CDAIT), Cognitive Distortions of Unrealistic relationship expectation Total (CDURET), Cognitive Distortions of Mind Reading Total (CDMRT) and Cognitive Distortion Scale Total (CDST). The dimensions of social adjustment scale were Fisher Divorce Adjustment of Feeling of Self Worth Total (FDAFSWT), Fisher Divorce Adjustment of Disentanglement from Love Relationship Total (FDADLRT), Fisher Divorce

Adjustment of Feelings of Anger Total (FDAFAT), Fisher Divorce Adjustment of Symptoms of Grief Total (FDASGT), Fisher Divorce Adjustment of Rebuilding Social Trust Total (FDARSTT) and Fisher Divorce Adjustment Scale Total (FFAST).

The results show that the as ATDWST has significant correlation with FFAST as the family attitude is positive there is greater chance of having social adjustment and as the family attitude is negative there is less chances of social adjustment. If a family shows a positive attitude with divorcee women, there is higher chances that the divorcee can socially adjustment to her social system. In contrast if a family shows a negative attitude with the divorcee then there is lesser chances that the divorced women can adjustment to her environment as her family isn't show cooperative behavior and her family doesn't support her to get adjusted in social environment. The family support system plays a significant role in socially adjustment of divorced females.

**Table 3:** Regression Analysis of Family attitude and Social Adjustment on Cognitive Error

Variables	B	SE	t	$\beta$	p	95% CI	
						LL	UL
(Constant)	64.645	7.320	8.831		.00	50.172	79.118
ADWNPT	.006	.146	.043	.006	.966	-.283	.295
ADWST	.191	.220	.869	.073	.387	-.244	.626
ADWPSNT	.779	.180	4.327	.406	.000	.423	1.135
ATDWST	-.119	.129	-.925	-.137	.357	-.374	.136
FDAFSWT	-.159	.443	-.359	-.045	.720	-1.034	.716
FDADLRT	.424	.339	1.252	.256	.213	-.246	1.095
FDAFAT	-.034	.412	-.083	-.010	.934	-.849	.781
FDASGT	-1.116	.350	-3.188	-.385	.002	-1.809	-.424
FDARSTT	.508	.395	1.287	.137	.200	-.273	1.289
FFAST	-.121	.298	-.404	-.135	.687	-.710	.469

Note CI = Confidence Interval

The table shows the impact of family attitude and social adjustment on cognitive error. The R Square value of .43 the prediction explained 43% variance in the outcome variable with F (10.804),  $p < .001$ , the findings revealed that family attitude ( $B = -.137$ ) and social adjustment ( $B = -.135$ ) negatively predict cognitive error and negatively correlated to each other as shown in correlation table 2.

The key findings show that there is a significant relationship between family attitude, cognitive errors

social adjustment, if cognitive errors are high the person has lesser number of chances to have socially adjustment as there is a negative relationship exist between cognitive error and social adjustment. Similarly, there is a negative relation exists between family attitude and cognitive error as the family attitude is positive with person there is less chances to have cognitive distortions. On the other stand, if family attitude is negative with the person there are more cognitive errors of a person as the person has

greater chances to have number of cognitive errors because of the negative attitude of her family towards her.

### Discussion

The early age marriages had higher divorce rate than late age marriage and marriage happened after thirty years had very low rate. There is another reason behind this age as the person get enough mature to overcome the daily challenges and to solve the problems by herself, the maturity levels also reached at this age and usually at this age females have patience and they did politely dealings they know how to communicate with others in an assertive way (Mehmood, 2019).

As the participants of the current study also reported that they lived in separate family instead of joint family because they faced many negative roles of society about divorcee so by living separately they felt more satisfactory. Most participants decided to live separately from society because they recognized the diplomatic face of society, so they didn't want their unloyal support, such participants reported to feel better after isolate themselves from society (Aqeel, 2015).

The one of the main reasons of having divorce in our society is the infertility of women as those women who were unable to give birth to baby also got divorced by their husband (Tahira, 2023).

The divorced women having child also faced many problems related to their basic need of child as they had to face great difficulty to meet basic needs of children. Divorced women also faces financial issues that's when they even suffer from poverty and because of financial issues their children also suffered in fact they even don't have enough money to fulfill the basic needs of children and they children deprived of their basic rights, in short the charm of childhood completely absent in these children they don't enjoy the glitters of childhood period (Maqbool, 2022).

The rate of divorce was higher in husband having psychological issues. Another major problem is the abusive behavior of husband. Usually, it is result of some other factors like financial issues and drug use etc, most of divorced women had divorced because their ex-husband abused them, having hitting behaviors towards them (Mehmood, 2019).

The first hypothesis that there will be significant positive relationship between family attitude and social adjustment. As the Pearson Correlation was used to find results as shown in table 2. The results of the study showed that family attitude has significant correlation with social adjustment as the family attitude is positive there is greater chance of having social adjustment and as the family attitude is negative there is less chances of social adjustment. The family support system plays a significant role in socially adjustment of divorced females. Family support system also plays a greater role in developing low self esteem of divorced females and those whose faces rejection from family and society had developed mental health issues while the support family system and society helped the divorcee to cope with mental health and other challenges of life (Mezalan, 2023).

The second hypothesis that will be negative relationship between cognitive error and social adjustment. Simple Linear Regression was used to find results as shown in table 3. The key findings show that there is a significant relationship between family attitude, cognitive errors social adjustment, if cognitive errors are high the person has lesser number of chances to have socially adjustment as there is a negative relationship exist between cognitive error and social adjustment. Similarly, there is a negative relation exists between family attitude and cognitive error as the family attitude is positive with person there is less chances to have cognitive distortions. The divorced women faced depression, anxiety and stress most of the time, more over mostly divorcee also faced rejection as they family didn't accept the as a divorced women and the society also rejected them that's why they decided to live separately from family system and social system as they the society did stigmatization and labelling that forced them to think negatively about themselves and others too, so divorced women also lived in Dar- ul Aman, if she had children so she also lived in Dar ul Aman with their children because she was rejected by family, society and she couldn't had place to live and to meet the both hands of their children this behavior of others enable her to think negatively which also caused great stress for divorcee (Zafeer, 2022).



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After the conduction of research and followed of overall procedures the research work was concluded according to significant findings of the study. The present research conducted to find the relation between family attitude, cognitive error and social adjustment in divorced females. So overall results showed that these three variables were significantly related to each other. As the family has positive attitude with the divorced females the divorced females have less cognitive errors and irrational believes that supportive system help divorcee to cope with the problems regarding mental health or sadness, loneliness. After coping with these problems the divorce females had skills to manage their problems and develop problem solving skills so that she could adjusted to the society. As we know, family support system and social support system plays a significant role in person's life and is responsible to bring any dramatic change in person's life as well.

### Recommendations

Some recommendations for future research on this population are as following:

- The future research should be conducted on comparison between divorcee of different cities.
- Research should be conducted on large population for generalization of results.
- The future research will be conducted on divorcee who got divorce more than one time and their comparison with single time divorcee and multiple time divorcee.

### Implications

Some implications of the study are as follow:

- The research findings will be more informative because it will be the second time to focus on the life of the divorcee females those living in Sialkot.
- It will be more applicable and beneficial research that has implications. The findings of the research will be more effective for people to understand the problems of divorcee and to understand how deeply family system and society impacts on them.
- The research findings will also address the government to take positive steps for divorcee, to give them equal facilities as given to widow to meet their basic needs and to implement rules to make ease for divorcee to spend their lives in a peaceful way.

- The research findings will be more effective as it gives beneficial information which can raise number of steps to solve the problems of divorced women so that she can live better life.

### Limitations

In this research work, there are some problems or limitations that were faced by researcher in conduction of the study. These limitations were as following:

- There were problems to approaching population for study because some participants were not available at that time and researcher had to go again that place for data collection.
- Some participants were uneducated so it took more time to provide information about research to them and it seemed to be bit difficult for researcher to fill the questionnaire by whatever they verbally said to researcher through interview.
- Sometimes, the researcher went to place which location was told to research and when researcher reached there, then there were no divorcee females and sometimes the divorcee shifted to another place with her family and again searching process was continued for data collection.

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