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The Role of Women's Socio-Economic Status in Divorce Decision

Kadınların Sahip Olduğu Sosyo-Ekonomik Durumun Boşanma Kararı Üzerindeki Etkisi

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Abstract: Today, it is very important to analyze divorce rate increases and the changes in the family structure sociologically. Based on this idea, the role of women's socio-economic characteristics on the divorce decision is discussed in this paper. In-depth interview technique was used in the research and in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 divorced women living in Nilüfer District of Bursa. It is concluded that women were negatively affected by economic problems experienced during the marriage process and this situation had an effect on the divorce decision. It is also determined that the economic situation of the woman causes such situations as tension, violence and desperation in social life, and then it has an impact on women's decision-making in the process and their attempt to get rid of problem areas.

Keywords: Woman, Socio-Economic Status, Divorce, Marriage.

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Öz: Günümüzde boşanma oranlarındaki artışları ve aile yapısındaki değişimleri sosyolojik olarak incelemek oldukça önemlidir. Bu düşünceden hareketle çalışmada kadınların sosyo-ekonomik özelliklerinin boşanma kararlarındaki rolü tartışılmaktadır. Araştırmada derinlemesine görüşme tekniği kullanılmış ve Bursa'nın Nilüfer İlçesinde yaşayan boşanmış 20 kadınla derinlemesine mülakat yapılmıştır. Kadınların evlilik sürecinde yaşanan ekonomik sorunlardan olumsuz etkilendikleri ve bu durumun boşanma kararında etkili olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca kadının ekonomik durumunun toplumsal yaşamda gerginlik, şiddet, çaresizlik gibi durumlara neden olduğu ve aynı zamanda kadınların süreçteki karar verme ve sorun alanlarından kurtulma çabalarında etkili olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın, Sosyo-Ekonomik Statü, Boşanma, Evlilik.

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1. Introduction

Since its emergence in the historical scene, social institutions have been seen as important social regulators. The family institution is one of them. As a group with its own rules and intense interaction, communication and sharing of experiences, the family has an important position in almost all societies. In this context, protective and supportive functions have been attributed to the family institution in an important part of history. However, with modernization, these functions were transferred to state institutions and social support mechanisms found the opportunity to develop outside the family institution. As a natural consequence of this situation, a transformation has occurred in the structure of the family institution (Kucur and Kelebek, 2021: 236). Especially in industrialized countries, the age of marriage and childbearing has increased, and there has been a significant increase in the rates of cohabitation, childbearing out of wedlock and divorce (Lesthaeghe, 2014: 18112; McLanahan, 2004: 607).

In relation to social change, nearly half of marriages in many countries are in the process of divorce. In other words, with modernization, marriages are no longer seen as an economic partnership, and with the emancipation of women, the reciprocity relationship within the family has come to the fore (Benedek and Brown, 1997: 2). Moreover, the traditional understanding of divorce has disappeared, and having children is no longer the only reason to continue the marriage; thus, married individuals can decide to divorce more easily (Amato, 1994: 207-221). On the other hand, although divorce has become more common nowadays, the negative perceptions associated with divorce maintain its place in cultural memories (Gerstel, 1987: 183). This situation results in individuals experiencing some difficulties before and after divorce, even in this century (Ilhan, 2020: 513). This situation necessitates examining the phenomenon of divorce as a social problem. With this in mind, this paper examines the effect of women's socio-economic status on divorce decisions in Turkish society, where divorce rates are increasing rapidly, as in many other societies. In this context, first of all, the socio-economic infrastructure as the reason for divorce was discussed, and then the role of the socio-economic infrastructure of women in the post-divorce process was analyzed.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Socio-economic Structure and Divorce

Divorce is a situation that develops with a legally supported process, in the event that individuals who have realized they cannot resolve the disagreements in the marriage union between themselves due to various reasons, the decision they take to end this union (Uray, 2021: 47). Although divorce can be understood as a simple matter of choice and decision, it is a very complex and multidimensional phenomenon with individual, social, cultural, legal and psychological dimensions (Dereje, 2014: 6-7). At this point, in the sociological context, divorce can be considered in various ways as a difficult and even unacceptable phenomenon (Gerstel, 1987: 172). Especially in the conservative approach, it is believed that the basic values of the society will be endangered with the moral and social corruption that emerges after this situation in which the family unity will be dissolved by divorce; for this reason, strict social and legal sanctions are applied against divorce (Halem, 1982).

Researches have shown that the phenomenon of divorce is closely related to the socio-economic structure (Afifi, et.al., 2013: 240; Toth and Kimmelmeier, 2009: 280). Accordingly, in societies where individualization and industrialization are high, women's education levels are high and economic independence is high, divorce rates are also high (Lesthaeghe, 1998: 6; Fan and Lui, 2004: 442; Tomassini, et al., 2007: 845-846; Huang, 2005: 161; Raymo, et al., 2004: 395; Tilson and Larson, 2000: 367). The change process initiated by the industrial revolution has also caused a change in the social position of women. The active participation of women in working life has greatly reduced the inequalities between women and men in the political, social and economic fields (Le Bouteillec et.al., 2011: 204). In this process, significant changes were observed in marriage and family institutions, such as the structural shrinkage of the family, the emphasis on gender equality in family relations, the change in the meaning attributed to marriage, and the fact that the choice

of spouse became a personal choice, while significant increases were experienced in divorce rates (Aydın and Baran, 2000: 119).

The meanings and roles that each society ascribes to the family institution are shaped according to their own social dynamics. From this point of view, the change in family structure and the perspective on divorce are also formed according to the effects of society on individuals (Ozankaya, 1991: 173). So much so that the change in family structure and divorce issues are handled and evaluated in different ways in regional and socio-economic terms (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000: 121-122). For example, according to McLanahan (2004: 608), while women with high economic status in the upper classes in developed western countries marry and have children at an older age, divorce and having children out of wedlock are more common among women without economic status. On the other hand, Raymo et.al. (2004: 393-396) state that the economic empowerment of women and the increase in their education levels have a significant impact on the change in family structure and divorce issues.

Another issue of divorce discussed in the context of socio-economic characteristics is gender. At this point, one can say that divorce causes difficulties for both women and men. However, women face different and more intense challenges than men (Cicek, 2014). As a matter of fact, researches (Can and Aksu, 2016: 889) have shown that although in traditional and many other modern societies, the rights of both genders are equally protected by the law, divorce manifests itself in a more conflictive and traumatic dimension for women in the economic, social, cultural and psychological context. So much so that many researches focusing on the devastating economic consequences for most women (Amato, 2000) show that divorce is a problem regardless of their socio-economic class and whether they are working or not. Because a woman who does not work in any job outside and shares her husband's earnings during the marriage may experience a serious economic deprivation after divorce (Eşsizoğlu, 2012: 129). On the other hand, it is also stated that women who work in high-income jobs will be affected by divorce in a positive way rather than negatively, since they will have control over the financial management of their earnings after divorce (Teachman et.al., 2000).

2.2. Divorce in Patriarchal Structure

The basic distinction between biological sex and gender is based on the facts of "*being born as a woman*" and "*being a woman*". While being born as a woman is a universal concept, being a woman corresponds to the norms and values of the society one was born and raised in (Senol and Kilic, 2021: 210). The most important role assigned to women in patriarchal structures is motherhood. Woman who exists as a mother and a wife in social life is rated with these roles and femininity is often defined in the context of motherhood. All expectations from woman emerge in relation to being a mother to her children. The only expectation of the society from the "mother" is to take care of her children and to be a faithful wife to her husband and home (Dinç Kahraman, 2010: 30).

In patriarchal structures, the man has the authority and he is the main decision-maker even on the woman's every steps. As the woman is excluded in all decision-making mechanisms, if she demands to get divorced, it is not accepted and even found strange by both men and the society (Arıkan, 1996: 175). Appealingly important decisions related with the marriage are made by man; and even if the divorce may occur it is expected that it must be the man who take the decision to divorce. Therefore, the woman's request or decision to divorce does not arouse as much respect as the man's decision (Senol and Kilic, 2021: 194). Moreover, it is not seen as an act that an ideal woman and a wife does (Ugur, 2014: 310).

The influence of the patriarchal point of view on women increases as the woman decides to get divorced by behaving outside the limits set for her. To put it more clearly, since the norms of the patriarchal system are both the reason and the result of the oppression of women, they increase the responsibilities of the woman, whose roles as a woman are determined and who do not allow her to go beyond, as a divorced woman. Thus, divorce brings the woman face to face with a more aggravated process as a divorced woman. Although being an ideal woman is a difficult and disadvantageous in patriarchal structure; being a divorced woman is much more difficult and disadvantageous (Senol and Kilic, 2021: 194).

So much so that while family pressure, violence and harassment are seen as important reasons for divorce, woman face the same problems after divorce (Bulut, 2008: 115). This situation causes woman to try to be invisible by hiding their divorce after divorce. Some women even do not take off their wedding rings long after divorce (Arikan, 1975: 220). The patriarchal understanding of gender leads to emotional violence such as jealousy, pressure, humiliation and sometimes physical violence on divorced women. Woman kicking her husband aside, getting divorced from him or disobeying their spouses see that there is no other way but to accept it (Cagirkan and Karahan, 2023: 156). As a result, since the patriarchal social structure expects women to be silent and obedient, divorced women also act in accordance with this expectation in order to be protected from oppression and harassment (Bulut, 2008: 115-117). In short, it is important to reveal in more detail the oppression and problems created by the patriarchal point of view, which imprisons women within certain limits and prevents them from doing any behavior outside these limits in more detail. In this paper, which tries to determine the roles of the socio-economic characteristics of women in the divorce processes, it is also aimed to point out the pressure and problems created by the patriarchal perspective on divorced women.

3. Methodology

3.1. Purpose and Importance of the Research

With the changing conditions and the modern effects being felt more than before, the perspective on marriage and divorce started to change (Unal, 2013: 591). At this point, women's evaluation and decision-making mechanisms have changed, and the strict patterns of divorce have begun to loosen. Although the level of influence of modern and global effects on individuals differs, the effect of organized normative values of societies cannot be ignored. From this point of view, the aim of the research is to reveal the effect of socio-economic reasons on the divorce decision of women. Revealing these effects is very important both for understanding and interpreting the increasing divorce rates and for analyzing the debates about the future position of the family. In addition, it is thought that revealing the socio-economic effects will contribute to the conceptual divorce research carried out in the field.

3.2. Universe and Target Population

One of the most important steps to analyze the social structure is to understand and interpret the family. Based on the family, it is possible to say that the social effects show themselves mostly on the social relations network. One of the factors that shape the social relations network and affect marriage and divorce is economic relations. Especially with women's greater participation in working life and gaining economic freedom, the system of relations within the family has also begun to change. At this point, the research aims to reveal the effect of the economic process of the woman both before and after the divorce decision. For this reason, the sample of the study consists of 20 divorced women living in the Nilüfer District of Bursa. Nilüfer was chosen because it is an industrial area and an economically developed district of Bursa. It is of great importance for the city, which tends to grow towards the west, in terms of creating new residential areas and making urban planning. In addition, it is the district with the highest population growth rate (<https://bursa.ktb.gov.tr>, A.D. 19.10.2022).

Within the scope of the research, 23 women were reached, but one woman wanted to end the interview halfway, and two women gave up at the last minute to participate in the research. Snowball sampling technique was used in order to reinforce the trust factor between the participant and the researcher, considering the sensitivity of the women in sharing the events they experienced in the past after the divorce process. Thus, women became a reference to another woman and a sample group was formed.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Divorce is a process that has various consequences in the lives of individuals, both socially and psychologically. Individuals have to restructure their lives in various aspects during and after this process (Oksuzler Cabılar and Yılmaz, 2022: 9). In-depth interview technique was used in the research, which was carried out with an effort to understand and make sense of this process through the economic situation of women. In this way, the answers given by the women to the interview questions were analyzed systematically and the technique used gave the researcher the opportunity to probe the question during the interviews. The interviews were conducted by the researchers themselves. A semi-structured interview form was used in the research. Interviews took approximately 30-45 minutes. The data were first categorized according to the main headings and then divided into subheadings with the descriptive analysis technique. In the paper, the principle of trust and volunteerism was taken into account and the participants were informed about the research before starting the in-depth interview. In addition, the identity of the women was kept confidential due to the principle of confidentiality and such abbreviations as I.W.1 (interviewed woman 1) and I.W.2 (interviewed woman 2) were used. The ethics committee approval was obtained from the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Bursa Technical University, with the decision dated 30.04.2022 and numbered 2022-7/ 1 during the data collection process.

4. Findings

Today it is very important to analyze the divorce rate and the changes experienced in the family structure by effects modernization from sociological perspective. The effect of the economic situation on women's view of problems and decision-making mechanisms is important in understanding and interpreting the process. In this paper, firstly, the socio-demographic characteristics of the women interviewed within the scope of the research were analyzed, and then the problems experienced in the marriage process and economic factors, the attitude of women during the divorce process, the effect of the economic situation on social adaptation after the divorce process were analyzed under different topics.

4.1. Socio-Demographical Characteristics of the Interviewees

It is very important to analyze the socio-demographic data of the women interviewed in the research, on the women's decision to divorce, the difficulties they encounter after the divorce and the attitudes they develop against it. Variables such as age, education, occupation, income status, and whether or not to have children greatly affect women's perspectives of view about divorce. Among the women participating in the research, 1 is between the ages of 15-25, 7 of them are between the ages of 26-35, 6 of them are between the ages of 36-45, 4 are between the ages of 46-55 and 2 are between the ages of 56-65. When the education level of the women is analyzed, it is seen that 7 women are graduated from primary school, 2 women are graduated from secondary school, 5 women are graduated from high school, 5 women are graduated from university and 1 woman has got her master degree. When the employment status and occupation information were gathered, it was revealed that 14 women had jobs and 6 women were unemployed.

Table 1. Socio-Demographical Characteristics of the Interviewees

Interviewed woman	Age	Education	Occupation	Number of Children	Type of Marriage	Length of Marriage	Income (TRY) ³
I.W. 1	35	High school	Accountant	2	Dating	8 years	6.000
I.W. 2	60	Primary school	Housewife	2	Arranged	20 years	2.000
I.W. 3	55	Primary school	Housewife	1	Arranged	28 years	none
I.W. 4	37	Primary school	Charlady	3	Arranged	14 years	3.500-4.000
I.W. 5	28	High school	Grapher	1	Arranged	5 years	4.250
I.W. 6	37	University	Nurse	1	Dating	10 years	7000
I.W. 7	30	High school	Housewife	1	Dating	12 years	none
I.W. 8	26	University	Web designer	1	Arranged	7 years	none
I.W. 9	29	University	Topographical engineer	1	Dating	3,5 years	8.000
I.W. 10	38	Secondary school	Officer	3	Arranged	18 years	7.000
I.W. 11	48	University	Human Resources Assistant	1	Dating	9 years	25.000
I.W. 12	44	Master degree	Food engineer	2	Arranged	12 years	13.000
I.W. 13	52	Primary school	Housewife	1	Dating	23 years	none
I.W. 14	25	High school	Shop assistant	none	Dating	2 years	6.000
I.W. 15	42	Primary school	Baby sitter	1	Dating	10 years	6.500
I.W. 16	34	Secondary school	Worker	2	Dating	10 years	5.600
I.W. 17	49	Primary school	Housewife	2	Dating	25 years	4.000
I.W. 18	61	Primary school	Housewife	2	Arranged	40 years	3.000-4.000
I.W. 19	29	High school	Employee in kindergarten	none	Dating	5 years	7.000
I.W. 20	39	University	Teacher	1	Dating	8 years	5.000

When the status of women having children is examined, it is seen that 10 women have 1 child, 6 women have 2 children, and 2 women have 3 children. 2 of women do not have any children. Having children is an important motivation for women to maintain their marital union. Although women are sometimes exposed to acts of violence, they delay the decision to divorce or give up on divorce due to child-related

³ A loaf of bread was sold for 3 TRY(0,033 Euro) in 2022.

reasons (such as the disorganization of their children, the child's growing up in a family union, or the woman's family not accepting the care of the children in case of divorce, etc.) (Altıparmak, 2018: 246).

The effects of modern life are seen in every aspect of the social structure. Considering that the transition from traditional to modernity is painful in underdeveloped or developing societies, it is not a coincidence that a reflection of this situation is also seen when it comes to women. With the advancement of women's rights in the social and public spheres and the progress of women's rights at the universal level, there have been many changes in the relations between men and women. For example, over time, the form of marriage has changed from arranged marriage to dating. Although arranged marriage has not completely disappeared, the widespread use of technology and the increased participation of women in the public sphere have increased the rates of marriage by dating (Cebecioğlu, 2019: 850-851). As a matter of fact, 11 of the women participating in the paper were dating with their spouses, and 9 of them made arranged marriages. When the length of their marriage is analyzed, 4 women were married between 1-5 years, 7 women were married between 6-10 years, 3 women were married between 11-15 years, 2 women were married between 16-20 years, 2 women were married between 21-25 years, 1 woman was married between 26-30 years and 1 woman stated that she was married for 40 years.

The economic situation of the woman affects not only the divorce process but also the adaptation to social life after the divorce. At this point, when the income status of the women interviewed is analyzed, 6 women 1.000-5.000 TLs. 8 women earn between 6,000-10,000 TLs. 1 woman earns between 11,000-15,000 TLs. 1 woman earns between 21.000-25.000 TLs. 4 women stated that they do not have any income.

4.2 Problems Experienced in the Marriage Process and Economic Factors

The problems experienced in the marriage in modern societies occur in a more complex relationship. There are many elements that make up this system of relationships. One of them is economic conditions (Altıparmak, 2019: 66). The interviewed women were asked what the source of the problems they encountered in the marriage union was and it was determined that most of the women saw the economic situation as the main problem area:

I.W.3 The lack of dialogue during the marriage is also completely based on materiality. My husband had a job, but there was no financial income.

I.W.9 Economical problems. Because we got married in debt. The fact that this beginning was due to debt also wore us out. At first, I was trying to back him. How can I say? I was just trying to appease the other side. You know, we can handle it, we will do it, we will. But he couldn't handle such a process for the first time (of course, this is my first time too). He was beating me. Then it just distanced us from each other.

I.W.13 Well... economic reasons...

I.W.15 Financial problems. He was giving his salary to his friends and family. It doesn't matter if his wife and child was hungry. This is the summary of my marriage.

I.W.16 We have always had financial problems. He didn't let us down. I mean, it's about paying the debts of your husband. It afflicts you. You work hard, you always try, but in vain.

I.W.17 There was an economic conflict in my marriage.

I.W.19 He wasn't working. We had a dog at home, he was looking after it. The life he wants that he does not work But the woman will work and take care of him. He will eat. How can you make a living with such kind of one person? You are newly married, you want to buy, you are emulating, but the money is not always enough, it is not always enough.

I.W.20 The biggest problem is financial problems caused by mindlessness. Now you will say, what is this like? Let me put it this way, your husband gives almost all of the salary he earns to his mother and siblings, and if you hardly make it to the end of the month, it means that you will experience poverty because of your spouse's foolishness. Making money is not difficult, people work and earn money. Unless it's a health

issue, of course. But if a person is still trying to be a child to his mother instead of being a family man, then there is something stupid in that situation.

Family unity is a contract that is based on love and respect, and has roles and responsibilities in itself, on the other. At this point, various expectations of men and women arise from this institutional structure. Failure to meet interests and expectations causes problems between spouses. There are many infrastructures that create the expectations that individuals have. Past experiences, education level, roles provided on men and women are also culturally shaped. In addition, violent behaviors that negatively affect the individuals that make up the society and especially the disadvantaged groups can be seen in every area of life and at every level of behavior. One of these areas is the system of economic relations. At this point, the negative effects of the fact that women are economically dependent on their spouses and do not have any income come to the fore (Gokkaya, 2011: 104).

I.W.2 What happened when he didn't work? he was trying to make me helpless and silence by leaving without money. This is one method. If you want to shut the woman's mouth, if you want her to put up with you, leave her penniless, leave both hands imprisoned. All right. That's what it used to be. I was silent too, what should I do? If you raise your voice a little, there is a beating.

I.W.3 I was exposed to economic violence. I was also subjected to physical violence when I reacted. First of all, he doesn't earn money. I couldn't go on him because he had psychological problems. This time, I had a lot of financial difficulties. For years, I tried to bring home the bread with my own effort.

I.W.6 I was taking care of my daughter's needs because I was working. I was taking care of my own needs. We were getting along without much difficulty. We paid our loan debt. I started the gym. I changed the furniture in the house. I bought electronics for myself. In my opinion a woman should definitely work anyway. If I hadn't been working, my husband would have taken care of me, of course. But earning one's own money is another matter. It's more free. The working woman is self-confident.

I.W.11 Economic violence is not always about leaving women without money. I think I was also exposed to economic violence. In a way, they lived their lives with my money. I have a luxury house and a luxury car. But in the two marriages I've had, they had worn me out economically. The men who came into my life abused me economically.

I.W.13 I generally remained silent. When I said I, my son, and the house needed money, that we had our own needs, but he generally abstained.

I.W.15 If a man pays for alcohol and cigarettes when the house is lacking, this is economic violence for me. We had this. When I think of it, I get very upset.

I.W.20 Depriving a woman of her money is violence. How do they expect a woman to do her womanly duties, then let a man take care of his house, wife and children?

The women interviewed were asked, "If you had a different socio-economic situation during your marriage, would this affect your decision to get divorced?". Participants stated that their marriage relationship would be different under different economic conditions.

I.W.4 If I had a different economic situation, I wouldn't put up with that man one day.

I.W.6 Yes, it would. So if I didn't work, I wouldn't be able to get everything I want. Even if I decided to get divorced because I have a child, I couldn't get divorced. Because after the divorce, the house, necessities, bills, school expenses would be on to me and I couldn't afford all this because I didn't work. That's why I would have to live in the same house without getting divorced.

I.W.16 It could have been different. So we wouldn't be obsessed with money. We would look after ourselves.

I.W.9 Well... It would have affected, I guess. As I said, in the earlier stages of our marriage, when we were married for three and a half years and we were married, for example, I am still paying something right now, I am paying my loan debt from my marriage. Well, here's what my husband told me, that is, as far as I know, the stress we experienced in the early days was the stress of debt, and because of that debt, we started to wear each other out for the first time. I mean, he was coming home, and she he nervous, I'm pregnant, so my hormones work differently. So at that stage, for example, there was an aggressiveness, unhappiness, such a state of stress that I couldn't understand. Okay, I understand that, but this debt was our debt, he did not accept it. If it wasn't like that, if we didn't have debt, maybe those problems wouldn't have happened. In other words, that intense state of stress, that pressure of responsibility maybe wouldn't have happened.

There are many social variables that affect marriage. In the research, the economic situation, which is one of these variables, was emphasized. At this point, the economic situation is an important determinant in the marriage union. However, considering that the system of relations that make up social relations has a complex structure, it is known that the economic situation is not the only determinant. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted, some of the women stated that the problems they experienced were not of economic origin, but that they had to struggle with different problems.

I.W.1 If the socio-economic situation was not good, this situation would not affect my marriage. So I wouldn't get divorced. If we had been still poor, I would not have divorced. At least he was loyal to me, he wasn't lying, he was by my side. That's why I wouldn't get divorced. He wouldn't get addicted to drug. Since he had a lot of money, he started to buy other items for himself this time. It wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for the money, and I wouldn't have gotten divorced either.

I.W.5 The only reason for my separation was jealousy, but the economic situation did not affect it much because it was extreme.

I.W.7 No, it has nothing to do with money. As I said, if there is a problem of loyalty, trust and lies in a marriage, there is no good in that marriage anyway. Whether you are very wealthy, have a lot of wealth, your husband is like that or you work with yours, you have a super life with yours, so after you spend that money and cannot be happy, after you can't get along without peace in the house, after constantly arguing and fighting, it means something. In fact, there was no money. How is it that he has no money, he doesn't look after his house, he doesn't buy what the child will eat, you struggle, you see that it's in vain or you're going to be subjected to violence, you say, there's nothing wrong with you from this man, but when the situation is otherwise, you know when you don't have these troubles. If your social life is good, your money and economy are good, other kinds of problems are lies, if there is insecurity and disrespect, this is the biggest problem. That means it's definitely over.

I.W.10 If he had been the richest person in the world and had drunk alcohol, I would not have made this marriage again.

I.W.12 If I had a different economic situation, that is, if I did not work and did not have an income, this marriage would still end in divorce. But I would have been divorced as a woman who had suffered more than I have now. I was deprived of everything economically by my husband. Because when love ends, you turn into two strangers. The parties become strangers to each other. Respect fades over time. That's when spouses want to inflict hostile pain on each other. My ex-husband wanted it too, but he couldn't. If he had it, he would.

Living conditions, increasing unemployment rates around the world, new consumption areas imposed by popular culture on the individual, economic crises, and unmet family expenses and expectations have made the socio-economic situation important in family relations. In this study, it was determined that women's problems in the socio-economic field were seen as one of the main problem areas in the family relations system.

4.3. Attitudes of Women in the Divorce Process

Divorce is a process that creates different life experiences for both men (Aktas, 2018: 53; Arikan and Kaplan, 2022: 113-114; Turkarlan, 2007: 101) and women. This process has social as well as psychological effects on the individual. Considering that it brings radical changes in the life of the individual, it can be said that the decision to get divorced is an important turning point. From this point of view, within the scope of the study, women were asked how they made their decision to get divorced.

I.W.1 He was going to get his salary that day, he took his salary and he didn't bring any money home. He did not bring home even 1 TLs and came home at four o'clock at night. The blind log arrived drunk. He ate all the money out; he ate in his nightlife. He was my last. That's when I decided to finish it for sure.

I.W.7 I said to him, I said frankly, look if there is anyone in his life, he said, he swore. If there is such a thing, tell me from the beginning so that I can respect myself and get out of the way. He said no, there is no such thing, he thought that these things I think will not always be in front of us. Because he is a person who likes to travel a lot and my working life is not the same as him because I work in shifts and he works stationary, I can't go to the places he wants all the time, I'm tired. It doesn't happen, that means it doesn't happen somehow. I'm telling you, I'll arrange it, you're always free, so you always have time, but it's not like that, I would spare time for him, I would do what he said, and so on. Another year passed like this. Then I said it won't happen anymore, so the coldness gets in the way, I don't know what. You slowly start to hate, you say, "Oh, it doesn't go that way," you say, you make your decision and you say to him, "I made this decision as soon as possible, so you get into the subject as soon as possible."

I.W.9 In fact, divorce is the first thing that passed, so let me say that... we got married for the first time, together with such problems and stresses, there was always something at work, "do you regret it?" He started with his words. My husband is constantly telling me at work, "Do you regret it? Here you regret it." This is how our first two years passed. Then, in the slightest argument, "Yes, you regret it. Okay, let's get divorced then," s began. These started. But I never said let's get divorced. Until this June-July last year. Well, I was very disappointed and then I said: "Okay, it's not making a run". Yes, we have a child, but the child is up to a point.

I.W.12 Let me think for a while. When the spouse feels that a stranger is walking around in the house, that marriage is over. I woke up one morning and he was a stranger to me next to me. He was even a stranger who I thought could hurt me whenever he wanted to.

I.W.14 I bought it when the slander started. If I had continued, I would have died. So I would die spiritually.

I.W.19 Will I be born again? In fact, the process progressed by itself.

Domestic violence is one of the important problem areas in women's decision to get divorced. In Bulut's (2008: 115) research titled "Divorce and culture in women", an in-depth interview was conducted with 40 divorced women diagnosed with mental breakdown in the Psychiatry Department of Ankara University Faculty of Medicine and the Social Insurance Institution Etlik Training Hospital Psychiatry Service. Although the women participating in the research were exposed to domestic violence, it was observed that they postponed the divorce due to their children. Again, in the paper titled "Divorce/ divorce process in the context of gender and women: The case of Elazig" by Karakaya (2018: 288), it was concluded that the economic and cultural factors of women are effective in the process of taking the divorce decision and for these reasons, the divorce decision can be postponed. As a matter of fact, in a research conducted as a result of a similar result, women stated that the most important factor affecting the decision they made during the divorce process was the child factor. Having children is the first reason for postponing the idea of divorce for women.

I.W.17 I had a lot of difficulties because firstly, the time to tell our children was very difficult, I always thought about that. I mean, I can't make that decision and tell you what I felt in that house. You can't sleep, you think while working, you get angry when you think of how you were good all this time and at a moment like this, you hate him more like that and you say, damn why did I meet you and come to this time and stuff. At that time, I had two friends at work, two of them who knew my every problem and everything. I was talking to him and getting comfortable with him, for example, he was giving me advice, he was saying let the divorce go. Some were saying that I am in a worse situation than you, here I am, I suffer from violence. I have two children, but I am patient.

I.W.8 Recently, my 6-year-old son said to me: When I grow up, I will beat you like my father beat you. This is normal behavior for my son so I made a decision to save myself and him.

I.W.13 There was some violence. There was emotional violence, actually. With words, with actions. He used to abuse my son by the way. After the violence he last applied to my son, I believed that I had to take this decision.

Another factor affecting the divorce decision is technological factors. It would not be wrong to say that technology has effects in all areas of life. Developing and advancing technology over time affects and shapes every aspect of individuals' lives. Many results, such as facilitating communication, using technological tools in domestic work, both facilitate family life and change family relations (Zhang, and et. al, 2018: 1). For example, the widespread use of the internet has both positively affected communication and reduced communication between spouses in various aspects. Frequent use of virtual applications has led to an increase in divorces caused by cheating (Kaya and Tan Eren, 2020: 723). In the union of marriage, the fact that the spouses are loyal to each other and monogamy is not only socially accepted, but also legally supported.

I.W.6 I am an assertive person. But we have communication problems within the family. Everyone takes their phones and retreats to their rooms. Actually, we are like 3 strangers in a house. I thought he was cheating on me with another woman. I said he can't be that cold. I was starting to doubt. I've fiddled with his phone a few times. I couldn't find anything. Then, while my husband was in the living room, I was searching his phone and saw his correspondence with a woman. Here are your messages. He wrote his name as a male name. He came into the room, saw me, and we started arguing. I showed him the messages. I yelled "Are you cheating on me?" At the end of the argument, he said he didn't love me, that's when I decided to divorce.

I.W.4 When I found out he cheated on me.

I.W.1 It was not working at first. But he started working, got a job. This time, other events started. He was going to nightlife. The cheating has begun. This time, he started to become a drug addict. It got higher as the level increased. It wasn't there when he wasn't working. Besides, he wasn't working, there was no one else in his life, but there was no money either.

The process of divorce and post-divorce indicates a change in a social and economic relationship network for individuals. In the process, it was emphasized by women that there was an economic necessity for legal business and transactions. In addition to this economic necessity, the fact that the woman is alone causes her to feel helpless and powerless. In other words, it is thought that especially family or friend support and financial strength are important in the divorce process. From this point of view, the women interviewed within the scope of the research were asked what problems they faced during the divorce process.

I.W.2 For the first time in my life, I went to the court. I hope not again. My family reluctantly stood by me. If I said "Okay, I gave up!" They would happily send me back.

I.W.3 What difficulties did I encounter? My economic situation has been effective. I am already going through difficult years economically. Since I tried to stand on my own feet, there was no contribution from my spouse, but I had to come home for many years, and I finally decided to get divorced because I lived on

my own. I also could not hire lawyers. Lawyer's fees, household expenses, taking care of the girl, of course, affect the livelihood.

I.W.6 I always questioned myself. In other words, I was constantly thinking about what I was missing, what I did wrong, was it my fault, or was it I who alienated my wife from the house? They were difficult times. My close friend helped me a lot. Fortunately, she was always behind me. Thanks to her, I survived.

I.W.8 Financial problems. I have to raise a child and that is difficult. I have only one way to continue my life and that is to find a job.

I.W.11 My second husband tried everything not to get divorced. He almost turned into an angel to dissuade me. But I could no longer bear the insults I was subjected to.

I.W.16 There are women at home who are content with little. He is always patient. He already has no property. There was no sharing. The judge even gave me alimony in court. 500 pounds. He objected that I couldn't even give it to him. Anyway, I'll say a lot... Anyway...

I.W.13 Of course I was forced. At first, I had a hard time finding a lawyer and managing the process due to the lack of financial power. To solve this, I applied to my family. Thankfully, my family was always with me. My brother has always been a supporter. My mother was with me a lot, she supported me financially. We tried to overcome it together.

Economic problems that cause problems before the divorce process create a new problem area for women after the divorce decision. To put it more clearly as legal divorce process is quite expensive, it is really difficult for women to meet this fee. At this point, it has been determined that women need an economic support. In addition, they stated that women need moral support during the divorce process and that they generally see this support as a family.

4.4. The Effect of Economic Status on Social Adaptation After Divorce

Women may face multiple difficulties after divorce in patriarchal societies. At this point, the biggest factor that women perceive as a problem while continuing their lives after divorce is the stigma: "widowed woman". The stigmatization of women causes the restriction of freedom. There are many factors that cause women to experience this problem. Low level of education, patriarchal social structure, cultural texture that dominates the social dimension, etc. many situations emerge as phenomena that trigger social exclusion and negatively affect women's social adaptation (Ilhan, 2020: 525). At this point, the women interviewed were asked about the difficulties they faced after divorce.

I.W. 20 You are a divorced woman once. So it's hard. I was divorced at a young age. Now, for example, I am different from others in many ways. When I come home late, people will think, where does she come from? Why a divorced woman? For example, what will people think when I go on vacation alone? Where is she going? Is she going alone? Who is she going with? In fact, perhaps she will think with pleasure. From where? Because this is the divorced woman. I took the risk of struggling with all this and got divorced. Now imagine how bored I am...

I.W. 2 The power of the woman is important before and after the divorce. Events are already being affected by your situation without you realizing it. If a woman has economic power, can a man beat? He knows that she can leave her, he limits himself. But he finds the helpless woman. "No matter what I do, the woman has no place to go, she needs me," he says. After that, your life is up to the conscience of the man. For example, after my divorce, I could not put up with what was done. You may be getting a divorce, but its effects do not go away from you. No matter how you look at it, I've lived for 5 years thinking about the injustices I've always experienced.

I.W. 1 Widow. I hate the name widow. Seeing through the eyes of a widow. So the widow cannot do anything. The widow cannot go out. The widow cannot travel with her friends. The widow cannot do anything. The widow will only go to work, come home. This much.

I.W. 5 My family has been very supportive. They just keep telling me that I should be more careful about going out and coming out because of social pressures.

I.W. 6 After the divorce, the neighbors tried to find me a husband, saying that you are a widow and young. How are you going to live alone at home with your daughter at this young age? Marry and have a husband, they said a lot of things like that. While renting a house, some landlords did not want to rent their house. Even when I looked at the house, the man's wife shouted from the stairs. He said, "If we take you as a tenant in this building, maybe you will take my husband away from me." What a clear intention, I don't trust widows, she said, they would be dangerous. I was very bad, I was psychologically worn out. While I was looking for a house, I was starting to get nervous. Then my friend took me to the psychologist and that's how I learned to cope. It helped me. I'm a little more relieved.

I.W.8 Because of the easy physical and verbal abuse, I started training in kickboxing. To defend myself in difficult situations.

The social structure, triggered by internal and external factors and open to development, has changed over time. The difference created by this change and development has also been reflected in the institutional structures and the view on the family structure has changed. The harsh attitudes towards the breaking up of the family have softened and the individual has become more easily able to choose the ideal lifestyle for herself (Ozkiraz and Isci Bas, 2016: 87). This choice, in other words, the decision to divorce and the subsequent process have sometimes been considered more beautiful and pleasing for women.

I.W. 11 I am not one of those who face difficulties after a divorce, but one who is relieved after a divorce. After each divorce, I felt like I was relieved of my burdens.

I.W. 14 It was easier after the divorce if you ask me. So yes, it is very difficult to return to my father's house, I can't say anything about it, but I felt that I was breathing. It was as if I was drowning, they saved me from drowning at the last moment.

I.W. 17 Divorce case has been filed. It's all over. I breathe deeply and relieved. My aunt's daughter was with me. "What happened to you sister? she said. "Look, think about it. It's like God gave me a new life. "Here, this is your second right, you deserve it," I said (She laughs)

In Turkey, with the effects of social change being seen more in the Western regions and therefore the weakening of traditional strict cultural patterns, the perspective on divorce and marriage differs compared to the Eastern regions. Marriage and divorce cases in the eastern regions are reinforced by harsher patriarchal patterns. As a reflection of this, it is seen that the divorce rates are low in the Eastern regions. The fact that the divorce phenomenon is still not accepted culturally in regions with low divorce rate and that it is rejected with harsh prejudices shows that patriarchal veils still shape the social structure in a rigid manner (Aydın and Baran, 2010: 123). As a matter of fact, I. W. 4 expressed a similar situation as follows; *The persecution of my family to keep me from leaving.*

It can be said that the problems faced by women in social life are very diverse. At this point, the economic power of women is very important (İgdeli and Ay, 2021: 16-17). The fact that the woman does not lead a dependent life and can stand on her own feet will both provide her with psychological confidence and enable her to have the power to make her own decisions freely. As a matter of fact, during the interviews, it was seen that working women made statements encouraging other women to work with self-confidence.

I.W. 1 It would change my life if I had a good financial conditions. At least I wouldn't have a financial thought. You know, I wouldn't have a financial thought to confuse and occupy my brain. The social pressure would continue in the same way. He would have continued, but financially I would have been

comfortable. Because my children were very young. They both go to school. such difficulties. The biggest factor is children financially. Because there were two children.

I.W. 2 My mother said, "Bread has left my tongue once," Come on, let's see if you can put up with this. The man gave me a house while I was divorced. I also inherited it from my father and now I don't need anyone.

I.W. 18 Oh baby. If I had retired now, if I had money... I wish, I wish... Life is so expensive now. I did a grocery shopping the other day, believe me, it cost 1000 TLs. I mean, I don't know, I wouldn't take money from children. Taking money from them puts it on me. I am mother. I wish I could give it to them. You're already falling for nothing, then your life is spent with "I wish". Look, I've been wishing you for an hour.

I.W. 9 Well, I was just a little devastated with the part with my child. The child is now accepted. But as I said economically, you are starting a new life and it necessarily falls on you as a plus expense.

I.W. 10 If I didn't have a job now, if I didn't go to my job, where would I earn this money? How about this freedom? How would I bring home the bread? I have the child. I did not leave any of my children. We all left that house together, the four of us. He even forced me to have financial difficulties. He did many things. He never sent any money to the children. We do not want it anyway, but it is very important for a woman to work and have economic freedom. It's very, very important. It is important to continue your life as a unique. Actually, I don't need anyone by myself. I am working. Not.

I.W. 11 I think my economic situation worked best after the divorce. Because I could easily go on a holiday abroad when I felt bad. After each divorce, for example, I changed my home. I had the power to leave no memories of the past in my life.

I.W. 13 Every woman should work. First of all, she must achieve her economic freedom. They should be able to stand on their own feet. It's possible. I regretted not working earlier. I wish I could work, I could find a job, but when I realized this, I was very old. I couldn't find a job and even applied to a few places. Well, I think every woman should work, she should first read and complete her education. Afterwards, I think that he should find a job according to his situation and work and live in the best conditions.

I.W. 20 The woman should work. She should stand on her own feet. No other choice.

I.W. 14 Very important. I just started working now. So now I have an income. My family doesn't buy for me. I can shop. I wouldn't change this freedom for anything.

Recently, it is seen that women are more involved in working life. Although it is seen that they are concentrated in some occupational groups with the shaping of the service sector and gender perspective, the presence of women in the economic system is considered very important for both individual and social progress. At this point, it has been seen in the study that the economic freedom of divorced women has important effects on shaping their lives in a positive way and indirectly affects participation in social life both financially and psychologically (Gunindi Ersoz, 2011: 256).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this research, the role of socio-economic characteristics in the divorce process has been tried to be understood and interpreted through the perspective of women on problems. In this context, at first, it was questioned how socio-economic characteristics were experienced as a reason for divorce. Afterwards, the role of women's socio-economic characteristics in the divorce process and the post-divorce process is discussed.

It is observed that the problem area in the divorce process is generally experienced through the economic situation. Here, firstly, the situation of women who are economically dependent on their husbands and do not have any income has been put forward. Because when the participants were asked what the source of

the problems they encountered in the marriage union was, it was found out that the majority of women saw the economic situation as the main problem area. Moreover, it has been observed that women who do not have any income and are economically dependent on their husbands are exposed to economic violence during their marriage. To put it more clearly, some participants stated that during their marriages, their spouses did not meet their financial needs in order to make them dependent on them, and they even took it a step further and resorted to physical violence. It is striking that women who are not economically dependent on their husbands experience the process in different ways. In this context, one of the participants, I.W.11, emphasizes that her husband exploits her because her economic situation is good. Some participants underlined that their spouses made various mistakes (using drugs, spending money unnecessarily, etc.) because their economic situation was good, and that if their economic situation was not good, they would not have faced such problems and even divorced. Again, during the process, women underlined the need to be at a certain economic level, especially for legal affairs and transactions. Because, with the divorce decision and the start of the legal process, different expense items occur for women. At this point, it has been determined that women who do not have economic independence need an economic support.

Another socio-economic factor that plays a role in the divorce process is the level of education. Lyngstad (2004) argues that the education level of women is related to the economic situation and evaluates its role on the phenomenon of divorce from this point of view. In other words, according to Lyngstad, women with a high level of education have achieved their economic independence because they also have a job. In this context, women who have problems in their marriages approach the phenomenon of divorce more positively and can take divorce decisions more easily. In the data obtained as a result of the research in question, it was seen that female participants with a high level of education approached divorce and divorced individuals more positively. However, this situation does not directly arise from the relationship between education level and economic status as in Lyngstad's research findings. It is also related to the perspective from which the participants approached the phenomenon of divorce. To put it more clearly, divorce can be considered as an easier solution when it is understood that the marriage will not work according to the participants with a high level of education. As a matter of fact, when the duration of marriage is examined in the paper, it is seen that the marriage period of women with primary and secondary education level is longer. In other words, it has been found out that there is a significant relationship between education level and the decision to divorce, and as the education level decreases, the divorce decision is taken more difficultly. On the other hand, feelings such as pity, anger and even hatred predominate in the approach of women with low education levels to the issue of divorce. From this point of view, it can be said that the participants with a high level of education approach the phenomenon of divorce from a logical framework, while the feelings of women with a low level of education play a more dominant role in their approach.

Undoubtedly, one of the areas where the effect of social change and transformation that occurred with modernization is seen the most is the family, whose structure and functions differ. Since entrepreneurship and individuality come to the fore in the new world order, we can say that the patriarchal perspective on gender still has a significant impact, even if there has been a loosening in the approach to the family institution. As Karakaya (2018) states, the economic characteristics and cultural factors of women are effective on decisions to get divorced, and women may even delay the decision to divorce for these reasons. In this research, how the participants perceive gender emerges as a factor that plays an important role in the divorce process. It is striking that the participants internalized the gender roles that are imposed on women and cause them to be in a secondary and oppressed position as their destiny or duty. So much so that in the context of their domestic roles, since the main responsibilities of women are seen as their children, it has been determined that the participating women prioritize their children above all else. Women postpone their divorce decisions because the child's life will be adversely affected by this decision.

Gender emerges as a factor that plays an important role in women's lives in the post-divorce period. In social structures dominated by the patriarchal perspective, women are exposed to the stigma of "widowers" and therefore some freedoms of women are restricted. As Halem (1982) states, since the family, marriage and divorce phenomena are reinforced by harsher patriarchal patterns in conservative societies, the

phenomenon of divorce is not accepted and rejected both culturally and legally in these regions. Similarly, one of the participants born in the Eastern Region of Turkey who participated in the research, I.W.4 also stated that she had to cope with various pressures and difficulties during the divorce process.

It enables women to have economic power in the post-divorce period and to make their own decisions freely. Having economic power here makes it easier for women who are exposed to violence to leave their environment and start a new life. In the interviews, it was concluded that women with a certain economic power can manage the process before and after divorce more easily when compared to women who are not economically independent. Moreover, it was observed that these participants confidently made statements encouraging other women to work as well.

As a result, it has been observed that economic status, education level and gender play an important role in both before and after divorce processes in the research. In addition, the data obtained from this research includes cultural elements such as prioritizing children or being exposed to stigmas. In this context, we can say that the findings obtained from the research data show similarities with other studies in the domestic and foreign literature in some points, while the sample group includes elements related to its unique cultural characteristics.

Research data reveals that women are exposed to various difficulties in the process before and after divorce. It was concluded that the socio-economic characteristics of women, as well as the social background in which they grew up, played an important role on the basis of these difficulties. Because negative attitudes towards the phenomenon of divorce and the fact that divorced women are stigmatized in various ways are the most important indicators of this. At this point, after providing financial support for the ones who need, it is important to provide social support services, considering that women need support in solving possible problems they may face during the divorce process and in supporting them psychologically.

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