

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN: A CASE STUDY IN  
SAKARYA PROVINCE  
BOŞANMANIN KADINLAR ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ: SAKARYA ÖRNEĞİ

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Case Study

**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to describe the effects of divorce on women and their perspectives on the concepts of marriage and divorce after their divorce. In-depth interview technique was used as data collection technique. Twelve women (12) who were divorced agreed to participate in the study. After conducting in-depth interviews with women, the data were evaluated using descriptive analysis. Besides the demographic information of these women, marriage and divorce process and causes of these, the problems that they faced after divorce and their intentions of getting married again were determined. It was found that women who participated in the study had psychological mood disorders caused by divorce such as crying alone, being introverted, feeling guilty, suffering from weight loss, inability to focus, distractions, lack of motivation. In this study it is concluded that the processes during and after the divorce process are hard for women and the women need psychological support as well as familial and social support in order to overcome these processes in a healthy way.

**Keywords:** Divorce, Marriage, Women, Family.

**ÖZ**

Bu araştırma, boşanmanın kadınlar üzerindeki etkilerini, boşanma sonrası evlilik ve boşanma kavramlarına bakış açılarını betimlemek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Veri toplama tekniği olarak derinlemesine mülakat tekniği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya boşanmış 12 (oniki) kadın katılmayı kabul etmiştir. Kadınlarla derinlemesine mülakat yapıldıktan sonra elde edilen veriler betimsel analiz kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Kadınların demografik bilgileri, evlilik ve boşanma süreci ile bunların nedenleri, boşanmadan sonra karşılaştıkları sorunlar ve tekrar evlenme niyetleri tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan boşanmış kadınların boşanma süreci ve boşanma sonrası birtakım hayal kırıklıkları yaşadıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Çalışmaya katılan kadınlarda boşanmanın neden olduğu yalnızken ağlama, içe kapanma, suçluluk hissetme, kilo kaybı, odaklanamama, dalıp gitme, motivasyon eksikliği gibi psikolojik duygu durum bozukluklarının görüldüğü tespit edilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda boşanma süreci ve sonrasında kadınlar için kolay geçen bir süreç olmadığı, bu süreci sağlıklı atlatabilmeleri için kadınların psikolojik destek, aile ve sosyal desteğine ihtiyaç duydukları sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Boşanma, Evlilik, Kadınlar, Aile.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

## INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the most important social systems for the legal structure of the family. Marriage is based on strong bases such as love, harmony and friendship. The unity in the emotions and attitudes of the members in the family, as well as their efforts to maintain the family, makes it possible for the family to protect its unity, survive and reach its goals and roles (Nassar, 2015). The family, established with the marriage contract, transforms in coordination with the changes in the social structure of the modern period. The definition of family has changed with the modernity, transforming the society from one state to another in a fast way, in terms of the origin family of spouses, the structural, formal and functional dynamics of the family institution as well as the relationship in the family (between the parents and children) (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2012).

The pressure for the unity and continuity of family decreases in marriages nowadays, as the individual wishes become more apparent. On the contrary, modern societies present individuals with various ways to overcome the problems when the marriage enters into a bottleneck. Divorce is one of these ways (Uğur, 2014). Divorce is the termination of the marriage institution by applying legal means when the marriage doesn't meet the expectations of the married couple (Yücel and Aksu, 2016). However, divorce is a social problem; and it is accepted as an important factor in the disintegration and the fall of the family (Al Qaisi and Al Majali, 2003). The women are more affected before, during and after the divorce in economic, social and psychological terms compared to men (Yücel and Aksu, 2016).

Although the termination of marriage is allowed within the belief system of Turkish society due to compelling reasons such as the impossibility of common life, the irresponsibility of the spouse, the lack of mutual understanding, the lack of reconciliation between the spouses, failure of spouses to fulfill their duties, the chronic diseases, the inability to have child, etc., the divorce is generally not approved in the society (Amato, 2000).

### 1. The Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Study

#### 1.1. Family

Family is a social institution with biological, psychological, economic, social, legal, etc. aspects, providing the continuity of humankind with biological relations. The family is the institution in which the socialization process first starts and by which the material and spiritual wealth created by the society transfer from generation to generation. The concept of family plays the greatest role in the development of the child's socio-cultural personality through the conservation and intergenerational transfer of cultural values of society such as our beliefs, customs, traditions and morals (Salman and Uzunboylu, 2011).

Family is the basic social institution formed by the people having kinship relations; it provides their various (psychological, sexual, social and economic) needs. The individual fits in and participates in the society through the family. Family is the smallest unit of the society and among the most important institutions forming the social structure. The family concept plays the most important role in the development of the socio-cultural personality of the child through the protection and transfer of our beliefs as well as the cultural values of the society such as customs and habits, tradition and moral values between the generations (Kurt, 2013).

According to another definition; family is the smallest unit in the society formed by the relationships between the spouses, children, siblings, etc., based on the bonds of matrimony and kinship (Ağdemir, 1991). In conclusion, we can initially define the family as the smallest living unit of society.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

## 1.2. Marriage

Marriage is the most important one in processes, know as "passing stages" in human life, which starts with birth and ends with death (Sezen, 2005).

Giddens (2000) defines marriage as follows. "Marriage can be defined as a sexual union between two adults, accepted and approved by the society". Marriage is one of the most important social systems for the legal structure of the family. Marriage is based on strong bases such as love, harmony and friendship. The unity in the emotions and attitudes of the members in the family, as well as their efforts to maintain the family, makes it possible for the family to maintain its unity, survive and reach its goals and roles (Nassar, 2015).

The marriage constitutes the core of the family, the institution in which the most of the people lives starting from birth. Marriage is one of the main forms of social life and it is formed through bonds of the marriage of one woman and one man. Marriage has physical, emotional, social, moral, economic and social dimensions. It means more than sharing of common living space by a woman and man defined as husband and wife (Salman and Uzunboylu, 2011). Marriage is a legal contract between two adults.

## 1.3. Divorce

Marriage is defined as the unity of life between two adults. However, when no consensus can be reached and the marriage loses its meaning for spouses, the termination of marriage may come up as a solution. Divorce has many dimensions. It has legal dimensions related to the legal problems; emotional dimensions due to the estrangement between spouses; economic dimensions in respect to the common budget and assets; social dimensions due to the changes occurring in the relationships between friends and in the social events; psychological dimensions due to the problems related to the spouses' finding themselves after their newly gained independence (Bohannon, 1970). Divorce can be characterized as a transition process since both spouses and children need changes in their lives (Sayil, 1996).

Divorce, above all, is a social behaviour. Indeed, space, where the divorce happens and is experienced, is the verification space of it. In addition, every phenomenon is shaped as the interlocked rings of a chain within the context it occurs. From this assumption, the reasons of the divorce can be various such as industrialization, urbanization, modernization, the employment of women, women's movements, domestic violence, cheating, economic problems, the effects of mass communication tools on the relationship between the family members, the increase of institutional and social support for the divorced people, the routine of married life, the increase of individualization, different life expectations, the differentiation of gender roles, etc. (Adak, 2012). In particular, the increase of domestic violence seriously affects the divorce rate, which is a social trauma (Ghazwi, 2007).

### 1.3.1. The Forms and Reasons for Divorce

According to the Civil Code numbered 4721, a divorce case can be opened in two ways:

- The uncontested divorce case,
- The contested divorce case.

In an uncontested divorce case, both woman and man agree to all the consequences of the divorce and terminate the marital union.

In a contested divorce case, certain disputes arise in terms of various topics such as the faulty part, pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages, alimony, parental rights, the sharing of household assets, etc. Contested divorce cases can be classified based on their causes as the general or specific causes of divorce:

**General causes of divorce:** Unlimited number of causes such as conflict, conflict arising due to the mismatch between the moods of spouses, insults, violence, behaviours damaging the trust, inability to fulfil the marital obligations, etc. are accepted as the general causes of divorce.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

**Specific causes of divorce:** The divorce cases based on the specific causes of divorce accepted by the Code are as follows: *the adultery (cheating) (Civil Code Article Numbered 161), the intent of harming the life of spouse as well as awful or degrading treatment (Civil Code Article Numbered 162), the perpetration and dishonourable living (Civil Code Article Numbered 163), the leaving (Civil Code Article Numbered 164), the mental illness (Civil Code Article 165).*

The legal results of divorce cases caused by general causes and specific causes are different. If the cause of divorce is specific, the plaintiff doesn't have to prove the fault of the adversary. The plaintiff only needs the existence of a specific cause of divorce. However, if the divorce is caused by the general causes, both the plaintiff and the adversary have to prove the fault of each other.

The privacy concept, characterized as the nature of the family concept, is damaged by the divorce, causing an imbalance in individual and social relationships of both sides. This situation also affects society (Nassar, 2015). Divorce has recently become a serious problem in Turkish society. Divorce radically affects social life, instigates the conflict between family members, damages the texture of the social life, and leaves significant traumatic effects in the lives of individuals.

#### 1.4. The Damages of Divorce on Individuals

Divorce is a crisis developing within the life cycle of family, causing significant changes in the roles of family members and disturbing their psychological balances (Erdim and Ergün, 2016: 79). When the divorce is considered from the perspective of the parents, it brings up new problems to overcome such as building a new life, developing new forms of relationship both with children and with the ex-spouse, financial difficulties, changes in the social relations, etc. (Öngider Gregory, 2016: 126).

Divorce can be considered as a failure for both man and woman, they have failed in one of the most important stages in their lives due to one reason or other. Thus their skills to cope with problems can decrease. Parents may be too busy with the changes occurring in their emotions, needs and lives and may fail to give sufficient support to their children. Their parental skills such as caring, disciplining, giving emotional support for other crises may decrease. The parents with whom the children live (usually the mothers live with their children after divorce) may start working. They may start to spend more time outside and thus their children may have to spend time with a caregiver in unfamiliar places or maybe left alone after the school (Erdim and Ergün, 2016).

Divorce, a stressful event, can leave the traumatic effects on women and cause problems in different areas. The problems that may occur as a result of divorce can be assessed as material and spiritual problems: Material problems include economic problems, the problem in finding a new house, the problems with alimony as well as the practical issues such as doing repairs in the house. Spiritual problems generally include psychological/emotional problems, as well as missing the children. Family and peer pressure, as well as the harassment of men, are problems with both material and spiritual dimensions (Arıkan, 1996).

Depression is a problem observed in women after divorce. While the symptoms in women are more pronounced compared to men, men can suffer from implicit depression with harmful habits such as alcohol consumption, smoking, nightlife. Depression is an unhappiness disease. People feel sad, pessimistic and unwilling. Easily performed activities may loom large and may become difficult for people. The people with depression suffer from low self-confidence and may find it difficult to focus on things, watch a movie completely or read an article in the newspaper. They suffer from forgetfulness, thoughtfulness and inability to make simple decisions. Patients report a decrease in their strength, as well as feeling lifeless and without energy. They suffer from sleep problems. The sleep problems can be various such as the inability fall asleep, waking up at night, waking up early in the morning, waking up without having rest or oversleeping (Aktaş, 2018).

The appetite of the patients usually decreases, they may loss weight, or they may excessively eat. They may think about

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

death, their dead relatives, they may have anxiety about the diseases or they may fear from death. Physical problems also increase during the depression. Previously regular blood pressure may become uncontrollable, spikes can be seen in the blood sugar tests. Chronic diseases usually originate during the depression. Various studies revealed that when the patients suffering from a heart attack have depression, their risks for a second attack, as well as their coronary problems, increase (Mete, 2008).

This study aims to investigate the structure and dynamics of modern family and marriage institutions, as well as the emergence, development and results of divorce phenomenon from the perspective of divorced women. The data of the study were obtained from the in-depth interviews conducted with the divorced women in Sakarya province. The causes underlying their divorces as well as the effects of their divorces were determined with the data regarding their marriage and divorce processes.

## METHODOLOGY

### The Subject and Aim of the Study

This study aims to determine the changes in the lives of the women after the divorce as well as the positive and negative effects of it. Another aim of the study is to determine the perspectives of divorced women on marriage and divorce concepts.

The following research questions were asked to obtain answers for the topic.

- Does divorce cause negative problems for women?
- Did the divorce change with the woman's social environment?
- Did women experience psychological problems after the divorce?
- Did women get psychological help before and after the divorce?
- Did the family pressure adversely affect the divorce process?
- Is there any idea of women remarrying after the divorce?

### Research Model, Target Population and Sample of the Study

Designed as qualitative research, this study takes divorced women as the subject. The data were obtained through the depth interview method, which is a qualitative data collection technique. The study was conducted in the form of individual interviews. The interviews were semi-structured.

In a field study, the data are obtained on-site. Field study requires on-site data collection process; the obtained data are then analyzed and interpreted. After determining the topic and research questions, a literature review was conducted within this framework. Afterwards, the data were obtained and analyzed, and the theoretical framework of the study was formed. After forming the theoretical framework, the application phase started.

During the application phase, the interview form, including the demographic questions, were prepared. The research data were obtained in Serdivan district, one of the central districts of Sakarya Province. 12 (twelve) divorced women constituted the sample of the study. The interviews were recorded with a recording device and then transcribed. Then, the results obtained from the interviews were interpreted with the descriptive analysis method. The target population of the study were divorced women living in Sakarya Province. Random sampling method was used to determine the sample. The sample of the study consisted of 12 (twelve) divorced women, with whom the interviews were conducted.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

### Limitations of the Study

The sample of the study investigating the effect of divorce on women was limited with 12 (twelve) divorced women selected through random sampling method. There are many divorced women in the target population. Some divorced women refused to participate in the study by saying "I don't want to express my thoughts", "I don't want to remember my divorce", "I don't want to talk about my divorce", etc. As this would lead to serious time loss, the sample was limited to 12 (twelve) people. When the interviews were conducted, the divorced women were observed to take a dim view of interviews and to evade by giving short answers in the beginning. When the statements used in the interview about the purpose and confidentiality of the research were repeated in order to ease the participants before the interview, the place of their hesitation was replaced by an environment in which they could easily and sincerely respond in the following minutes of the interview.

### Sample Group

The study was conducted with divorced women living in Sakarya. Participants were coded as F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F12 in the analysis process. The demographic information of the participants is below presented in Table 1. The voice records of the interviews were transcribed. The data obtained within the framework of qualitative research were then interpreted with descriptive analysis.

**Table 1. Demographic information of Divorced Women Participating in the Study**

Codes	Age	Number of Children	Civil Status	Education Status	Occupation	Revenue (TL)	The Duration of Marriage	How many years did she divorce?
F1	46	1	Single	High school	Housewife	1900	8 years	4 years
F2	49	1	Single	Primary school	Housewife	1950	7 years	17 years
F3	33	1	Single	Middle school	Housewife	1900	3 years	4 years
F4	31	2	Married	High school	Hostess in School Bus	2200	2 years	5 years
F5	53	1	Single	Bachelor's Degree	Civil Servant	5000	6 years	4 years
F6	39	1	Single	High school	Hostess in School Bus	2200	11 years	4 years
F7	38	1	Single	High school	Housewife	1750	10 years	1.5 years
F8	33	1	Single	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	6000	10 years	15 years
F9	26	-	Single	Associate Degree	Unemployed	350	2.3 years	6 months
F10	29	1	Single	High school	Hostess in School Bus	2200	5 years	9 years
F11	39	1	Single	Bachelor's Degree	Civil Servant	6000	7 years	8 years
F12	44	-	Single	Associate	Private Sector	2200	4 years	4 years

Due to the privacy policy of the study, the names of the divorced women participating in the interview were not asked.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

When the frequency and the percentage distribution of the demographic information of women participating in the study are analyzed, the lowest age range is determined as 25-30 and the highest age range is determined as 51-55. 2 participants are in 25-30 age range, 6 participants are in 31-40 age range, 3 participants are in 41-50 age range and 1 participant is in 51-55 age range. When their education statuses are analyzed, it can be seen that 1 participant is primary school graduate, 1 participant is secondary school graduate, 5 participants are high school graduates, 2 participants have associate degrees and 3 participants have bachelor degrees. When their current marital statuses are analyzed, only 1 of the 12 participants is married while the remaining 11 of them are single.

Most of the divorced women participating in the study are employed. 7 of the participants are employed. When their income levels are analyzed, the lowest income level was found as 0-350 Turkish Liras and the highest income level was found as 5000-6000 Turkish Liras. When the number of children they have is analyzed, 2 of the participants were found to have no children while 9 of them were found to have 1 child. When the time of their divorce is analyzed, it can be seen that the lowest rate was found in the women separated between 6 months-1.5 years ago (2 participants). The highest rate was found in the women separated between 4-5 years ago (6 participants). When the places the participants were brought up are analyzed, it was found that 3 participants were brought up in a village, 1 participant was brought up in the district, and 8 participants were brought up in the city. The rate of participants brought up in the city was found higher compared to the participants brought up in the village.

## Findings

This chapter presents the findings and interpretations related to the negative and positive effects of divorce on divorced women, based on the interviews conducted. The questions asked to the participants and the findings obtained are presented below:

### Theme 1 - The Cause of Deciding on Marrying and Feeling of Regret about this Cause after Divorce

The participants were first asked questions about how they decided on marrying. These questions are about the nature of their marriage, such as love marriage, arranged marriage or convenience marriage. F3, F4, F5, F7, F8 and F9 stated that they decided to marry because they were in love. It was found that they didn't regret marrying after divorce, as it was a love marriage.

**F3:** "We married after eloping. We loved each other so much. We risked everything."

**F4:** "We met in our friend circle. We loved each other, of course. You don't think about the end then."

**F5:** "Ours was a love marriage. We loved each other."

**F7:** "My marriage was a love marriage at the beginning. Although it ended as a disaster, it was a love marriage at the beginning."

**F8:** "We saw each other and loved each other. Ours was a love marriage."

**F9:** "We were in love, we married in love."

F1, F2, F6, F10, F11 and F12 stated that their marriages were arranged. They stated this situation simply with a single sentence: "it was an arranged marriage".

**F10:** "Our families introduced us to each other. It was an arranged marriage but we liked each other, then we married".

**F11:** "We can call it an arranged marriage. Our families introduced us to each other. My ex-husband was an acquaintance of my aunt".

50 per cent of the women participating in the study were observed to prefer arranged marriages, a common and accepted method of marriage in the past. Most of the women describing their marriage as arranged also stated that they didn't have time to get to know their husbands, and they weren't allowed by their families to flirt with their husbands after being introduced. 50 per cent of women participants met their husbands, instead of opting for arranged marriages.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

They married after getting to know their husband. However, their marriages also ended in divorce. After the divorce of love marriage participants did not feel regret. It was concluded that the women whose marriages were arranged did not feel responsibility during the divorce process because they did not take the initiative.

### Theme 2 - The Effect of Monthly Income During the Marriage on Divorce

The contemporary life changes in time and results in competition. The finance may cause families to live independently while it may also cause the dissolution of the families (Aktaş, 2011). The low-income level of family is a significant problem negatively affecting the marriage and causing different problems in the family. Low-income level emerges as one of the leading causes of divorce in all societies. 2 of the women participating in the study stated that the economic status of their husbands was low and economic problems negatively affected their marriages, which resulted in their divorces.

**F4:** *"Our financial status could have been better, but my ex-husband used to spend all his money in just one week. Then we had so much financial difficulty. This, of course, damaged our relationship."*

**F10:** *"My ex-husband did not work. He had no income. This was the way he was brought up. We can say that he also enjoyed it. He didn't have a regular job with insurance but he still wasn't idle. He worked in the village. He gained income from the village or used the pension of his father. We couldn't stay married due to financial problems."*

Remaining 10 participants stated that the finance wasn't a cause of divorce, and there were other problems in their marriages leading to the divorce. In particular, participant coded as F2 stated that their economic conditions were bad during her marriage, but it wasn't effective at all in her divorce.

**F2:** *"We had economic problems, I was able to endure these problems. But when my parents saw my situation, they said: "you cannot stay with your husband, you have to come with us. When my husband and his family opened the divorce case, we accepted it."*

As a result, for the majority of the participants, financial status was not an important factor in their marriage and it had no effect on divorce.

### Theme 3 - Who first wanted to divorce and What was the cause

According to the results of the interviews, it was found that 7 of the women participating in the study wanted to divorce. The husbands of the other 5 women wanted to divorce. Many different reasons were stated as the cause of divorces such as the intervention of the in-laws, conflict, gambling, cheating and financial difficulties mentioned above.

**F1:** *I wanted to divorce There were many economic difficulties, and my mother-in-law mingled a lot in our marriage. The marriage deteriorated when the outsiders mingled.*

**F3:** *"My husband cheated. His family was too indifferent. He was also very uninterested and undisciplined. Maybe he cheated because we didn't have a child. Cheating, in the end, ended our marriage."*

**F5:** *"I wanted to divorce. Our marriage ended because there were intellectual and spiritual problems we couldn't overcome. We had different points of view on our lives."*

**F7:** *"I wanted to divorce. The most chronic problem in our house was gambling and economic problems. It had no end."*

**F10:** *"Actually we both wanted but it was me who wanted first. After a while, I gave up divorcing as I didn't want my child to raise without a father. We had already had broken our ties afterwards. We were unable to get well. I was the one who first wanted to divorce. I left him and moved in with my parents. During that period, my husband opened the divorce case. The financial problems were a factor, he also limited my freedom, we can say that both factors were effective."*

**F11:** *"I already wanted to divorce. My child is 1.5 years old. He wasn't interested in me at all. I wasn't concerned about that, I only wanted my child to be raised with him, I wanted my child to know him as the father. But I saw that he came and spent only 10-15 minutes with our child, he gave so little attention to the child. He didn't help me at all."*

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

*I feel like when I was married, I had more burden on my shoulders. After the divorce, I started to make my own decisions. That felt great. I couldn't withdraw my salary since I got married. I gave my pay card to my husband so he felt better as the family man. We were already in debt for the furniture we bought for our home, so I felt responsible and gave my card to him. I gave it myself as when I grew up with my parents, I had seen this way (husband holds the money, not wife). When we started to have serious problems I wanted my card back, and he gave me. This happens regardless of your education or your status. My mother-in-law used to complain about me to my husband all the time. He once said to me 'I would divorce you if I listened to my mother'. He was the good cop, throwing me in front of his mother (playing the bad cop). I used to rebel to that situation."*

Only 1 of the women stated that they were the first to bring up the divorce while they emphasized in their interviews that their decision was taken together with their husbands.

**F8:** *"I was the one who first offered to divorce, but we had a very smooth and unproblematic divorce. If we consider the society in which we live in, I can say that the way we divorced was very modern. I wish everyone wanting to divorce experience an unproblematic time during and after the divorce like us. Of course, it depends on the causes of divorce. In our case, these were the unhappiness of my husband, his pessimistic mood, the lack of a common pleasure and hobbies and sexual negligence of my husband; which are quite substantial causes."*

In the cases of F2, F4, F6, F9 and F12, it was their husbands who first wanted to divorce. The husbands wanted to divorce due to the conflict the women had with the husbands' parents, the intervention of families to the marriage, financial difficulties, conflicts and the inability to get rid of gambling addiction.

**F2:** *"We had economic difficulties. He cheated on me. My father-in-law was a good man but my mother-in-law and my sisters-in-law used to get angry at me, blaming me for his inability to get rid of bad habits. This is why they wanted us to divorce."*

**F4:** *"My husband wanted to divorce. He had many irresponsible behaviours. We used to have difficulties as he spent all his money in a week. The main problem was economic. He couldn't continue our marriage as he couldn't manage this problem."*

**F6:** *"My husband wanted to divorce but I opened the case. The problem was his irresponsibility, his indifference towards the house, his unemployment. We used to stay at my father's house, which made him offended in time. I didn't want to move to another house as I didn't trust him. He didn't work, after all. He drifted apart from the house."*

**F9:** *"It was my husband who first wanted to divorce but then he denied. He called my sister's husband and told him that he wanted to divorce me, instead of talking to me. He said, "I don't want my wife anymore, come and take her". I cried and grieved, he subjected me to psychological violence during that process. After a short time, this become mutual. He acted angry at me, he was cold and uninterested towards me for the last two months before leaving. He didn't turn to my phones or messages before I left home. Then I left home and moved in with my parents. He didn't even call me. He didn't bother himself to ask if I needed anything. I called him several times, I sent him messages but he didn't return to them. He was online even at nights but he didn't answer me. The cause of our divorce is lack of communication, psychological violence. My husband searched for new ways to get away from our marriage as he got bored with marital responsibilities, especially financial responsibility. He tried to get away from responsibilities by ruining our marriage."*

**F12:** *"My husband wanted to divorce. The causes are various, such as his mother and elder sister, his learned helplessness, comparison with the ex-spouse, the women regretting marrying, etc. He said 'Even I cannot bear my mother, how can I ask someone else to do so?' He had regrets about his mother, I tried to convince him about our happiness but failed. He had an inferiority complex. 'You are bourgeois (you are rich), I am a peasant. My mother is peasant..."*

Based on the statements presented above, it can be inferred that 6 of the women stated that they wanted the divorce and listed the causes. 1 woman stated that she took the divorce decision together with her husband while the remaining 5 women stated that their husbands first wanted to divorce.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

**Theme 3 - The Form of Divorce Case (Contested or Uncontested) and Problems During the Divorce Process**

F2, F3, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F11 and F12 stated that they didn't have any problems in the termination process. These participants defined their divorces as uncontested cases. Remaining 3 participants coded as F1, F4 and F10 defined their divorces as contested cases. They indicated alimony and the status of children as the problems they faced during the divorce process.

**F1:** "Our divorce was a contested case. We had problems with compensation and alimony. The adverse party created problems when it came to money."

**F4:** "It was naturally a contested divorce. It was problematic. Because we had conflicts. He took away my daughter. He didn't want me to see my daughter. He then regretted and called all the time".

**F9:** "We had no problems apart from the unfounded petitions and false witnesses in the court during our divorce process. Their falseness was proved in the end. Due to the false witnesses claiming that I was the reason for conflict, it was a contested divorce."

**F10:** "Initially, the case was uncontested, but we had conflict over the child's custody. I didn't want any financial support from him. We couldn't share the child. In the end, I took custody. We had conflicts about the child's custody after the divorce. My husband opened a custody case. But I won that case. Currently, I have custody of my daughter".

Participant coded as F6 had problems due to her ex-husband's inability to accept the divorce, even though they didn't have problems during the divorce process and they had an uncontested divorce case.

**F6:** "Although we had an uncontested divorce, we had many fights during the divorce process as he has an angry nature. He didn't want to divorce at first."

When the aforementioned answers are assessed in general, it can be seen that the majority of participants had uncontested divorces without experiencing any major problems. The participants experiencing problems are low in number, they stated the alimony and the custody of the child as the causes of the conflict.

**Theme 5 - The First Person with whom the Divorce Decision was shared and The Opinion of Family and Circles about the Decision**

The participants were asked about the person with whom they first shared their decision to divorce. 3 of the participants (F2, F3, F4) first shared this decision with their mother, 3 of them (F9, F10, 12) shared with their parents, 3 of them (F1, F5, F7) shared with their siblings while 2 of them (F6, F11) stated that they didn't share this decision with anyone. One of the participants (F8) shared this decision with a close friend.

3 participants (F1, F7 and F10) stated that their family didn't support their divorce decision, and they didn't support divorced women during this process.

**F1:** "My family initially didn't accept my decision. They left me alone. I had to cope with many things on my own. Later, they thought I was right, but it was much later."

**F7:** "My father did not speak to me for a year. My father is from Karadeniz (Northern Turkey). He is very conservative and divorce is not acceptable for him no matter what. He opposed my divorce despite knowing my pain, and he didn't support me."

**F10:** "I shared the decision with my family. They didn't let us divorce, so I consulted an attorney. According to their perspective on life or culture, you cannot divorce your spouse. According to their family values and upbringing style, I shouldn't divorce. I consulted an attorney without their notice."

2 of the participants (F11 and F12) stated that their families were neutral about their decision to divorce.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

**F11:** "They were aware of the process from the beginning. They were aware of what I was going through. But they didn't want to comment not to affect my thoughts. They expected me to continue my marriage if I was able to do so."

**F12:** "I was expecting more opposition. They didn't dwell on it. Afterwards, they looked at me with pitiful eyes". Remaining 7 participants stated that their families supported their decision unconditionally.

**F9:** "My family went into a big shock with me. Of course, they were sad. But they gave full support stating that they were with me no matter what. They said it was the right for my life. My father even wanted to speak with me and my husband as a senior. He spoke to us in a room, and then left us alone thinking that we would want to make up with each other. But he insulted me during that alone time. I called my father back into the room and said 'I don't want to talk with that man anymore.'"

The people in the social circles of the participants had given different reactions and had different views on the divorce decision. Most of the women stated their best efforts to avoid the sexual intentions of men after learning that the participants were widows. Some of the participants stated that they tried to isolate themselves from their circles to the utmost to protect themselves from these intentions.

The views of the participants objected to the sexual intentions of men are as follows:

**F7:** "There wasn't any pressure from my circles. My mother wants me to marry again. But I cannot trust men as they have sexual intentions when approaching me, and since I have a disabled son. His father doesn't take care of him, I have concerns about a stranger's approach to my son. It makes me feel bad when men call me "sister", and suddenly change their glance and speaking style with me after learning that I am a widow. I feel guilty, I think "What I have done to make them think that I am an easy woman?".

**F8:** "No, but the approach and attention of men have differentiated. You understand what I mean to say..."

**F10:** "You can be regarded as a problematic and difficult person. Everything negative can happen. Some men approach me thinking "She is a widow, I can flirt with her easily". Of course, I understand the intentions of men approaching me like that but these intentions make me feel bad. This way of approaching isn't pleasant. This kind of approach hurts me. I had a bad experience when I was working in a factory. One of our male neighbours used to work in the same factory, too. We were commuting with the shuttle vehicle. One day, the neighbour said the driver of shuttle vehicle: "You don't have to drive us to the village. I can take her (me), we can drive to the village in my car." I was surprised and said, "The shuttle has to drive us to our houses." But I still didn't have any negative thoughts and we got off the shuttle together. I got in his car. After I got into his car, he said "I am abducting you. Call your family and tell this". I understood that he had sexual intentions. I didn't understand if he was joking or not. I was on the front of the car, and I reclined as far as possible from him. "What do you mean?" I asked. "I will call the police right now. You are such a shameless man, how dare you?" But I was so scared. I said, "Drive me to my house or you will see the consequences of your action." Fortunately, he left me at my house. I lost all my faith for men with that event. I went home but I couldn't tell even my family anything about that event. Even to my mother. I never wanted the wife of that man to hear about that event. Because they would blame me. There is a saying "If the female dog doesn't wag her tail, the male dog won't follow her." The woman would have divorced her husband due to that situation, and I didn't want it. I was scared of the gossiping about me in the village. But I think that the man tested me on that day. He couldn't advance as I gave a harsh and strong reaction. After that day I never talked with him. But I was scared to death when he drove me to my house. That 1 or 2 kilometres of the road was hell for me".

**F12:** "You become pitiful when you divorced. They say 'She is so poor. She married and suddenly divorced'. We are all conditioned to think that divorce is a really bad phenomenon. It is a learned thing. And when you divorce, you are made to feel that guilt. 'Everyone endured more horrible things. You should have endured instead of divorce'. These thoughts are always forced to you. When I started working, people investigated my divorce instead of focusing on my job. Once, my boss explained that I was a widow to a group of people, which offended me. It was such a dishonourable behaviour that opened wounds so deep. I even thought to quit the job due to that event.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

The participants preferring to isolate themselves from their circles are presented below:

**F1:** *"There were doubts. I first isolated myself from my relatives. I never took my child to a relative visit. I don't live in the village because I cannot stand being seen as a widow".*

**F3:** *"Some of the people in my environment asked questions. I didn't need to answer. You shouldn't explain anything to everybody."*

2 participants stated that they resisted the pressure of people in their circles.

**F11:** *"I was the director of an institution when I got divorced. The employees didn't talk to me but they were talking about me when they were together. They were talking about me seeing some men. My family wanted me to return to our hometown after my divorce. I did not accept. If I had accepted it, I wouldn't be a strong woman fulfilling my own needs in the eyes of my daughter. I would become dependent on my parents."*

**F12:** *"There wasn't any reaction as I stood strong after my divorce. I thought it on my own and solved my problems in my head. I stayed far away from everything until everything became clear. As I moved in with my parents and my parents also moved to another place, there was no pressure from society. I started my life in an environment where they didn't know me. I didn't ask about the private lives of my colleagues as long as they didn't talk about it. No one asked me anything personal and they didn't know about my divorce for long years. I didn't reflect my divorce to my job. And it was a peaceful process..."*

The remaining participants stated that they didn't experience any serious problem.

When the person with whom divorce decision is shared and the reaction of family and social circles are analyzed, a differentiation can be seen based on the education level of participants. Participants with an associate or bachelor degrees shared their decisions with their families and didn't give importance to the reactions of people in their social circles or show resistance to their reactions. Participants who are primary, secondary or high school graduates shared their decisions individually with their mothers, siblings or friends. It was also found that they received less support from their families and they were objected to more pressure from their circles.

### Theme 6 - Receiving Psychological Support During or After the Marriage

Participants were asked whether they had received psychological support for the problems during the marriage. The question was about the participants themselves while 3 participants gave responses covering the status of their ex-husbands. F8 and F12 gave responses covering their ex-husbands and stated that they consulted to family therapy.

Here the answer of F12 is considerable.

**F12:** *"Yes, I have received support. We received together with my husband. A specialist told us 'You are very different from your husband. You husband is perfectionist while you are a natural person. This marriage will never work'. And his power to continue the unity of marriage was destroyed. We couldn't work it out as we thought about the specialist's diagnosis of our marriage. I received support which I considered beneficial for myself".*

Participant coded as F9 stated that she couldn't persuade her husband for going to the family therapy. One participant stated that she received psychopharmacologic support. Other participants didn't apply for any psychological support during this process.

Participants were asked if they received psychological support after Their divorce. 4 participants (F1, F2, F4, F7) stated that they received psychopharmacologic support. 2 participants (F9 and F12) stated that they only received psychotherapeutic support. 1 participant (F10) stated that she received both psychopharmacological and psychotherapeutic support.

**F12:** *"Yes I received support and it was very beneficial. It is a great support to change your perspective. These therapies and*

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

*other supports develop your point of view in life and facilitate acceptance.”*

**F10:** *“In fact, I didn’t know about it during our divorce, but I understood that he had an affair with another woman. Seeing him choosing another woman over me was emotionally devastating for me. This hurt me a lot. I cried a lot. I suffered from depression. I sometimes went to the psychiatry clinic in the hospital, sometimes to a private clinic, sometimes I consulted to the psychologist in the municipality. I used the medicine. The psychologist at the private clinic told me that I didn’t need using the medicine, I needed talking”.*

### Theme 7 - Individual Problems Women Faced After Their Divorce

Process after the divorce brings many new challenges for women. Women need a certain period to adapt to this new situation. The problems and their effect on people different from person to person, but the initial depressed state is usually common for all of them. The views of the participants on this subject are presented below.

As is known, children are the most affected victims of divorce. After winning the custody of the child, adapting to the new situation is a major problem for parents.

For participants coded as F1, F2, F3 and F4, the child was one of the most important factors affecting them apart from the individual problems they experienced during their divorce process. Their views are presented below.

**F1:** *“My father rejected my mentally retarded daughter, he wanted me to give her back to my ex-husband. We weren’t on good terms for 5 years. I had to endure all the problems with my child. I had serious problems. I was left alone”.*

**F2:** *“I spent a lot of effort for my son. As he has mental disabilities, I tried to get a disability report and education possibilities. I committed suicide. I couldn’t endure the fall of my marriage. I took lots of pills once. But I never committed again.*

**F3:** *“There are problems at the moment. My ex-husband wants us to be together again. He was in a relationship with another woman. When their relationship was over, he wanted us to come together but I don’t want him. I don’t want him to see our child. Our child has mental disabilities, I don’t know how he treats our child”.*

**F4:** *He opened custody case three times for our daughter. All these processes wore me down.*

For the participants coded as F5, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11 and F12, it can be inferred that loneliness and depression were the only problems.

**F5:** *“I felt loneliness. I felt emptiness for a time. It took time to get accustomed to the new situation. I had reluctance, distrust and resentment towards life for a time. However, as my child was with me, I had to recover as soon as possible. I didn’t have the luxury to be depressed for a long time. I sometimes ask myself if I had suffered completely, but my answer is no, you don’t have such a luxury. I guess becoming a mother is something like that. You put your child above all.”*

**F7:** *“I cannot live with my parents. I am currently living in a rented house. My main income is the money I received due to the child. Loneliness hit me hard. Because I have a disabled son and I need material and spiritual support. My ex-husband is very indifferent and negligent towards his son, this burns me out. If my child weren’t disabled, maybe I could overcome divorce more comfortably.*

**F8:** *“Emotional emptiness and loneliness make you take wrong decisions.”*

**F9:** *“No one bothered me, I didn’t have that kind of problems after divorce. I have experienced problems, of course. People bring you news of your ex-husband like ‘he was having fun there, there was a lady with him’ etc. You feel betrayed, more so if your divorce is new. Apart from these, a new life and a new order are hard to adapt to. You don’t feel good no matter how good you are treated. You feel like that for a while. You are incomplete in a sense, and you feel empty inside all the time. You miss your old armchair, your old cup of coffee, you miss your old house and old living. No matter how good your parents treat you, this doesn’t change. I had many sleep problems at the beginning, I couldn’t eat, I lost weight. I cried a lot. My day and night were mixed. I had that dullness, my thoughts wandered a lot. I didn’t even hear when someone called me. I was depressed.”*

**F10:** *“After my divorce, I had financial troubles. I sometimes experienced them, not all the time. The current minimum wage I earn isn’t enough sometimes. I cried a lot during that period. I couldn’t eat. Sometimes all consumed was a glass of water for the whole day. I lost a lot of weight. I was skin and bones.”*

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

**F11:** "I cried a lot after my divorce. Not for me, but my child. Then I realized that it was better for my child to live with a good family instead of living with such a father."

**F12:** "Of course I had problems. I turned into myself and didn't want to talk to anyone. I suffered from fibromyalgia during my marriage, by the way. The disease decreases my life quality a lot. I had to live in a body constantly aching to which no one could touch at the beginning. I couldn't tell anyone that we divorced. I hoped for coming together again. It was like a routine process for us. I didn't even remove my stuff from the suitcase for a year, as I hoped for marrying him again. I didn't want to talk with anyone. I didn't want anyone to hear that I failed again in my marriage. Meanwhile, my ex-husband called me after some time and begged me in tears to forgive him. I softened and gave him another chance. But he blew it again. We spent one year separately and faced the same end. I don't even bother to explain my condition to people anymore. Anyone can think whatever she/he wants to think about me. I got over myself on this issue. But I am still so sorry. Why we still have the same ending? This caused me to hurt myself emotionally. Nobody can do anything for anyone else. I gave this emotional value to him and chose to feel sad and be affected negatively during this process. I understand it now. We were the ones nurturing every emotion."

The only difficulty of divorce has been depression. The participants described the symptoms of major depression. Apart from one participant (F2, committing suicide) none of the participants exhibited advanced symptoms of depression.

**Theme 8 - The Opinions of Participants on Getting Married Again and Their Definitions of Marriage and Divorce After Their Divorce**

When asked whether they wanted to get married again after their divorce, 2 participants (F2 and F3) said absolutely no. F1 and F7 said they had disabled children and it would be not appropriate to get married again. Their statements can be interpreted as situational; they weren't completely against marriage, they took the responsibility of their children, which created an obstacle according to them. 4 participants were wary of the idea of marrying again. Their statements are as follows:

**F5:** "Perhaps, I need to consider the situation and the potential husband. You need to approach cautiously. You need to blow on cold water..."

**F9:** "I am away from that idea currently, maybe I will stay away from it forever. I couldn't overcome my fears. Marriage has beautiful sites but it is still a major trauma for me. But if, one day, I meet with someone who will make me forget this trauma, and most important of all, if I think it is the right person and the right time, then I can marry again. I am not clear on this issue, and I don't want to talk large."

**F10:** "I may get married again. People are wanting to marry me. My family sometimes introduce me to other people. Sometimes people in my circles trying to introduce me to people they see suitable for me. But I evaluated them all. I didn't get married because they weren't suitable for me."

**F11:** "My daughter is so young in my eyes, I cannot hurt her. There are many pros of marriage for me. I can get married after I raise my daughter and see that she can stand on her own feet. Only after that, I can think of marrying again if I find someone with whom I can chat for long hours, who can understand me, who can compromise when we have opposing views. But not now. I don't want my daughter to be affected. I care about her sensitivity."

The remaining participants coded as F4, F6, F8 and F12 gave an affirmative answer to the question.

The view of participants about getting married again and their descriptions of marriage and divorce have many parallels with each other. In other words, participants looking positively to marrying again also have more moderate descriptions of marriage and divorce while the participants who are away from marrying again have more pessimistic descriptions.

**F1:** "If you have asked me about marriage when I was single, I would say 'it is not for me'. Marriage is a good thing if you can manage it, otherwise, it is a hell. There is no divorce. Two people separate on paper. If your child has a love for the father, you face your ex-husband. It is the meeting of two different people at two different points again."

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

**F2:** "Marriage. I cannot say anything because my marriage was bad. If I had 1 beautiful day, I cried 10 days after that. I was even hungry during my pregnancy. I don't know. Divorce: When two people cannot agree and they have unrest in their marriage, they divorce."

**F3:** "There is a saying 'Marriage is a sacred institution'. When you behave very respectfully but the spouse act very differently, the marriage fails. You may also make mistakes in marriage. During my marriage, I may have made mistakes, I cannot describe it. In the end, we have an uncontested divorce, which makes me think that the adverse party acknowledged that I was right."

**F4:** "Marriage is a happy home while the divorce is a catastrophe."

**F5:** "What is marriage? I thought for a long time on this question but I couldn't find an answer. Divorce? If I think about our divorce, I can say that it is getting rid of your troubles."

**F6:** "Marriage in a peaceful home. Divorce is loneliness and emptiness feeling. It is living in separate houses."

**F7:** "Marriage is a problem. I wish there wasn't any divorce but you may get a divorce due to the obligations. I have no regrets. But it was very hard. I would prefer to get divorced instead of staying married."

**F8:** "In marriage, two people share the stress of life and decrease it, they share their happiness and increase it. Divorce is the separation of two people who cannot make each other happy, who cannot fulfil the needs and demands of each other."

**F9:** "Marriage is an institution in which two people who have no kinship relations, miraculously share their lives, with all the bad and good things, within the framework of respect and love. It is sacred. Although I was devastated at the end of my marriage, the good times we spent together was precious and special for me, which is due to my self-respect. Divorce is either the rebirth of one man and one woman or the point at which they see the lowest and get ready to jump again. Divorce is the situation in which you see the highest in the sky and start to fall, between which you get to your senses. It is really difficult but a solid experience. It is like you are reborn, you are made to born again. You open your eyes wide. It can change from person to person. Its definition is different for everyone. It is difficult for me to express it. I left so many things behind but it was not easy. In my view, divorce is a situation which has various definitions differently for everyone."

**F10:** "Marriage is briefly a family, it is a commitment. Divorce is a collapse".

**F11:** "Marriage is living together with someone with whom you can share beautiful things, you can communicate, you can talk with, you can spend an enjoyable time. I think that a woman should stand on her own feet before marriage. This is true for both genders. We become selfish when we see someone with a weak character. This, in turn, hurts the other party. This leads to the breaking up in relationships. Then the woman becomes the victim".

**F12:** "Marriage is belonging, a regular life, trust and loyalty. It is making every moment precious with someone you love. Everyone has so much to learn from each other... Divorce... It is sailing to unknown waters, to a new life, to face yourself again... You ask yourself so many questions... What I did wrong? What should I have done better... Where I stand in life? How much of me is left inside me? I also have feelings and I cannot force anyone to anything they don't want to do".

### Theme 9 - The Opinions of Divorced Women on the Basic Elements of Continuing Marriage

**F10:** "There may be no love or respect at the beginning but respect, and then love is very important for the process following. Loyalty, apart from respect. When there is respect, everything works in one way or another. You don't do undesirable things such as thinking evil of or gossiping about someone. This is disrespectful. I consider respect as very important". Woman and man should know each other well. When they argue about problems during the flirting and engagement periods, they should break the ties. They shouldn't continue their relationship for the sake of their families. They should know each other very well. They should spend time together to know each other. They should do various things together such as eating, drinking coffee, having fun, working in the same environment, etc. It is of course not possible for everyone to work in the same place with the people they marry, but you need to see the workplace of your significant other. You need to have fun, spend more time together. You will know your significant other in this way".

**F11:** "Respect, following the processes, sharing. The more sharing, the better the marriage is. When the marriage turns into a competition, everything comes to a deadlock. The husband and wife shouldn't exercise influence on each other. They shouldn't patronize each other. People should stand on their feet before getting married".

The divorced women participating in the research were stated that the most important elements for the marriage are respect, loyalty, spending time together, knowing each other, getting along with each other and loving each other.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE**To summarize the research findings;**

12 divorced women between the ages of 26-53 participated in this study. 10 participants were either high school graduate or hold a higher degree. 7 participants were employed. 9 of the participants had 1 child, 1 of the participants has 2 children, and 2 of the participants had no children. The majority of mothers (10 participants) in the study took the custody of their children after the divorce, 3 of them had problems with their ex-husbands about alimony and custody, the majority of them (9 participants) didn't move in with their parents and started a new life with their children.

50 per cent of the women in the study had arranged marriages and the remaining 50 per cent had love marriages. The women married for love stated that their marriage lasted between 2-11 years, they divorced 6 months-17 years ago. 9 of them had a smooth divorce process. Only 1 of the 12 women married again after her divorce. It was found that the majority of the women (8 participants) don't lean up to marrying again. It was found that parents of some of the participants told them to continue their marriage during with they faced problems.

6 of the participants stated that they decided to divorce, 1 participant took that decision mutually with her husband. The husbands of 5 participants decided to divorce. 3 of the participants first shared their decision to divorce with their mothers, 3 of them explained it first to their parents and 2 of the participants shared it with their siblings. 2 participants stated that they didn't share it with anyone, 1 participant shared the decision with a friend. 3 of the participants stated that their families considered their decision to divorce unfavourable and didn't want them to divorce, 2 of them stated that their families were neutral about their divorce, and 7 of them stated that their families supported their decision to divorce. Another important problem is society's perspective on divorce and divorced women. Both family and the environment can put stress on women (Yazicioğlu and Kayhan, 2007, 322).

**RESULT**

In addition to experiencing economic, emotional and psychological problems, divorced women face problems such as family and environmental pressure, restriction of their freedom and more responsibility.

Some of the participants used negative phases when defining marriage, while some of them didn't define marriage. Some of the participants used words such as loyalty, sharing, happiness and peaceful home, which can be expected to be in a marriage. The view of participants about getting married again and their descriptions of marriage and divorce have many parallels with each other. It was found that participants looking positively to marrying again also have more moderate descriptions of marriage and divorce while the participants who are away from marrying again have more pessimistic descriptions.

The women who married for love after a divorce with her husband has been found to experience less regret. Their marital adjustment problems were the main problem of their divorce. During the divorce process, most of them stated that they received family support.

With the divorce, the burden of women increased. In particular, the custody of their children leads them to assume all responsibility for their own children and to devote more time to their children's education, health and care. It seems that divorced women who have an income want to live alone. It was found that divorced women who had to return to their families had problems with their families in terms of family pressure and restriction of their freedom. Almost all the women who have children took the responsibility of their children. It was found that the women didn't want to be under the guardianship of their parents. Participants moving in with their parents (3 participants) stated economic problems as the reason for this situation. One of these participants has an associate degree but isn't employed. Other two participants work in minimum wage jobs but couldn't make ends on their own in the big city. One of them has 1 child and has to move in with her parents as she cannot afford the care of her child and due to other economic reasons. The rate of moving in with parents after a divorce is lower among women who are actively employed.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

The economic troubles after the divorce are the leading problem women face. The women who don't work outside the house and who share the income of their husbands face serious economic crisis after the divorce (Yazıcıoğlu and Kayhan, 2007: 322). Women who have work experience before the marriage can become more powerful in making the divorce decision as well as they can continue their activities in the work-life after their divorce (Uğur, 2014: 297).

Some of the participants in the study stated the intervention of their parents to everything, the angry mood of their parents, the impatient behaviours of their families towards the children, etc. as the reasons of their unwillingness to return to their parents' home. The mutual agreement problem occurring when a woman establishing her life in her way and adopted a lifestyle different from her family move in with her parents due to various reasons (Can and Aksu, 2016: 895). The divorced women preferred living on their own with their children instead of moving in with their parents, as living on their own gave them more freedom compared to both living with their husbands before the divorce and living with their family before their marriage. Single-parent families, in this sense, empowers women (Uğur, 2014: 309). Some participants in this study also stated that they felt stronger when they lived their own, compared to their married life.

It was found that the majority of women participating in the study experienced many different moods such as crying, loss of appetite, weight loss, loneliness, feeling bad, guilt, helplessness, indecision, feeling of unworthy, etc. during and after their divorce. Women may experience many different emotions after their divorce. The main emotions can be listed as follows: Lovelessness, loneliness, helplessness, indecision, insecurity, feeling empty, feeling heavy responsibilities, feeling unworthy, negative feelings about the men, feeling guilty towards themselves and their child, feeling lame, feeling rebellions, etc. (Oğurtan, 2011, 50).

It was found that 7 of the participants received psychological support after the divorce while 5 of the participants overcame the problems with the support from family and friends. It is known that women experience many psychological problems after the divorce. Thus, receiving psychological support after their divorce is very important for women to overcome this event. Can and Aksu (2016) found that most of the divorced women tried to overcome the problems of divorce with the support of their family, children and people in their circles instead of receiving professional psychological support.

It was found that some of the women participating in the study felt pressure from their environment, they isolated themselves from their environment, they limited their communication with their colleagues, some participants kept communication with their relatives at a minimum level, some participants felt the malignant intentions of men in their environment. Pressure from family and environment is among the biggest problems the divorced women face. Divorce isn't accepted and approved as natural as marriage in cities where the traditional values are still valid. Variety of prejudices nurture the negative attitudes that can lead to the stigmatization of divorced women (Arıkan, 1996: 217).

When asked about their opinions of marrying again, 2 of the participants gave negative (absolutely no) answers, 4 of them gave positive answers. 2 of the participants stated that they cannot marry again due to their children. 4 of the participants stated that they considered the idea of marrying again very cautiously, and they did not consider it favourably. Some of the participants were found to feel relieved after their divorce and they described themselves as more peaceful compared to their situation during their marriage. This feeling of relaxation was found to emerge right after the divorce in some participants while it emerged following a deep depression process, arising in the first step after divorce in some participants.

When the participants were asked their opinions about marrying the same person if they had gone back in time, the majority of them had negative answers, while 1 of them answered "maybe". 1 of the participant stated that she had never thought about it. When all of the answers are considered, it was found that they wouldn't have married the same person with their knowledge today.

Many economic, psychological and social factors can cause divorce. Divorce, in turn, may cause various problems for women such as financial problems, social pressure, stigmatization, violence, etc. After their divorce, women can be injuriously perceived as easy. In addition, the responsibility of child as a single parent can overwhelm women. Loneliness and emotional emptiness, together with other problems, can cause psychological problems.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

Some suggestions can be presented within the light of the findings obtained in this study. The decision to get married should be taken after thoroughly knowing the potential spouse. In addition, compulsory education should be given to the spouses before the marriage for problems that can arise in marriage. The potential spouses should obtain problem-solving skills as well as compromising skills in order to maintain the family unity. The psychological support as well as family counseling should be encouraged in order to decrease the number of divorces. The women should be encouraged to participate in the labour market in order for them to gain their economic independence.

In the cases where the unity of family cannot be maintained, the divorce can be seen as a solution. Divorce has many negative effects on spouses as well as the children. Psychological support should be provided during and after the divorce process in order to eliminate its traumatic effects. The ex-spouses should maintain a healthy relationship with each other for the sake of their children. In addition, the legal regulations on divorce should be reviewed. The local and international counseling for divorced people should increase. Experts specialized in the problems of divorce should be employed in social work departments.

THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

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THE EFFECT OF DIVORCE ON WOMEN:  
A CASE STUDY IN SAKARYA PROVINCE

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