

Divorce or dissolution of marriage is the putting an end to a marriage even before the death of either spouse, it is different with an annulment, since annulment is a declaration that a marriage is void, though the effects of marriage may be recognized in such unions, such as child custody , spousal support, and property distribution. A court certification is needed in divorce , since a legal action is needed in order to dissolve the prior legal act of marriage. Also,the terms of the divorce is determined by the court, though the court may take into account some prenuptial agreements, or in some cases simply ratify terms that the spouses have agreed on privately. Very often, however, due to the disagreement of the spouses the court is called to decide about the terms of the divorce, this can lead to stressful (and expensive) litigation. In recent years a less adversarial approach to divorce settlement has emerged,this is known as family mediation, an attempt to negotiate mutually acceptable resolution to conflicts.

Causes of divorce

According to the statistics of the Center for Disease Control's report of 2002, about 50% of first marriages has ended in divorce and the same report show that 60% of remarriages also end in divorce. However , the Center for Disease Control found that about 96% of Americans, express a personal desire for marriage, and almost 75% of the Americans believe that marriage should be a life long commitment. And it is likewise believed that there is a somewhat similar statistics worldwide. With statistics like these, it is very easy to see how complicated it could be when people think that it is divorce that they want, people also have difficulty in identifying how a truly viable a divorce reason might be defined. All people want happiness through marriage and considering a taught with what

may seem an inevitable outcome (a divorce), can be mentally and emotionally challenging. This is because it is human nature to want to feel nurtured and secure, no matter where you live and what status of life you have. Some major causes of divorce are:

Couple has conflicting personal beliefs

Couple's marital satisfaction decreases

Desertion

Adultery

Cruel treatment

Bigamy

Imprisonment

Spousal Indignities

Institutionalization

Irretrievable Breakdown of some kind

Effects of divorce on children

Divorce affects children differently; factors that brought to this effects are their age gender, developmental stage. When their parents divorce it seems that the kids world seems to fall apart this is true with, their security and their stability as well. Research has shown that the following responses are some of the effects found among children of divorced parents.

FEELINGS

- They believe and worry that they are no longer loved by their parents they also feel a sense of abandonment since they feel that which that parent has divorced them too.

- A feeling of helplessness and being powerless is evident this is due to the fact that they can't get their parents back together , and they cannot speed up or slow down the said process.
- They have this feeling of anger however they just couldn't express that said anger or just let the anger out
- They often blame themselves for what is happening. They always think and believe that something they did or said have caused one of their parent to leave.
- They grieve; this is due to the fact that divorce is a loss, both in the lives of children and parents.
- They experience conflicts of loyalty.

BEHAVIORS

Behavioral effects of divorce in children vary. It ranges from very mild behavior, for example difficulty sleeping, to extremely destructive behavior, like drug abuse, suicide, worse, violence. Other behavioral problems noticed include problems in school, repetitive physical behavior, nervous habits, also regressive behaviors like bed-wetting, fears, and use of comfort items has been observed. Children with divorced parents become whiny and clingy and they need a much greater understanding when it comes to their moods and behavior. These children have a greater feel to be nurtured. And they have this thinking that they have to "take care" of their parents. The noble act of giving up their childhood in order to take care of their parents who are emotionally troubled is a very much widespread characteristic of this group of children. Children of divorce need support systems and individuals to help them during these transition , and that the

assumption that they are naturally resilient and can easily get through the divorce easily and with out any effect in their lives is indeed an false assumption.

Some other very evident effects are :

Fear and worry- Children of divorce usually become very scared, they always think of what will happen to them and their family. These children worry a very great deal about what their future and their secure world will become. These children also feel that when one of their parents leaves the house they will no longer see this parent again. And would often wonder and think of what will happen to this parent.

Guilt- It is indeed very common although very much unfounded that the children always believe that they are the ones that caused their parents divorce. There are unfortunate times however that they are singled out our even blamed for their parents predicament.

Anger and Frustration- Divorce is one of the major causes for this. The sudden changes in their familys' structure and composition will make some children very much withdrawn and quiet, or strong-willed and upset. And because of fear, these children tend to strike out at all the people whom they feel and think are responsible for the changes in their world. Usually all this anger stems from reaction brought about the some drastic changes and threats to the child's life from divorce. Frustration also sets in due to these changes: the common question that they ask themselves are : Why is this happening to me ? Why can't they see one parent? These emotions are aggravated by the fact that sometimes they have to relocate. Also study show that older children have a much harder time letting go of their anger due to the changes that they have to undergo.

Rejection and loneliness- Since all the focus during the divorce is on the parents. Very little is said to the children. And due to the fact that parents concentrate on their own situation their children are often forgotten. The problems of the parents brings problems to the children as well. When one parent leaves the house the children think that they are the ones being rejected, And this is magnified when they can or have no means of communication with the parent that left. The feeling of rejection can send a child into a self-imposed isolation and a time of loneliness and they may withdraw and hope something will eventually change. In addition to these being required to relocation to another neighborhood and another school system can and will intensify this feeling of rejection and separation.

Loyalty and Resentment- divorce puts children in very difficult position and at very difficult times. Divorce tends to split the child between the parents. It makes the child question their position in the family and who among their parent really cares about them. Divorce can also separate a child from relatives on one side of the family. And there are unfortunate times when parents make the child select or choose to whom or to which will their loyalty be. This situation might cause the child to lose loyalty to both parents, this is because of the fact that they feel that their love for both is being questioned and very often children will resent their parents for getting a divorce. Any parent who doesn't visit or call can be resented. And parent failure to attend important events in their child's lives will reinforce the feeling of resentment. Marrying again by either of the parent will further complicate the emotions of the child. The child will feel that the new spouse is really not their parent and that there will be a feeling of anxiety of whether the new spouse will allow them to see their parents or not.

Trust and Hope- Due to the trauma brought about by divorce children tends to be untrusting of others. This is due to the fact that have this feeling that they do not want to be hurt again that is why they are very much cautious with their affection. Problems with relationships can continue for a long time. Seeing a better tomorrow can be difficult for children of divorce. They lose their hope of getting over the tragedy.

Divorce's financial implications

As divorce always lead to the sure creation of two households instead of the usual one , and with the increased costs. Both parties will deffinitely suffer these effects, And since more men are awarded child custody, quite a number of the roles and difficulties mentioned on the below paragraphs may be reversed, men who are usually awarded with the custody of the child they have historically been less likely to be awarded child support or alimony. Women suffers more due as a result of the divorce this is due to the fact that they have a lower earning potential in many countries and also due to their greater role in rearing their children. And since it is always a fact that women will be given the custody opf the kids after the divorce , this will impede them in going after those high paying jobs.also another major problem is the child support collection, some men could not accept the fact that they have a financial obligation to their children, and others who recognize that fact cannot fulfill it due to some reasons.They more often obtain custody of children after the divorce, reducing their ability to pursue well-paid employment. This is the reason why both the National and Local government units have instigated a welfare system for mothers who are divorced as well as their affected children. The men are also victims of divorce, both financially and in other ways. This is due to the fact that the alimony that the court ordered and the child support can really be

crippling, this is often a very large percentage of the male who has usually the larger income. This duties and so called obligations makes marrying again impossible and in cases that they get married again they are required by law to put their prior obligation first before the needs of his new family, also the reality of being denied access to their children is a prevalent fact. In the US currently, the Federal law has made it a felony when child support is not honored, while the womens refusal to honor or follow the visitation rights goes scot free without any punishment. In addition to this the Bradley Amendment has revoked due process for support-paying parents, by removing the ability of judges to reduce and amend child support obligations if there are unfortunate cases of bankruptcy unemployment, incapacitation state statutes of limitations or other extremity. In the US it can be disadvantageous for a spouse who earns more and resides in a community property state without any prenuptial agreement. This is because that in this states they split the property 50/50 without considering who earned the money. This is the case even if the one who earns less has committed adultery or initiates the divorce. less tangible assets like putting a spouse through school or college or being able to provide a good home is very difficult difficult to value in terms of dollars, thus making the spouse whose contributions are less tangible can also be disadvantaged. The 50/50 split also holds even if the richer spouse which contribute or earns more commits adultery or is the one who initiates the divorce. One good thing though is the fact that most states in the US are not community property states; quite a number of large and states with high population such as California along with smaller states has started a 'equitable' standard, rather than having equal division of property, this is a move by this states to address the complexities that is involved in financial sharing. In this states the judge has a

greater power and can balance the division of property depending in the spouses contribution. Another very significant financial implication is the cost of the divorce itself, it is a known fact that attorneys fees are quite expensive or high and it is very significant specially during the time of divorce when the resources of both spouses are already quite stretched thin. In order to reduce conflict over financial division in case a divorce is undertaken, a pre nuptial agreement is entered into by both spouses, this however can be overturned by courts if they find that these agreementy is very disadvantageous to one of the spouse, when tjhis agreement was signed under duress and the said agreement is found to be not to the best interest of the children.

Divorce's medical and psychological implications

As a consequence of divorce study show that the divorcee suffer a variety of long term social, economic, physical and mental health. Although the maximum effect and extent of this is still hotly debated. All the studies conducted up to the present has suffered due to the inherent methodological weakness , and the reasearchers still has to find a solution to this and this is to find and establish a relevant baseline for their comparison. And basing by its deffinition majority if not all divorces are of couples who are not happy with each other. and those who stay married is a combination of couples who are happy and those who are unhappy with each other but prefered to stay as a couple for the sake of their children. And due to this any list of formal sociological articles on aftereffects of divorce would quickly become obsolete, Recent studies have shown that some divorced people who has been thru a divorce are no happier after divorce. Linda Waite a University of Chicago sociologist analyzed in 2003, the relationships between divorce, marriage, and happiness using the National Survey of Family and Households. In the said report Ms.

Waite reported that adults who are unhappily married and went thru the divorce were no happier than those who had stayed married. Some studies also reported that cohabitation before marriage is correlated with an increased divorce rate [Bramlett 2001]. Studies attempting to assess divorces' impact on children are very much compromised by the very same methodological problems as with adults and this problem is the establishment of a baseline that would be relevant for comparison. and by its definition, virtually all children of divorce definitely come from unhappy families; at the same time children coming from those parents who never divorced is a mixture of happy and unhappy ones, this is due to the fact that children whose parents are unhappy with each other but decided to stay married despite an unhappy marital relationship also has an effect on their children.

Results would show that if you would study and compare the outcomes or the well-being of the children, the poorer result will definitely be the group that is composed entirely of children of unhappy families. This is a clear proof that it is a lot better being a child of happy parents rather than being a child of very unhappy ones. One interesting question that is being studied and frequently asked is, whether the child of unhappy couples who remain married despite the fact that they are no longer happy, better or worse than children of those parents who divorced. However establishing a reliable data for this comparison is difficult for this would require being able to identify with no reasonable doubt the subset of nondivorced parents who are nonetheless deeply unhappy with each other, something no researcher has found a way to do at a meaningful scale.

Studies show that children of divorced parents (those entirely from unhappy families) are very sure to have a much higher rate of behavioral problems as compared to those with non-divorced parents (a mix of happy and unhappy families). The same studies have also

shown and reported that the following is more likely to show in people who have been in divorced families:

- They will have a much higher rate of alcoholism and other substance abuse as compared to those who have never been divorced. The study made by Robert H. Coombs a professor of Behavioral Sciences at UCLA, show how marital status affects the personal well-being of individuals. The study also shows that married subjects. Studies also found that drinking problems and alcoholism is more prevalent in unmarried subjects as compared to its married subjects. The separated and divorced account for 70% of all chronic problem drinkers, and marrieds 15% [Coombs 1991].
- They have a much higher rate of clinical depression. "Family disruption and low socioeconomic status in early childhood increase the long-term risk for major depression" [Gilman 2003].
- They also seek formal psychiatric care at a much higher rate. Studies vary, suggesting from 5 to 21 times the risk, and vary over whether men or women are more seriously affected [Marks 1998] and [Bloom 1979].
- In the case of men, they are more likely to commit suicide at some point in their lives, referring to the study made by Augustine Kposowa, a University of California at Riverside sociologist [Kposowa 2003].
- They have much lower life expectancy
- And they are more likely to live in poverty [McLanahan 1994].

Studies have also claimed positive correlations between divorce and rates of:

- **stroke** [Engstrom 2004]:it has been shown that marital dissolution is followed by an increased incidence of stroke."
- **cancer**. The married cancer patients are also more likely to recover than those patients who are divorced [Goodwin 1987].
- **acute infectious diseases, parasitic diseases, respiratory illness digestive illnesses, and severe injuries**. See [Lawson 2000]. In support of these particular claims, that article cites [US Bureau of the Census 1991] and [Albrecht 1980].
- **heart problems**. There are some research that suggests that childhood trauma, including parental divorce, is one of the causes that can lead to much greater risk of heart attack in later life. See [O'Rand 2005]. This fact Combined with job stress, led to a 69% increase of death rate among men with above average risk of heart disease [Reuters 2002].
- **rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis**. [Mili 2002] study shows that a 30% increase in risk at any given age. [Kopeck 2003] finds that parental divorce leads to increased risk of arthritis for children later in life.
- **sexually transmitted diseases**. For example, in Uganda "Results from a baseline survey of HIV-1 infection in the cohort of over 4,000 adults (over 12 years old) showed a twofold increase in risk of infection in divorced or separated persons when compared with those who are married." [Nabaitu 1994].

REFERENCES :

Ahron, Constance. *We're Still Family: What Grown Children Have to Say About Their Parents' Divorce* Harper Collins, 2004.

Albrecht, S. L. "Reactions and adjustments to divorce: differences in the experiences of males and females. *Family Relations* 29 (1980): 59-70.

Arendell, T. "Fathers and divorce." Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 1995.

Amato, Paul R. and Alan Booth. *A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval*. Harvard University Press, 1997.

Amato, P. R. and B. Keith. "Parental divorce and adult wellbeing: A meta-analysis." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 53 (1991): 43-58.

Bartlett, Barbara Ann. "Parenting Coordination: A New Tool for Assisting High-Conflict Families." *Oklahoma Bar Journal* February 13, 2004.

Bloom, B. R., S. W. White, and S. J. Asher. "Marital Disruption as a Stressful Life Event." *Divorce and Separation: Context, Causes and Consequences*. New York: Basic Books, 1979.