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**Review Article**

# The Rise of Divorce in Bangladesh: A Review in the Change of Marriage Dynamics

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**Abstract:** The world is going through massive globalization. The ideas, trends, practices diffuse much faster than past. The family is not an undeviating institution anymore. In recent decades, the earth has experienced downfall in marriage rates, increase in divorce rates, and change in the defining attributes of marriage dynamics. The western countries have gone to that phase where divorce is natural. But in a restricted society like Bangladesh, divorce is still treated as a taboo. Although divorce is not a desirable act in any society of the world however with the recent surge in divorce rates, Bangladesh is going to feel the necessity of policy interventions regarding single parent family or divorced male and female very shortly. In order to understand the marriage dynamics in lens of divorce this paper examines the concept of divorce, review the divorce pattern and the existing divorce law. This paper analyzes socio-psychological approach to explain how and why divorce rates are proliferating. It also discusses the causes and consequences of divorce which will help the policy planners to revise the divorce act and to design interventions for reducing the stigmatization and discrimination towards people seeking marital termination and will help the children of divorced family.

**Keywords:** Nuptiality Pattern, Divorce, Marriage Dynamics, Marriage Law, Demography, Bangladesh

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## 1. Introduction

Divorce or marital dissolution is the ultimate termination of a marital union, ending the legal responsibilities and duties of marriage and disintegrating matrimonial bonds between the parties [1]. Since the late twentieth century throughout the world the saintliness of marriage has seemed to have disappeared [2]. Globally, during the period of 1970-2010 divorce rate has more than doubled from 2.6 divorces per 1000 married people to 5.5 divorces per 1000 married people [3]. Seemingly, Bangladesh is also showing a similar pattern of marriage dynamics. In the past seven years, the number of divorce applications has increased by 34% [4]. In every society there is existence of marital dissolution. However the pattern and procedure of divorce may vary society to society but in every society there is a legal process of divorce. There are two broad types of divorce: fault based divorce and no fault divorce. In fault based divorce one partner is accused of disloyalty and inhuman treatment as a result divorce is filed

and in no fault divorce couples on the basis of mutual understanding dissolve the marriage [1]. Annulment and desertion are two other forms of divorce, when a married partner is mentally immature to understand the commitment of marriage then the marriage is likely to be annulled and when one couple leave another one without any notice referred as desertion [2, 5, 6]. In Bangladesh, most of the divorces are result of fault based causes. As society is going through numerous social change and transition divorce is a rising phenomenon [7]. Though in developed countries, divorce is a means of freedom from an unpleasant marriage but in a country like Bangladesh where divorce word itself treated as negative term and considered as taboo, there still remain a burning question whether divorce leads to freedom from a disconsolate relation or a means of social isolation [7, 8] However, very few article focused on conceptualizing the changes in marriage dynamics of Bangladesh. Thus, this paper aims to conceptualize the concept of divorce, review the divorce pattern and the existing divorce law and also find out the possible causes and consequences of rise of divorce in

Bangladesh.

## 2. Method

For understanding the change of marriage dynamics in the lens divorce, document analysis has used as research method. Analyzing documents has been used for a long time in study of nuptiality which aims to conduct a bibliographic research and formulation ideas on the basis of available information. Accessible documents have consulted in this study to apprehend the divorce. The type of the present research is explanatory; hence, it has explained the causes and consequences of divorce. The article reviews census, demographic statistics, laws and available historical evidence provided by preexisting research to trace the rising trend of divorce rate in it Bangladesh. Based on the social and psychological theories it conceptualize the changes in marriage dynamics as well as the causes and consequences of divorce.

The content of the research has been followed by an analysis of theoretical structures of socio-psychological perspectives.

### 2.1. The Sociological Perspectives of Divorce

'*Structural functionalism*' claims that every society has some specific functions, these functions are integrated part of society. A state of balance ensures the functions of society. Marriage and divorce is the part of society's function. In this perspective, structural functionalism related with divorce [1]

The perspective of '*Conflict Theory*' assumes society in such a way where one group is always struggling over power or resources [9]. The focus point of this perspective is inequality. Marriages take form of termination when there is inequality. This perspective describes divorce as competition for power and resource where disagreements and nonconformities increase the likelihood of divorce [1, 2, 10]

'*Is feminism responsible for the rise in divorce*'? This question requires insight explanation. Previously women used to consider their abusive marriages as their awful fate, they were subordinate to their male counterpart, marital ill treatment was legal but with the suffrage movement the consciousness of women's own right upsurge [11, 12]. '*Liberal feminism*' assumes that females' household responsibilities place them at series of stumbling block and support policies that uplift males to accept a minimal share of domestic responsibilities [13]. While the '*Cultural feminism*' assumes that it is not an issue that females care for children rather it is considered as deemphasized thing [14, 15]. On the other hand believer of '*Radical feminism*' presumes that it is impossible to realize whether females' attachment to the rearing of the children would differ from males in another society and emphasize on the ways in which wedding and work policies sustain dominance of men [1, 14]. According to the believers of '*feminist perspective*' all these household issues and males' bulk of the expectation towards females that they are bound to do bulk of the domestic work and the bulk of the childcare somehow lead to the rise of divorce phenomenon [1, 14, 16].

In the context, of gender inequality feminist movement applied to '*conflict theory*', which concentrate on conflicts and disagreement that emerge from gender based inequalities. Conflict and feminist perspective focus on social change to minimize inequality. This perspective shows how termination of marriages occur when there prevails gender based inequality at the family and societal level. It showed that as an escape from conflicts and disagreements people seek divorce [10].

'*Social exchange theory*' assumes that individuals maintains, develop or terminate marital relationships in terms of the harmony between the rewards gained from the marriage and the costs that resulted from it [17]. Thus if the cost of maintaining a marital relationship is more than the benefits that one can expect from the marriage people dissolve the wedding.

### 2.2. The Psychological Perspectives of Divorce

'*Why people get divorced*'? Explanation of this statement consists of a number of psychological perspectives. The '*divorce-stress adjustment*' approach is one of the perspective that consider divorce as a strategy that starts with feelings of alienation from one's partner keep on with as one or both spouses are determine to separate and then accompanied by adjustment after divorce [18] This approach shares interchangeable ideology to the '*stress-distress*' approach by forecasting of divorce as a pressure to which people adjust with changing levels of flexibility rely on the socioeconomic control at their discard [4, 19]. Psychologists of '*selection perspective*' belief that there are two groups of individual one who cohabit before marriage and another one those are non-cohabiters are different in various ways, even cohabitation before marriage increase probability of poor marital status and divorce for the prior group [1, 3]. Besides poor educational status, low socio economic status, growing up in broken family, holding nontraditional belief for commitment and wedding, no religious affiliation, all of these relevant characteristics increases the likelihood of cohabitation and marital dysfunction [20]. A study found that, cohabitation before marriage was associated with more marital dysfunction, lack of interaction, prominent likelihood of divorce [21]. In opposition to the selection perspective, the believers of '*experience of cohabitation*' perspective infer that cohabitation itself causes the marital dysfunction and personalities of individuals [22]. In another study, it was demonstrated that cohabitation alters people and their relationships in a way that diminish the quality of marriage, stability and commitment [23]. Similar study exhibited that individuals who cohabit prior to marriage, were more susceptible to divorce than the non-cohabiters [24, 25]. Additionally married people who possessed more accepting attitudes toward divorce declines in marital happiness, stability and increases in marital conflict and disagreements [26]. Moreover, individuals who do not support the norm of lifelong marriage and commitment are more likely to deal with termination of marriage [18, 27].

Therefore, this paper doesn't focus on single theoretical

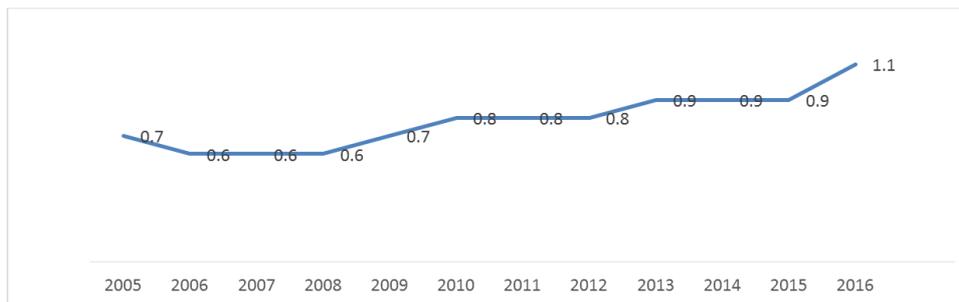
framework for analyzing rise of divorce in Bangladesh rather it combines both the sociological and psychological approaches to analyze the underpinning causes that trigger the termination of marriage in Bangladesh.

### 3. Result and Discussion

Social transition and change in marital dynamics closely linked with each other. Since last six years at least 50000 divorce applications were filed in the capital of Bangladesh that indicates on average one divorce application filed per hour, this is the present scenario of a traditional society like Bangladesh. In large port city of Bangladesh, Chittagong experienced 2532

applications have been filed at the beginning of 2018 [8] Majority of these divorce applications had been filed by women as a result of marital conflict however this pattern shed lights on women empowerment. Some common reasons for women were husband’s suspicious nature, extra marital affair, dowry, Facebook addiction and partner impotence. For men the reasons were wife not leading life according to religious manner, ill tempered, indifference towards family, disobeying their husband’s order and infertile [28].

Figure 1 shows that divorce has doubled throughout the last decade. In 2006, divorce rate was 0.6 per one thousand of the population and this increased to 1.1 in 2016 [29].



Source: BBS, 2007

Figure 1. Trends of Divorce Rate in Bangladesh.

Table 1 shows the registered files but there are numerous cases those are not filed and the divorce are done verbally in a religious setting like Bangladesh. This data shows an alarming rate of divorce which is increasing every year. Though Dhaka city doesn’t imply the total scenario of divorce in Bangladesh but due to data scarcity data regarding divorce rate we will only the data from Dhaka City Corporation has been showed.

Table 1. Trend of Divorce application in Dhaka city of Bangladesh.

Year	Number of divorce application in Dhaka North City corporation	Number of divorce application in Dhaka South City Corporation
2012	2884	4518
2013	3238	4470
2014	4445	4600
2015	4077	4761
2016	4847	4897
2017	5046	5245

Source: BBS 2017

Rajshahi division had the highest rate of divorce, 1.9 per thousand, by Khulna, 1.3. In rural areas, the divorce rate was 1.3 per thousand. In urban areas it was 0.8 [29, 30]. Besides a recent study found that, irrespective of sex in the poorest wealth quintile the rate of divorce is higher [7]. Studies of

western world showed that urbanization and modernization promote individualistic behavior and enfeeble taboo of divorce which in turn increases the rate of divorce [22]. Nevertheless, in developing countries like Bangladesh termination of marriage solely handicapped women and make them socially and economically vulnerable. Thus, female headed households face more economic hardship compared to male headed households in Bangladesh and again this scenario is highly prominent in poorest wealth quintile [7].

However, whatever the reason is, divorce in a country like Bangladesh, comes with serious consequences. An array of social, economic, psychological consequences are on line for divorcee and most importantly, women have to share most of the consequences solely. Bangladeshi culture has a negative attitude toward divorce from past. But this perception is gradually changing and will be changed in future. Data that are available in Bangladesh is not able to show regional or divisional difference of divorce.

#### 3.1. Divorce Law in Bangladesh

There are different divorce laws for different religion such as: Dissolution of Muslim marriage Act 1939 and 1961, the divorce Act 1869 for Christians. But, there is no codified law for Hindu in Bangladesh.

Table 2. Distribution of divorce law by religion in Bangladesh.

	Muslim	Hindu	Christian & Buddhists
Divorce Pattern	1. No-fault divorce is available for husband. 2. No-fault divorce is available for wife only if agreed by husband in marriage contract otherwise divorce available through mutual consent.	1. No provision for divorce. 2. Wife can seek court decree for separate residence and maintenance.	1. Husband and wife can 2. Seek divorce on limited grounds. Grounds are more restrictive for women.

	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Hindu</b>	<b>Christian &amp; Buddhists</b>
	3. Women has a right to ask for divorce. 4. In another way, involves an element of mutual consent where the offer may be either from of wife or husband. If no divorce out of court, then women can seek divorce through court.		
Maintenance during marriage	1. Husband should provide alimony. 2. Maintenance is tied to chastity and wife being dutiful	1. Husband should provide alimony. 2. Maintenance is tied to chastity and wife being dutiful	1. Husband should provide alimony. 2. Maintenance is tied to chastity and wife being dutiful
Post-divorce or post-separation maintenance	1. Divorced women cannot get maintenance except during a 90-day waiting period from notice of divorce or during pregnancy, if pregnant at the time of divorce.	1. There is no divorce. Wives can seek a court decree for separate residence and maintenance on limited grounds. 2. The rules on chastity and being dutiful apply.	Wives can claim maintenance, post-divorce.
Marital property	Separate property only. Marital property not recognized, regardless of contributions.	Separate property only. Marital property not recognized, regardless of contributions.	1. Separate property only. 2. Marital property not recognized, regardless of contributions.
Institutions involved	Local arbitration councils, family courts, and appeals courts.	Family courts and appeals courts.	Family courts and Appeals courts.

Source: Human Rights Watch, 2018

### 3.1.1. Muslim Divorce Law

Under the Muslim Law, a marriage is terminated either by death of the husband or wife, or by divorce.

- i. Extra-Judicial Divorce: Extra judicial divorce is when it is depend upon the will of husband or wife or when it is by mutual agreement. Most of the times rights to give divorce are given to husband only, wife are at very subordinate position to divorce. Extra- judicial divorce is divided into several parts-
  - a) By Husband- All that is necessary for divorce is that the husband should pronounce divorce in his mouth. How he does it, when he does it, or in what he does it is not very essential and it can happen even in absence of wife. It need not be made in the presence of the witnesses.
  - b) By Wife- Under traditional Sharia Law, a Muslim woman cannot dissolve her marriage without the consent of the husband. The Muslim husband is free to delivery his power of pronouncing divorce to his wife.
  - c) By Mutual Agreement- Even when there is no fault a Muslim women has a right to ask for divorce if she does not desire to live with her husband and the husband has no power to cancel it.

In another way, which involves an element of mutual consent where the offer may be either from the side of wife or from the side of husband. When an offer is accepted, it becomes an irrevocable divorce [7].

- ii. Judicial Divorce: When women has no chance for divorce through extra-judicial Muslim law, then she can ask for divorce through court under Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961 The reformation of Muslim family law in 1961 has entitled women to divorce her husband. A woman married under Muslim law shall be entitled to obtain a decree for divorce for the dissolution of her marriage on any one or more of

the following grounds:

1. Whereabouts of the husband have not been known for a period of four years
2. Husband has neglected or has failed to provide for her maintenance for a period of two years
3. Husband has been sentenced to imprisonment for a period of seven years or upwards
4. Husband was impotent at the time of the marriage and continues to be so
5. Husband has been insane for a period of two years or is suffering from virulent venereal disease.
6. Husband treats her with cruelty i.e. habitually assaults her or makes her life miserable, leads an infamous life, or attempts to force her to lead an immoral life.

There is no such criteria necessary for a man to divorce his wife [7].

### 3.1.2. Hindu Divorce Law

Whenever the question of divorce or dissolution of a Hindu marriage arises, it becomes a very thorny question. Dayabhaga law is followed by most of the Hindu communities in Bangladesh. According to this law, Hindus are not allowed to divorce their spouse as they consider marriage as a sacred relationship, a divine covenant and sacrament [31]. In Bangladesh, technically there is still no law that grants a Hindu person a right to affect a divorce against their partner. But, a Hindu married woman may seek entitlement to separate residence and maintenance pursuant to the grounds laid down in the 1946 Act. On the other hand, in India, according to Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, both the husband as well as the wife has the right to file case and seek termination of the marriage [32].

### 3.1.3. Christian Divorce Law

Among Christians also marriage is a holy order. The Divorce Act 1869 secures divorce for persons practicing the Christian religion. According to this Act,

- i. Husband may present a petition to the District Court or to the High Court Division, that his marriage may be terminated on the ground that his wife has been found guilty of adultery.
- ii. Wife may present a petition to the District court or to the High Court Division, praying that her marriage may be terminated on the ground that, her husband has interchanged his believe of Christianity for the sake of some other religion, and gone through a form of marriage with another woman or has been guilty of adultery, or of rape, cruelty, or desertion with couple without reasonable excuse, for two or some more years.

In case the Court is satisfied on the evidence, a decree for a dissolution of marriage made by High Court Division and the divorce becomes operational. However, the decree doesn't become absolute within the period of six months [33].

### 3.2. Causes and Consequences of Divorce in Bangladesh

#### 3.2.1. Causes

Every instance of divorce brings a unique combination of such causes. Researchers have looked at factors affecting both wider societal divorce rates and individual divorce decisions. Determinants of divorce in context of Bangladesh are discussed as follows-

- i. Women's Independence: Women's economic independence stands as one of the most crucial factors for increase in divorce. Women's participation rate in the labor force in Bangladesh has increased by eight times in the last four decades—from four percent in 1974 to 35.6 percent in 2016. Beside, girl's school enrollment has increased 30% since 2001 and literacy rate for females has risen from 43.74% to 69.90% between 2006 and 2016 [28]. It is true that much of Bangladeshi women's increased freedom in their personal lives today has to do with their ever increased decision making power and less dependence on the spouse means there's less of a need to remain tied to an abusive marriage [34].
- ii. Impotency & Infertility: The sexual relationship is important for a happy marital life, because it is not only individual's biological need; it is closely related with the emotional bonding between husband and wife [35]. A 2011 study has identified impotency, that is, husband having problem in establishing sexual relationship was identified as one of the significant cause for divorce [34].
- iii. Many women and men in Bangladesh have given divorce on the ground of physical unfitness. When either husband or wife is not capable to give birth baby because of issues like sperm failure or infertility, it may be considered as physical unfitness. A recent study also identified that impotency and infertility as a reason for increasing rate of divorce [28].
- iv. Domestic Abuse & Dowry: Domestic abuse and violence often lead to the deterioration of marital harmony. It is not uncommon that women are still abused in their home. There might be a significant

decrease in physical abuse over decades, but, sometimes, verbal and mental abuse is such that it is worse than the physical abuse [28]. One of a major source of violence against women is dowry. Women, mostly in rural areas are forced and tortured to bring dowry. There has been 108 case of physical torture and 126 cases of tortured to death for dowry in 2016 in Bangladesh. 105 cases filed in 2018 [36].

- v. Women's Empowerment: The independence of women has been associated with increase in freedom of voice and to protest. Women, as before, do not just bear the physical, mental torture. They does what needs to be done. Previously, they had to tolerate, and even they have given life because of abuse. The occurrence of "tortured to death" has been declining over time and also the case of physical torture. According to BBS, violence against women, dowry and related abuse is a crucial determinant for female to give divorce in Bangladesh [29].
- vi. Extra-Marital Affair: Extra marital relation has become another major ground for divorce in Bangladesh. Previously, if their husband brought another wife without the permission of the previous, women were supposed to maintain silence. This is not the case in recent. Women, now raise their voice if such things happen and more likely to divorce their husband than a few decades ago. BBS showed that, it has become one of the significant cause for women to divorce. Besides, increasing case of female getting involved in extra-marital affair also causing the incidence of divorce from male [28].
- vii. Alcohol, Drug: Over use of alcohol, drug or gambling are usually all forms of addiction, which can ruin relationships. The problem becomes worst when combined with physical or verbal abuse. Addicts generally do not have control over themselves and they come into clash and torture the wife even in trivial matters. Unless the addiction get recovered, it becomes difficult to continue the marital life as marital discord, leading to abuse and torture tend to increase. A study 2011 study showed that, alcohol and drug use is becoming a significant reason for divorce and the prevalence of this, is increasing every year [34].
- viii. Influence of Social Media: Besides, excessive integration in social media like Facebook, Whatsapp, Viber, Instagram etc cause a distance and communication gap between couple [28]. The higher the integration, the higher the probability of lack of understanding among couple, lack of quality time between couple. This results in husbands or wives being suspicious of their partners, which eventually destroy the bonding. Besides, coming in contact with new people through social media increases the probability of husband or wife getting involved in extra-marital affair. The recent findings of BBS supports this as a significant factor as for divorce [28, 29].

- ix. Husband's Economic incapacity: Economic solvency contribute to strengthening the reciprocal relationship between husbands and wives. When a couple has enough to spend on their daily and associated luxury needs, the marital relationship are likely to maintain a harmony. Financial crisis, in contrast, creates discontents because of unfulfilling the gratifications in conjugal life which also accelerates the process of separation and divorce between husbands and wives [37].
- x. Age at Marriage: The incidents of divorce were highest in the 25-29 age group [30]. Child marriage was explored as one of the major causes of their divorce. Besides, now a days, there have been an increase in adult boys and girls getting married without the consent of family when they are in a relationship for many years. In most cases, they do so as soon as they reach the legal age of marriage. This kind of inexperienced personal decision might also contribute in rise in divorce in Bangladesh.

### 3.2.2. Consequences

Divorce has some universal consequences. But, in countries like Bangladesh, consequences are devastating. Especially for women. Who suffers more from divorce: men or women?. The answer to this question is sorrowful. Whoever among a couple want a divorce, the consequences are always devastating for women only! After divorce, women experience declines in household income, standard of living as well as sharp increases in the risk of poverty, face depression, social stigma and so on [38]. In general, women have to suffer more than men after a divorce. The Bangladesh Planning Commission acknowledges that women are more vulnerable to becoming poor when they lose the male earning member of the family because of divorce. However, most devastating Consequences of divorce for both male and female are the followings:

- i. Social and Psychological consequences
  - a) Stigma: Due to divorce, women are very prone to live under the disguise of social stigma than men in the society [30]. A recent study showed that, in Bangladesh, people allege women for divorce and consider them as 'bad woman'. They have to tolerate teasing of neighbors. People makes a change in attitude and their looks when treating a divorced women. In our society, it is seen as a question of womanhood that a woman didn't become able to continue her marital life. To avoid the situations they usually have to remain inside the home. In sum, divorced women become public ridicule and face social exclusion [39].
  - b) Family Dissatisfaction: With the passage of time, relationship with family members and parents start to deteriorate [39]. Divorced women might be regarded as a burden to a family after some time. Besides, it is not uncommon in our society that family gets socially damaged because of the divorced women. Family has to face difficulty in order to give marriage to other

members when there is a divorced member in that family. The same study in Sylhet showed that, their siblings were annoyed at them after their divorce [10]. Most of the informants shared that they did not have the same relation with their siblings as it was before divorce. And when such situation comes and women tries to manage a separate house for themselves, they usually get refused as because of being a divorced women [34].

- c) Psychological impact and lack in Ability: Psychological impacts are dire for both male and female, but female shares the higher burden because of Bangladeshi society. Divorce, whether formal or informal, may contain the probability of stressful events in personal life. Divorced people tend to experience increased depressive feelings over time and pass the days with great psychological stress. They become more susceptible to mentally illness [37]. A study in Dhaka showed that the divorce left them with pain, anxiety, and uncertainty and with the feeling of failure because they had not been able to continue their marriage for the rest of their life [34]. After separation, as a result of psychological impact, many of the people become unable to restore the impaired personality. It becomes very difficult for them to concentrate on their daily doings and confront a reduced ability in themselves which in turn affect their mental health [36].
- ii. Economic consequences:
  - a) Economic Harm and Decline in Standard of Living: Divorced or separated women struggle to cope financially. According to in Bangladesh "Divorce" has been identified as a key cause of poverty among female-headed households are divorced. 95% of all female-headed divorced households fell below the poverty line [40]. Besides, in most cases women do not get the full payment that was promised in married certificate. A study in Dhaka showed that, 40% divorcees were completely paid while 35% not paid at all and 25% not concerned of it [36]. However, as more women are employed with better wages, this income decline is less painful than before, even though it is still prevailing as women are more likely to face poverty and they are the one, primarily responsible for childbearing, their standard of living drastically falls. They come face to face with challenges to ensure minimum needs in order to live for both mother and child [35].
  - b) Housing Problem: Housing is often the first casualty for divorced or separated women. Since after marriage, wife moves to her husband's house, after divorce, they have to leave the house. After divorce, women generally have to reside in their parent's home or with their siblings. In absence of mother, they have to lead a miserable life in father's house. Many have family or friends who might help, but getting required help after divorce is not common in case of residence. A

study in Sylhet showed that, 20% of the respondents were living under impossible situations [30].

### iii. Health Consequences

- a) Food insecurity: The difficulty in securing maintenance often result in poverty, which contributes to food insecurity, poor health and is a barrier to accessing health care. Food security is in jeopardy for many divorced and separated women in Bangladesh. Overall, 38 percent of female-headed households were classified by the WFP as “food insecure “compared to 23 percent of couples [40].
- b) Health care seeking behavior: Besides, A 2000 study showed that, in 79% of cases, divorced women cannot be able to seek the required health care. Many women reported about shortage of money to purchase health care [41].

### iv. Impact on Children

If couple have children at the time of their divorce, it could have serious consequences for a child. Divorce generally puts children at greater risk for many kinds of problems.

- a) Loneliness: Persistent feelings of loneliness are common in children of divorce. In later life, the adult children of divorce, rate their current relationships with both mother and father less positively than do children from intact marriages. They rate their current relationships with both mother and father less positively than do children from intact marriages. During the time of divorce a child’s emotional security also becomes more fragile issue. Fears that both parents will abandon the child are common [6].
- b) Psychological Consequences: Depending on the age of the child, in various ways a child might express his/her damaged Psychological state:
  - a. large amounts of anger, directed both toward others and themselves, frequent breaking of rules, sleep problems, defying parents or teachers, frequent guilt, increasing isolation or withdrawal from friends and family, drug and/or alcohol abuse, early sexual activity, thoughts of suicide or violence [6].
  - b. Many children of divorce believe that they caused the divorce or that they did something wrong that made one or both parents not want to be with them. These feelings can cause a child to feel sad, depressed, and angry. These negative emotions can contribute to other problems, such as poor health, difficulty in school, poor academic performance and problems with friends [4, 6].
- c. In addition, some scholars believe that children of divorce are less likely to learn crucial social skills in the home, such as cooperation, negotiation, and compromise that are necessary for success in life. Children exposed to high levels of conflict between their parents, both before and after a divorce, may learn to model the poor communication of their parents. This can increase the likelihood of conflict in their own personal relationships as children and even as adults [4, 6].

- c) Food and Health Insecurity: Food insecurity becomes a significant problem for children among female-headed households generally in Bangladesh. A study found that nearly double the number of female-headed households managed only 2 meals per day for herself & their children, compared to their male counterparts. Several divorced or separated women told Human Rights Watch that, they struggled to feed themselves and their children after divorce or separation [41]. Children of divorced parents, are also at risk of ill health. Research has shown dramatic differences in terms of health and access to health care for children of female-headed households. A study, for instance, found that infant mortality was more than double for infants with divorced mothers than married mothers in the location studied. [41]. Another study found that 65 percent of sick children in “male headed households” had access to health care compared with only 44 percent of sick children in female-headed households [39].
- d) Children’s Education and Child Labor: The economic toll from Bangladesh’s discriminatory personal laws leads many divorced women to pull their children out of school and put them to work. Studies show that school drop-outs are a major problem for children in female-headed households. The 2009 Millennium Development Goals progress report for Bangladesh stated that about 88% of female-headed households as a result of divorce, reported that their children had dropped out of school [40]. Several divorced or separated women told Human Rights Watch that they sent their daughters to work as domestic workers when they were forced out of their marital homes, usually by cutting short their boy’s and girls’ education. In cases of girls, most of the girls leave education and start to work at garment factory or n paid household works [28, 40].

## 4. Limitations of the Study

As the research has amazed only the accessible documents, sample area is not wide. Only one method has been followed in this study which can be controversial in drawing generalization. Besides due to lack of data, it is quite challenging to establish relationship between divorces with other socio economic variables. It is an increasing phenomena. Future Bangladesh will have to make policy and decisions regarding single parent or divorced male and female. For that time data availability is huge challenge besides in a setting of Muslim majority and traditional belief divorce itself a stigmatized issue so very few literature highlight on this changing dynamic of marriage pattern in Bangladesh.

## 5. Conclusion

Going through a divorce is a tough and mentally draining event to experience. But it is actually better than staying in a

bad marriage. Staying in a bad marriage in our country might provide security but, getting a divorce give one's a hope: a hope to be who you want to be, the hope of another start the hope of shaping the life in one's desired way. Unfortunately divorce is not as easy as it should be in Bangladesh. There is no universal marriage act, instead, here exists discriminatory religious law, where in extreme case, no permission for divorce. Besides, the society doesn't regard divorce normally. Divorcee are often prone to be stigmatized.

So, there should be-

- i. Work toward comprehensive reform of Bangladesh's laws on divorce with special focus for women.
- ii. Raise nationwide awareness about the existing attitude and stigma on divorce.
- iii. In order to divorce, after the official application, a period of three months are provided for further consideration. As divorce in our society includes a lot of social, psychological and economic consequences, any intervention needed like counseling should be provided to think thoroughly whether the divorce is actually necessary. If the decision of divorce stem from trivial matters, it should be addressed and solved.
- iv. Ensure access to divorce is on an equal basis for men and women.
- v. Sensitize the idea of Re-Marriage after divorce.
- vi. Effective and special attention is necessary to the children of divorced family to make them be able to be resilient and strong and to help them to return to their normal life.
- vii. Ensure the compensation payment to women after divorce without time lag and necessary steps should be taken to guarantee the social security of women.
- viii. There should be some private, governmental and individual initiatives to mitigate the stigmatized attitude toward divorced.

No one expect a divorce to happen. But when it comes to situation where it is required, then environmental and the legal facilities should be in place to minimize the consequence at the least level as possible. With modernization, globalization, urbanization and constant change in the family structure divorce is rising in Bangladesh, no doubt about that. But the risk it is arising due to its long term effect on putting on the broken family child. In the West as it a part of the culture now there are policy intervention to deal with this issue. But this is not the scenario of Bangladesh, so the government should take the alarming situation seriously and save our future from getting into oblivion. Bangladesh is different in many demographic and health related ways. However as the country uplifting herself towards development and modernization it is high time to ponder over the change in marriage dynamics.

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