



## The Causes and Consequences of Divorce in Bedele Twon: The Case of 02 Kebele

MENGISTU MELAK<sup>1</sup> AND A. KIRUBAKARAN<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer at Wolega University, Collage of Social Science and Humanities, Nekemte, Ethiopia

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Collage of Social Science and Humanities, Mettu University, Ethiopia

E-mail: [mengistumelaku16@gmail.com](mailto:mengistumelaku16@gmail.com) [akirubakaran76@gmail.com](mailto:akirubakaran76@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The issue of divorce is increasing in rate and become an issue of global concern, especially related to globalization, individualization and decreasing of religion influence on society particularly in Ethiopia divorce becoming a major social problem. This study has five chapter, chapter one introduction, chapter two review of related literature, chapter three methodology, chapter four data analysis and interpretation chapter five conclusion and recommendation, each chapter has incorporated different aspects regarding to the divorce. This study incorporates both general and specific objective. Across-sectional study was conduct in this study. The researcher employed non-probability sampling technique from non-probability technique purposive, convenience and snowball by looking 11 informants in order to conduct the study. This study conducted by qualitative research method through in depth interview, case study and document analysis

**Keywords:** Divorce, Causes, Consequences, Social Impacts

**Received :** 11 March 2022

**Revised :** 30 March 2022

**Accepted :** 11 April 2022

**Published :** 30 June 2022

### TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Mengistu Melak & A. Kirubakaran (2022). The Causes and Consequences of Divorce in Bedele Twon: The Case of 02 Kebele, *Anthropo-Indialogs*, 2: 1, pp. 57-69. [doi.org/10.47509/AI.2022.v02i01.05](https://doi.org/10.47509/AI.2022.v02i01.05)

## Introduction

---

Divorce is the separation from marriage between spouses. It is the termination of marriage or marital union, the canceling and or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, and also it is defined as legal dissolution of a marriage. That is, they were intended to separate couples who could no longer live together and to allow ex-spouse to re-partner (Amato & Previt; 2010). The rate of divorce in the world were already increasing up war in the 19th century as a result of secularization trends, the liberalization of norms concerning individual choice and decreasing religion influence on society. Good (1963) argued that industrialization on by which he meant a host of socio-economic changes including urbanization,

the breakdown of kinship ties, women's increasing education and employment opportunities individualism causes higher level of divorce, consequently not only industrialized countries higher rate of divorce than less industrialized countries, but also divorce rates would increase as countries (Amato 2010; Lester;2010).

In Ethiopia some statistical data show that there is a high rate of divorce in the countries both national and regional level. According to Tilson and Larsen (as cited by Serkalem; 2010) 45% of first marriage in Ethiopia end in divorce within 30 years. Similarly, according to the 2006 population and housing census in an Addis Ababa individual among these married were 1,722,391 individuals among these married were 506,852 while divorce was 97.147 the legal trend has also great contribution for the increased divorce rate

The consequences of divorce are very wide and may vary from person to person. Divorce affects physical and mental health of both partners. The rate of hunger and frustration is also higher among divorced couples. Divorce has social consequences on concerned parties or partners. The couples lost their social circle some friends, relatives may stop talking to them, and they will feel a drastic change in the behavior of some people in society towards them. As a result, couples feel ignore and alone (White; 2009). The majority of divorce parents have low inter-personal relationship and faced feelings of inferiority, so they commit suicide and in the process of divorce and post-divorce the negative consequence of divorce affect the society. Divorce has economic effects on divorce individual compared to married individual. Mostly divorced individual has lower standard of living condition, have less wealth and experience economic (Amato;2011).

Regarding to the adverse effects of divorce on individual, family and society at large, as far as my investigation, there are no adequate and comprehensive studies on the cause and consequence of divorce in the study area. Thus, there is need for more place-based studies to show clear pictures about cause and consequences in Bedele town. Therefore, this study tried to assess the major causes and consequence of divorce in Bedele town administration.

### **Specifically, it aimed**

---

- To identify the causes of divorce in study area.
- To assess the social impact of divorce.
- To assess the economic impact of divorce in Bedele Town 02 kebele.
- To explore the psychological impact of divorce.

## Methods

**Research Design:** in terms of time dimension, this study was employed cross-sectional research design i.e., one point at a time collection of data from target group. However, based on its relevance, this design was supplemented with approximation of longitudinal study design where by respondents were asked to furnish data relevant to the past with the aim of collecting relevant retrospective data concerning the causes and consequences of divorce and its manifestations. On the other hands, in terms of research approach, this study employed qualitative research approach. Because of the nature of the title and qualitative method is used to gain an understanding reason, opinion and motivations causes and consequences.

**Study Population:** This study was conducted on divorced parent's those who live in Bedele town, not only this study incorporates divorced parents, but also include different concerned bodies related to the issue in the study area such as religious leaders, judicial experts and social affairs.

**Sampling Technique:** For this study. researcher used non-probability sampling technique from non-probability sampling techniques purposive or judgmental sampling technique used for the key informant, convenience and snowball used for divorced parents were undertaken. The reason why the researcher selected non-probability sampling technique in order to taking a typical group of individual who might reflect or represent large population who can explain the nature of divorce in a given area, and the study population have not well-known place. So, it better to use this non-probability sampling technique to conduct this study. In this study the sample size were determined by data saturation. From divorced people the researcher used 8 informants. In addition to this the researcher used 3 key informants (judicial expert, social affairs and religious leaders) through purposive or judgmental. The samples were taken by the total population by using convenience or available and snowball non-probability sampling technique for divorced couples, because of the study population have not fixed and well-known place.

**Data Collection Instruments:** The objective of this study was to assess the causes and consequences of divorce. Therefore, the researcher used qualitative research method. Hence an assessment of the causes and consequences of divorce is more of qualitative than quantitative by its nature. There for this, study was conducted by qualitative research methods such as in-depth interview, case study and document analysis

**In-depth Interview guide:** In order to get genuine and reliable information unstructured interview guide was employed as qualitative data collection instrument.

why the researcher selects in depth interview because to get more information and to know in detail about feeling, idea and attitude towards divorce.

**Key Informant Interview:** The researcher gains information from key informant such as one from judicial expert, one from social affairs and one religious' leader through interview. There is high similarity of information from all sides, so the researcher obligated to analyze the data from all key informants together to avoid repetition.

**Case study:** In this study, the researcher used case study data collection method to know the personal experience of a single individual in relation to the given problem (divorce) to get more and further information about the issue. The researcher used false name to analyze the history of informant.

**Document analysis:** Document analysis is a form of quantitative research method in which document are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around the assessment of the issue. In this study, the researcher used document analysis qualitative data collection method in order to get additional information regarding to the issue.

The researcher employed semi-structured interview, which also used to supplement the ideas and question designed in the household survey. Informants for in-depth interview were selected from the member of the local community and other administrative member based of the purposive selection of the researcher.

**Methods of Data Analysis:** The data collected was analyzed using qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data, which was collected through in-depth interview, case study and document analysis, were analyzed through thematic analysis method.

## **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

---

### ***Factors that contribute for divorce***

---

Now a day divorce is one of the social problems that are occurring in great extents. As the result of this study, shows there are many factors, which are responsible for the occurrence of divorce these are;

### ***Economic causes of divorce***

---

The data gathered from informant through in-depth interview reveals that the economic factors were one of the leading factors for parents being divorced. Based on the finding 3 informant said economic problem has greatly contribute for their

divorce such as they cannot feed their children, problem of inability to get food on time, inability to cover expense of clothes, medical expense and children school fee. The remaining informant said social cause has responsible for their being divorced.

The informant added that difficulty of paying water, electricity and holiday expense not only cover their but also in ability to cover their children expense because of this situation disagreement was raise always between parents. So, this can be considered as a major factor for their divorce as case 1 reveals below;

**Case 1:** She was born in Bedele town kebele 02 she is 50 years old, 6 years ago she made divorce and during that time her husband was a daily laborer, now she is a mother of a child, as she told me about the cause and consequence of divorce in her lifetime sates as follows.

The main cause of responsible for her divorce was lack of economical resource to fulfill their family basic needs and when she becomes pregnant her husband was not comfortable with it and he ignore to support her because he has not sufficient source of income and he is HIV positive. One day he leaves out his home at night because, as she said, he considered the new born baby in the future becomes HIV positive and he will not be able to care of him, but she did not know whether her husband is HIV positive or nor her child too. When he come again, he could not get her as before due to this reason they got divorced. Today, she is living with her HIV-positive child, and her source of income is baking and selling injera by cooperation with her friends, and as she told me the response of her friends was positive towards her being divorce, now her living standard is relatively better than before because as she said without the expectation of someone every things possible and she created job and generate her own income.

### *Social Causes of Divorce*

---

Social factor is the one which contributes for divorce such as due to one of the partners basically the man addiction with chat, alcohol, cigarettes and different drugs, and social stigma because of these practices got a large share from other social causes. In addition to this there is sexual incompatibility infertility or in ability to give birth them both parents and lack of good communication has a significant contribution for divorce.

According to the majority of informant saying lack of communication, family intervention and extramarital sex constitutes for their divorce. They represented 5 informants. Among these five informants some of informants argued that fertility problem and sexual variation as a contributing factor for their divorce. For Instance,

we can understand much about the social causes of divorce by looking the case below.

**Case 1 :** He is 57 years old who was born in Bedele town 02 kebele and he follows traditional religion and he completed grade 12. Nowadays he is unemployed and he leads his life, on detainment income, because he served in Ethiopian electric power cooperation for a long period of time, and has 7 children and he was divorced for 3 years ago. He said that the cause for his marriage dissolution was inability to sexual intercourse with his wife. He has a natural problem related with his sexual organs. Following this there is a long term of conflict between them, even she tried to kill him due to this reason, so he took divorce as a solution not only for the conflict, but also, a mechanism for saving life. As he said when he compares his current income from the previous one it is very much little, since he is jobless because he led his life by retirement and absence of support from marriage partner.

During their divorce, the division process of their property was not fair; since much of the property was taken by his wife. As he said after divorce the response of his children and relatives was not positive still now. Additionally, his social interaction is not good he discriminated from different social aspects, he often financially, socially, psychologically and physical health problems suffers and he underlined that the man is very affected after. Since culturally we are not trained to prepare our food, washing cloths and cleaning house etc.

“No word to express my several feelings about divorce and its consequences on me, as you see can see my eyes are blinded since, I was not happy and dropped my tear on my face as a mechanism of coping now, no one is able and interested to support me, finally I am in trouble”.

**Case 2:** She was born and living in Bedele town kebele 02. she is 45 years old. In the last 1 year ago, she divorced and her husband was government employee. Now she is a mother of 2 children. To her the main cause of her divorce was lack of communication and her husband is adultery behavior. Before this her ex-husband cheated with his colleagues and she got divorce and now she engaging in cotton spin activity. Since she spent more time by keeping her children at home today, her income is not that much enough to cover her families basic need, because of this she cannot properly care her children. Even though the response of was good from her friends and families after she got divorce, and during their divorce division of property was fair, but she faced, so many social and economic problems like; lack of food, cloth and other consumption expense, hopelessness, stress and low social interaction with society. As to her, we women are more vulnerable for the consequence of divorce, since she faced these much problems listed above.

## Consequence of Divorce

---

### *Economic consequence of divorce*

---

Divorce has a negative consequence on specifically on individuals and also with society in general in economic condition. According to the finding of this study the majority of the informants reported that stressful economic situation is existed after they were being divorced, like in ability to feed them too.

Based on the data obtained from the informant through in-depth interview the majority of divorced women were engaged mainly on informal sector activity in the study area. Such as selling home product like Tella, Areke injury and collecting wood which does not require much individual skill, capital and profession. Some of the informant said that they were engage in formal activity like teacher profession. According to the majority of the informants argued that after divorce, the economic problem affects highly women than men, on the other hand one informant argued that men are more affected by divorce greater than women. but the majority of informant illustrated that Women's have lower probability of getting formal sector activity to secure their source of income and life. After they were being divorced full of difficulty and they forced to lead life in hand to mouth situation.

The study revealed that many divorced parents were not able to cope confronted and the living standard and quality of divorced couples had been negatively affected by economic condition caused by divorce. Based on this as the researcher got information from informants through interview; "We often financially suffer as a result of divorce due to lower earning potential. Although the economic hardship emanates from divorce affected both partners but women affected in special case. Since they are responsible for take care of their children and lead their livelihood. Therefore, the researcher concluded that based on the data, divorced parents faced several economic problems related to the reducing of their source of income.

### *Social Consequence of Divorce*

---

As the majority of informant argued, divorce affected their relationship with their relatives, friends and community. As they said, the society even look them with a different eye them the married ones. After their breakup of their family, the consequence of didn't stop not only on them but it also reaches their children in such situation like; there may be their child's poor academic performance in school,

become involved with drugs, alcohol, crime and prostitution and these problems transcend their adulthood stage.

Based on the finding, divorce changes the whole social dynamic not for divorced parents, but also whole family divorced partners. After being divorced, the social interaction and social life and income earning activities.

According to the majority of informant argument, divorced parents faced several problems, when they tried to remarry, since they are discriminated by the society and the society attaching to certain values and norms of after they being divorced, because of this forced to lead their life alone and these are hopeless to marry again.

### *Psychological Consequence of Divorce*

---

According to some literature and the result found in many studies support the fact that sleeplessness, loss of appetite and the like are very much seen after divorce. In this study the majority of informant argued that they feel the following symptoms after they being divorced, such as being depressed, having aggressive behavior, feeling of headache and conflict with their brother and relatives. Some of the informant argued that they didn't face any psychological problem after they being divorced rather, they faced economic and social problem. Therefore, the above-mentioned problem is beyond their control and affects the divorced individuals and lead them to different physical and mental health encounters, which are very dangerous for the individual life.

### *Reaction of society Towards Divorced Parents*

---

The majority of informants said that their friends and family were tolerant towards divorced. But some of informants argue that there is sort of discrimination towards divorce. One informant said that I am HIV positive and also, she made divorce, since 1years ago. Today the attitude of peoples towards divorce is positive even about HIV ADIS already changed. But she added society's reaction towards tome it different from people. Some people consider normal as other social activity, on the other hand, some people reaction towards this issue is negative. Therefor most divorced individual doesn't face any criticism and they get positive response from society as the data shows on the above explanation.

### *More seriously affected by Divorce*

---

Based on the finding, that the researcher gain through in-depth interview from the informant's women and their children were mostly affected by divorce in economic,



social and psychological aspects. The majority of women informant argued that the participation of women in economic and social aspect was too low after them being divorced. Because they have a responsibility to and the other one informant argued that both are affected by divorce equally.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that even though both are affected by divorce but women were mostly affected by divorce because they involve mainly informal sector activity like backing injury and selling of home products by such activities, they are not profitable.

### *Division of Property during Divorce*

---

Based on the data gathered through in-depth interview from the informants about the property division during divorce, the majority of informants said that as there was a fair division of. In the contrary some of them of divided their property in favor of one party. This condition leads the victim of party to request appeal to courts. As the above data shows after divorce, parents divided their property in fair manner.

### *Children Support after Divorce*

---

According to the data gathered through in-depth interview, all divorced parents considered their children well-being by giving priority attention. The majority of informant said that there is no anybody ready to help their children. Lack of child support payment was one of the factors of that further aggravated economic problem of divorced women's and their children. Some of the divorced women's informant said that ex-husband help their children but not regularly. The majority of women informant said that the responsibility to care children laid on us, from our income earned from daily labor. After parents being divorced mother took more likely to take sole child support role than fathers and other relatives. When we see child parent's relationship, children have a good relationship with their mother rather than their father. Since children got every accommodation and care from their mother, and this makes children disgraceful for their father.

### *Analysis of Data from Key Informant*

---

The researcher gains information from key informant such as one from judicial expert, one from social affairs and one religious' leader through interview. There is high similarity of information from all sides, so the researcher obligated to analyze the data from all key informants together to avoid repetition.

According to the key informant divorce has different economic and social cause such as lack of communication between parent's, extramarital sex, relative intervention, family arranging the larger share from the other causes.

According to social affairs expert divorce has long and short-term impact on individual and community at large. For individuals they may get shortage of food for themselves and their children like dropout of children from their education under the age of 18 years, housing problem, lack of educational materials, clothes, labour exploitation of children. On The mother side they may engage in prostitution activity to satisfy her and her children need. On the other hand, after divorce expanded community crime activity like theft, robbery and illegal trade activity etc.

According to judicial expert, the general overall process of divorce is follows legal system and according to all key informants illustrated that divorce is now in increasing rate time to time.

Most of the time, families who have more children are more likely vulnerable to divorce. Because there are more children everything becomes complex for the partners and they not govern their family especially their source of income is very low.

As the religious leader said, everyone us has the responsibility of holding family together and religious institution more than anyone else must preach the sanctity of marriage and the spiritual as well as moral consequence of divorce. Religious leader added that marriage is an institution established by God, so divorce is the act going against God, will.

### *Document Analysis*

---

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research method in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around the assessment of the issue. In this study the researcher used document analysis qualitative data collection method in order to get additional information regarding to the issue. According to the data that the researcher got through document analysis, there are socio-economic factors that contribute for the increasing rate of divorce in the study area. Among these lack of communication between spouses, emotionally, psychically abuse, financial problems, sexual incompatibility, drug abuse, relatives and third person intervention, inability to support each other and inability to encounter their credit together after they got loan from out.

Based on the above stated information, the researcher concludes as there are a complex of causes and consequences of divorce which can not been determined in a single action and it needs a collaborative effort to minimize its effect on the individuals and the community at large.

## Conclusion and Policy Implication

---

From the data presented and analyzed earlier, the following conclusion was drawn regarding the issue under investigation. There are different factors that contribute for increasing the rate of divorce in Bedele town 02 kebele where this study was conducted. The occurrence of divorce as the researcher understood from the data, people with 30-60 age groups were more likely vulnerable to divorce. Based on the finding, the majority of the informants were women, orthodox Christian religious follower, and illiterate, still they are divorced or not re-married again, half of the informants were engaging in different occupation and half of informant has not. The data gathered from informants through in-depth interviews some of the informants reveals that economic factor was one of the leading factors for their divorce like they cannot feed their children, inability to get food on time etc. According to the finding this study the majority of informants reported that stressful economic situation exists after they were being divorced. The study revealed that many divorced couples were not able to cope with their economic hardship, they had confronted.

The living standards and quality of divorced parents had been negatively affected and economic circumstances severely affect those partners after they got divorce. Based on the finding of the study there are social factors which contributes for divorce such as addiction with chat, alcohol, cigarettes and drug. According to the findings; lack of communication, family interference and extramarital sex constitutes as the basic social factors for divorce. After being they were divorced the majority of informants said there is low social interaction and social participation decreased especially women, and divorce has a psychosocial consequence on divorced couples, their children, and society at large.

The findings of the study reveals that the response of their family and relatives towards divorce were positive and the finding shows that, the process of property division is fair after the occurrence of divorce. And mostly women's take the sole responsibility to care their children . according to the finding, the social life of divorced parents in the study area was affected since they are divorced, as a result divorce changed the quality of social relationship. According to the

## Recommendations

---

- The cause and consequences of divorce in divorced parents, their children, and society have been clearly assessed. It is also necessary to forward recommendations on the basis of the major findings of the study.

- Couples must know about their personal background and social position before entering to marriage.
- Family members should get religious teachings because they are important to remove disruptive behaviors like, drug abuse, alcoholic behavior and extramarital sex and it can solve marriage related problems.
- The study also suggest that spouse have to be limited to one friend one to one then have to bear their children depending on their income, through their agreement on different angle.
- Religious leaders, NGOs and social workers should give special focus to strengthen marriage and solving marriage related problems.
- The government should raise the living standard of peoples by designing different projects, because low economic status is one of the causes of divorce as the finding shows.
- Education and training should be given for the community to use family planning in order to reduce the family size, since large family size may be cause divorce because they couldn't full fill all the needs of the members; as a result, family with large family size is more vulnerable to divorce.
- Any stakeholder should create awareness towards the consequence of divorce on parents as well as on the community.
- The coordination of different sector (such as justice, economic and social affairs) is necessary to reduce the rate of divorce in the study area.

## References

---

- Amato, P. (2010). Research on divorce: Continuing trends and development.
- Amato, P. (2009). The consequence of Divorce for Adults and Children, *Journals of Marriage and Family* 62(4); 1269-1287.
- Daniel, T, (2006). The social and Economic problem of divorced women; An assessment of the causes and divorced women as cited by Serkalem B, (2010) Addis Ababa.
- Dawn Sutton (2013). The three major sociological perspectives on Divorce.
- Emily Daskow. Attorney (2012). Kinds of divorce 4th Edition.
- Federal Negarit Gazette of Federal Democratic of Ethiopia the Revised Family Code Proclamation of (2009). Addis Ababa.
- Gary S, Becker (2001, 1991) Treatise on the family Harvard University.

Linda A. Mooney, David Knox Caroline Schacht (2005). Understanding social problem, Fifth edition's 160-163.

Patrick F, Fagan and Aaron Churchill (2012): The effect of divorce on children.

Serkalem, B (2010) Divorce; its cause and consequences on the lives of divorced women and their children, Addis Ababa University (msw).