Marriage breakup reasons of divorced applicant Couples

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Abstract

Introduction: The aim of the present research was to examine the reasons for marriage breakup from the perspective of the couples who were applicants for divorce.

Materials and methods: The sample consisted of 28 couples, who were applicants for divorce in the Judiciary House of Kermanshah. Participants were recruited through purposeful criterion sampling procedures and interviewed accordingly. Couples who met criterions include at least, 2 years of marriage, experiencing chronic and severe conflict and the reason of applying for divorce must not be acute psycho-physiological complications or special disabilities which make the continuation of marital life difficult.

Results: The data in this research were collected through conducting in-depth interviews with couples, one member of which was applicants for divorce. The reasons for marriage failure among the research sample include Premarital Factors like Marriage with Improper Motive, escaping from social pressures and unpleasant atmosphere of paternal house and coerced wedding and Post-marriage factors encompass, Little presence of husband at home and the continuation of celibacy bonds ,Non-separation from the family of origin, Non-separation from the family of origin, Gender role conflicts, Lack of sexual attraction, violence, infidelity, Suspicion, Financial problems, Addiction.

Conclusion: Theoretical and research localization and designing interventions on the basis of contextual knowledge are important suggestions and at the same time challenging that can be deduced from the findings of the present research

1. Introduction

Divorce rates have increased worldwide. For first marriages, it is approximately 40%–45% in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia and 40% in Germany (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001; Census Bureau, 2002; cited in Baucom et al., 2006). As a developing country, Iran is not an exception. It has experienced

an ascending pace of divorce rate. The divorce rate in Iran has been declared to be around 13% in 2010 (Iran census bureau, 2010), which seems much lower in comparison with developed countries. However, it must be admitted that this statistic gets a whole different meaning when considering the contextual factors (cultural, social and legal). The meaning of 13% becomes more obvious when we take heed of this note that there are both serious legal obstacles for women and financial obstacles for men throughout the process of putting an end to their marital relationship. Consequently, many people are unable to meet their demand for divorce in spite of having serious marital problems and willingness toward getting rid of such an unpleasant relationship.

With regard to the deleterious effects of marriage instability on divorced individuals and their children (for a review see Amato and Previti, 2003; Amato, 2010), investigating into the reasons for marriage breakup has received special attention from the side of researchers. As a result, a large number of researches have been trying to find an answer to this question that why most marriages end in divorce (Morgan, 1992; Sweet and Bumpass, 1990). One way for finding the answer to this question has been the exploration of marriage breakup reasons from the perspective of the divorced individuals or the applicants of divorce. The noticeable point about the findings of these researches is that the peoples from diverse racial-cultural contexts report different reasons for marriage breakup. For instance, Moore and Schwebel (1993) found that Whites reported child care/rearing and communication problems, while African Americans indicated extramarital affairs and physical abuse as the major reasons for their divorce. Similarly, in Chang's research (2004), the reasons reported by the Korean immigrant women were different from those of their American counterparts. The Korean immigrant women cited concrete abusive/negative behaviors and financial problems as their reasons for divorce, while non-Korean American women tended to report abstract and affective reasons. Huston's (2000) idea is also congruent with this. He points out that the marital relationships do not exist in a vacuum but they are embedded within socio-cultural contexts that have the ability to influence their processes and consequences. The focus of the present research is the exploration of factors which contribute to marital instability in the socio-cultural context of Iran.

1.1. Review of Literature:

Perhaps, the first research into the reasons of divorce from the viewpoints of divorced individuals was done by Godeh (1948). The women participating in his research mentioned their ex-husband's nonsupport, heavy drinking, and neglect as the main reasons for divorce. Since then, many researches have been conducted in this area, the findings of which have been summed up in table.1

Reviewing the relevant literature, Chang (2003) points out that some changes have occurred in the reported reasons of divorce through the recent decades. He suggests that concrete negative behaviors such as "drinking" and "non-support" were the major complaints for divorce in the initial researches, but in the last two decades more affective and abstract reasons such as "conflicting lifestyles" or "a spouse wanting freedom" became frequently cited reasons for divorce (Kitson and Sussman, 1982).

Chang recognizes the changes in the cultural views toward divorce as one of the reasons for this shift. Furthermore, this idea has been put forward that the cultural norms of pluralism or its polar opposite i.e. individualism have strong implications for marriage breakup (Sastry, 1999 cited in Madathil and Benshoff, 2008). In pluralistic communities, the instrumental factors are more salient; in other words, concrete problems of the marital life (such as the financial problems) have a more important role in marriage breakup. But, in individualistic communities, the higher level psychological needs such as love, intimacy and self-actualization have a special significance too (Madathil and Benshoff, 2008).

Table1. Reported divorce reasons concerning important findings

Research	Findings(reported divorce reasons)

Kittson (1992)	Commitment to work, Problems with in-laws, External events, extramarital sex, Personality, Drinking, extramarital sex, Sexual problems, Economic nonsupport, untrustworthiness or immaturity, Lack of communication
Bloom et al (1985)	physical abuse, drinking or drug use
Cleek & Pearson (1985)	Alcohol abuse, Basic unhappiness, Incompatibility, Emotional and physical abuse, Infidelity
Fletcher(1983)	Personality problems, Negative attitudes, Specific behaviors, Extramarital sex.
Granvold et al(1979)	Lack of communication, Conflict over roles/responsibilities, lifestyle values, Extramarital sex, Sexual problems
Chan and Mostaffa(2008)	Infidelity, No longer in love, Emotional problems
Zargar and Neshatdoost(2008)	Communication problems, Addiction, Interference of family members, Mental disorders
Amato & Previti (2003)	Most commonly reported causes were infidelity, followed by incompatibility, drinking or drug abuse, and growing apart.
Savaya & Cohen(2003)	Physical, verbal and sexual abuse, Lack of commitment to the marriage and the family, alcoholism, Mental illness, interference by in-laws, Lack of communication, conflict over traditional/modern lifestyle

Anyway, the issue of culture necessitates carrying out separate researches into diverse socio-cultural contexts and the question, "what factors lead to marriage breakup in the socio-cultural context of Iran?" requires separate research attempts. However, a few researches have been done to find the answer to the above question (Khojastehmehr and Takrimi, 2009; Zargar and Neshatdoost, 2008; Aghajanian and Moghadas, 1998) which are firstly very few in number and secondly they have used the quantitative approach and thirdly they have not made a distinction between the marital dissatisfaction factors which are not the direct causes of marriage breakup and the breakup antecedents by which one of the spouses proceed to adopt practical measures for putting an end to marital relationship. For instance, the spouse's messiness (Khojastehmehr and Takrimi, 2009) could be one of the dissatisfaction reasons and also an preparatory factor for other reasons that bring about marriage breakup, but it cannot be as the sole reason of breakup per se. still, marital violence can be deemed as the direct reason of marriage breakup. Nonetheless, the distinction between these two sets of variables has not been taken into attention in previous researches and this case can be

Conceived as one of the limitations of these researches.

Attending to the above mentioned limitations, the aim of the present research has been the examination of the marriage breakup reasons with a qualitative approach so that besides considering the participants' viewpoints regarding the breakup reasons of marriage, the two sets of breakup reasons, i.e., the preparatory reasons and the immediate consequences, would be distinguished from each other separately.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The sample consisted of 28 couples, who were applicants for divorce in the Judiciary House of Kermanshah, a city which is located in the west of Iran. Participants were recruited through purposeful criterion sampling procedures and interviewed accordingly. Purposeful sampling is based on selecting a sample from which the most can be learned about the research question (Creswell, 2007). Couples who met the following criteria were selected for participation in the study: 1. At least, 2 years must have passed since their marriage 2. The couples must have experienced chronic and severe conflict 3. The reason of applying for divorce must not be acute psycho-physiological complications or special disabilities which make the continuation of marital life difficult.

The age range of the women was 18-42 with a mean of 28.9 and that of men was 23-45 with a mean of 33.4 years. The marriage onset age for women

was 16-35 years with a mean of 22.2 and that of men was 20-35 with a mean of 27.6 years. Finally, the duration of marriage was 2-18 years with a mean of 6.1 years. Among the 28 couples, except for 2 individuals, all divorce applicants were women.

2.2. Data Collection

The data in this research were collected through conducting in-depth interviews with couples, one member of which was applicants for divorce. With regard to this point that the interviews were conducting in the judiciary house consultation room, the participants were concerned that their revealed information might be used as legal evidence for later prosecution. So, the first step was to ascertain the couples that the interview data would be used only for research purposes and wouldn't be influential throughout their judicial proceedings. Following the removal of this concern, the conscious consent form was filled out by the participants and then the interview began. The preliminary question was this: "Why some factors have compelled you to opt for divorce?" This question was followed by additional explanation. The couples were asked to retrospect as much as they could and explain the emergence of the experienced problem regarding the connubial relationship and do not suffice to the recent happenings prior to applying for divorce.

Most couples described the story of their connubial life and problems experienced since the initiation of their shared life. However, there were also couples who had experienced a satisfactory life at the beginning of their marriage and were faced with problem afterward. The interview with each couple was conducted in two sessions which took about 45 minutes each. In the first session, the story of marriage failure was probed since beginning and the interviews were analyzed and encoded between the two sessions and the ambiguous areas or those areas which required more probing were being identified. In the second session, these areas were being probed into and the extracted themes and categories were shared with the couples so that the credibility of the researcher's inference from the participants'

descriptions would be ensured. Finally, this question was being asked: "The absence of which problem could have impeded the divorce applicant from proceeding to divorce?" The answer to this question isolated the two sets of factors from each other; the factors that result in dissatisfaction and conflict in marital life but the divorce applicant preferred to cope with them and put up with the present situation, and the factors that were unbearable for him/her and had compelled him/her to opt for putting an end to the marital relationship.

3. Results

The analysis of the participants' descriptions about the consequential reasons of divorce culminated in the identification of factors that are shown in table.2. Some of these factors have been frequently reported in other researches but some of them have not been attended to sufficiently in previous researches and it seems that most topics have risen from the cultural context of the participants.

3.1. Premarital Factors:
3.1.1. Marriage with Improper Motive

One of the reasons for marriage failure among the research sample was the formation of marriage on the basis of improper goals and motives. Some of the divorce applicants (esp. the women) reported that their marriage had been failed because they had not married due to love and interest or on the basis of proper criteria. Two issues are mention-worthy in this regard: First, some women had married in order to escape from the social pressures attached to being celibate. In the cultural context of the researched sample, the raising of single girls is construed as an unpleasant situation and as a result, marriage is preferred over staying celibate in some cases. Therefore, some marriages are formed that are destined to fail right from scratch.

> *Since our engagement, we found out that we are fit for each other. We tried to break up a few times…but my family created an atmosphere that I was compelled to surrender to marriage…they were afraid that this suitor was the last option for me and otherwise I had to stay celibate till the end of my life. As my age was high too, they pressured me a lot so that I myself felt*

that I must marry at least for their consent (a 36-year-old woman who had married at the age of 28).

Table2. Premarriage and post marriage divorce factors

Marriage with improper motive	Conflict with in-laws
- for escaping from social pressures - for escaping from the unpleasant atmosphere of paternal house coerced wedding	Little presence of husband at home and the continuation of celibacy bonds Non-separation from the family of origin Gender role conflicts Lack of sexual attraction violence infidelity Suspicion Financial problems Addiction

Second, the main motivation for some other marriages was to get away from the unpleasant atmosphere of the paternal family. The conflict-fraught families led their children toward the point that they would prefer an improper marriage over their presence in their paternal home. With regard to this point that in the cultural context of the researched sample, the boys have the opportunity to attend more at outside-home environment and to balance the pressures inside the improper setting of their families and on the other hand marriage brings about huge obligations for them, it is the girls who find tolerating such a situation tough and see marriage as a proper solution for escaping from home.

> *I did not marry because of love or interest. I just wanted to get away from my family…I wanted to get rid of the quarrels and swear words which were rampant and occurring day by day. Everybody in our home had animosity with each other; my father with my mother, my father with my brother…it was like a battle field. The atmosphere inside our home was too bad that most of the times I thought of committing suicide or escaping from home and when I was familiarized with my husband, I felt that I have found the best way of running away (a 23 year-old woman who had applied for divorce due to her idle husband's frequent violence).*

3.2.1. Coerced Wedding

Some of the marriages had been consummated by the coercion of family, irrespective of the individuals' free will. In the cultural context of the researched sample, decision making about the marriage of offspring's, esp. the girls', is done by their parents. Among the interviewees, there were some individuals who had married in spite of their own willingness and only because of the persistence and coercion of their parents. Even in some cases, when the individual had resisted against the coercion, she was confronted with terror, intimidation and too much unexpected reactions that she preferred escaping from home by means of marriage over staying and grinning.

> *My marriage was a coerced one; it was not my own choice. My parents did not allow me to make a decision by myself. They had determined that it was an appropriate case but I disagreed…I could not resist against their decision either since I knew that I disagreed with their words, they would make the home into a hell for me…after marriage I didn't have any interest in him either. I bore him willy-nilly because he was too far away from my own ideals.*

3.2. Post-marriage Factors:
3.2.1. Conflict with In-laws

One of the factors resulting in marital conflict was the discrepancy between either sides with the spouse's family of origin, esp. those that were between the wife and her in-laws. Two important points is mention-worthy regarding this issue. First, the attitude of some families toward the bride was as if she were their bondwoman. They recognize the bride as a bondwoman who must behave respectfully, humbly and in a self-sacrificing manner in front of her in-laws under any conditions.

Although the bride lives in another place and has an independent life bereft of any shared preoccupations with her in-laws, she is entangled in an invisible web of expectations emanating from the aforementioned attitude which brings about a lot of problems for these individuals and their relationships. Second, when these disagreements pop up, which are mainly about unimportant matters, husbands opt for taking the side of their families and hence they intensify the conflict at both marital dyad and intergenerational levels.

> *Once we married, we did not have any special problem till his family's excessive coming and going to our house changed it into a real hell…one time, when his parents came from their town and stayed in our house for several days, I did not dispense with respecting them in spite of the fact that I was at work from morning till night…but after they returned, they called my husband and told him that I was not warm enough with them…consequently, I was battered badly and couldn't be as usual when they came to our house afterwards. I was battered many times because of them,… and whenever I hear their names, a feeling of hatred haunts me…he accepts everything that they say and he always prefers them over me. He had repeatedly said that if I ever disagreed with his family, I would be omitted and that he could not ignore them because of me… (a 22-year-old woman).*

3.2.2. Little presence of husband at home and the continuation of celibacy bonds:

The allocation of excessive time to celibacy bonds which had been mostly done from the side of the husbands and followed by making apologies and making up stories for justifying their lack of presence beside their wife, had created dissatisfaction and serious conflicts in marital relationships. This issue had led to a few consequences in some cases which had facilitated marriage breakup (suspicion, violence, and temporary separation).

> *Once in the first week of our marriage, my husband was supposed to come a bit earlier to go to my father's house together. I was going to get ready when he called and said in a rush that " I have come across with a bad luck by having an accident with an old woman who is not at the hospital and I have to be beside her to see what I should do". I was scared to death. After calling the alleged hospital, I found out that it was just a lie. I tried calling his cell phone a few times but*

> *no answer was given. Then, following a splitting headache, I called on one of his colleagues to see if he knew anything about him. His colleague said that he was there while I could hear a loud sound of music and dancing over the phone. I was assured that he was there. This was just one of his lying cases and deceitfulness. In addition, he didn't take charge of anything; as soon as I said something, he counteracted with the ugliest imaginable swear words and finally he threw me out of house after battering me and used to say: "I am like this; take it or leave it; your dad is waiting for you" (a 42 year-old woman).*

3.2.3. Non-separation from the family of origin:

Among the most important factors for marital dissatisfactions and conflicts which had abetted in marriage breakup and had been frequently reported by the participants was the non-separation of the spouse from the family of origin. This issue had two facets: lack of independence in decision making and the continuation of the responsibilities of celibacy period in the family of origin. Lack of independence in decision making becomes more obvious when one or both sides try to consult with their families of origin instead of trusting in their own capabilities and insist on executing their viewpoints. The result of this situation is the emergence of dissatisfaction and serious conflicts in the marital dyad which pave the way for marriage breakup. Another facet of non-separation from the family of origin is the continuation of responsibilities which the individual used to undertake when he was single in the family of origin. The most important issue in this regard is the financial dependence of the family of origin to the married offspring. The tension heightens specifically when the financial requirements of the couple interfere with those of the family of origin. Among the studied couples, only men encountered with this problem. Conflict starts when women complain directly or indirectly due to lack of fulfillment of personal needs and conceiving the grant of financial assistance to the family of origin as an unjust thing to do. These complaints are mostly construed by men as insult, derision and jealousy toward the family of origin and accordingly evoke certain reactions which results in the negative interaction cycle of connubial relationships.

> *My child and I became the victims of his family. Our income is not so much that we could afford his family*

expenditures too. I often tell him that if he couldn't isolate his financial expenditures from his family, why did he marry in the first place? Or at least you'd better remind this issue to me right from scratch so that I knew what to do about it. I want to have control of my own life and at the same time our conditions become better that before… the problem doesn't lie in financial assistance either. For instance, if her mother became sick, none of his brothers would come over her; he goes to her and takes her to doctor, even his mother asks him for help when they want to buy a new house……nonetheless, what are we supposed to do? (a 29-year-old woman).

3.2.4. Gender role conflicts

The most common reason for conflict and dissatisfaction which was almost expressed by all participating couples in the research was gender role discrepancies. Husbands were inclined to traditional gender role attitudes. They expected behaviors, beliefs and attitudes from wives which recognized by them as illogical and unfair. The traditional gender role attitude, which forms the basis of marital interactional behaviors in men, is rooted in this belief that men possess a higher status than women, decision making exclusively belongs to them and women must be obedient to their expectations and aspirations. In contrast, women advocated the egalitarian attitudeand believed that their husbands must engage them too in the process of decision making and avoid overlooking them. The following paragraph relates the sayings of a woman about the enforcement of extreme limitations by husband:

I can't understand why he tends to tell me what do or not to do so much and what his main intention behind all of these orders is. Why am I not allowed to get of the house from the time he leaves for work till he is back? Why should we only keep in touch with his relatives….even, he doesn't allow me to go to my nephew's birthday celebration while we neither do have any dissension with them nor they have done sth bad to us. When I ask for the reason, he just says: "I don't like it". In your idea, who can put up with his behaviors? He wants solely to prove that his words, though too illogical, are true. My tolerance has a threshold; I am not his bondwoman. I think that they do not behave with a bondwoman like this… who has claimed that men can do anything to their wives just because of their breadwinner role in the family and

men can deprive women of any freedoms (a 27 year-old woman with a non-traditional marriage).

On the other hand, husbands see women's disobedience and recalcitrance as the main reasons of marital dissatisfaction and conflicts.

The first thing I told her was that I do not like my wife to fuss over everything with me and it is me that must always tell the last word. But she adopted a non-compatible attitude from the beginning…she did not have any interest in life at all. A woman must be obedient if she is concerned with her life; both religion and law mention that women must be obedient. I did not agree with her continuing of her education but I permitted her despite my unwillingness. This mistake made her bold and she thought that whenever she resists against my words, I will ever surrender….the kind of battering that she claims of is also due the fact that she snaps at me very easily. I didn't allow her to go to work because I didn't want her to work where men attend too. I have asked her to conceive a child for two years but she always makes excuses as a revenge for not allowing her to go to work…

Relationships with friends and in-laws, and wives' education and work are the issues in which the most gender role conflicts manifest itself. Particularly, conflicts pop up when the men who see decision making and power as their clear right try to adopt a series of attempts for making women obedient in its full epiphany without any flexibility and justify their aspirations and expectations logically until these attempts come across with women's resistance.

3.2.5. Lack of sexual attraction

In the present cultural context, most individuals experience the first intimate relationship with the opposite sex throughout marriage and the most important criterion for selecting a spouse, especially for men, is the physical and sexual attraction which they can find in their potential wife. In these marriages, when the initial sexual attraction diminishes or its amount differs drastically with individuals' initial perceptions, the connubial relationship gets prone to serious risks. The following paragraph implicates in the statements of a husband who had faced with his wife's compliant due to his second marriage and making beyond-connubial relations. He recognized her wife's lack of sexual appeal as the main reason for their marriage inconsistency:

To tell the truth, I was too young when I married. I didn't have any relations with girls and consequently, my choice was not a conscious one. In other words, I did not know anything about women's subtleties and beauty…If I married now; I would definitely have another choice. Of course, it is a fact that I made a mistake but I do not want to divorce her. I just want her to be satisfied and I am sure that three of us can live together and if she had a little more sense of devotion, three of us could be prosperous (a 33-year-old man).

Another effect of a deficiency in sexual appeal on the marital consequences is described in the following paragraph. Although this case seems so rare and exceptional, it refers to the effect of cultural norms on marriage consequences:

You know, sometimes familial problems originate from reasons that are not easy to express…our marriage had been quite traditional; my wife was familiar with one of my relatives. When we went to the suiting session, she came with a full Islamic head gear covering whole her body and I could see barley her face…I could see her full appearance just after our engagement. I didn't know that her limbs are so big and virile; the thing that I hate a lot…Thus, if I had known this fact before engagement, I would not have married with her…after all, her sexual passion is too high and this issue racks my nerves. Things went on till I asked her to have a baby just because of getting rid of her… (a 27-year-old man).

3.2.6. Aggression

Connubial aggression was one of the main reasons of opting for divorce and putting an end to marriage. Physical aggression was the most common consequence of connubial conflicts in failed marriages that was committed by men against women. From a chronological perspective, aggression had been started from engagement and before the initiation of marital life in some failed marriages. In other cases, it had occurred immediately after the initiation of the shared life and in some other cases, it had been intensified gradually as a result of chronic conflicts. The main characteristics of aggressive behavior in failed marriages were their high frequency and intensity. Cases like shoving, and throwing from the top of the stairs, breaking of the skull, picking hair and getting hospitalized as a result of the injuries and physical aggression damages were reported by some women.

3.2.7. Betrayal

Extramarital relations were one the most important reasons for marriage breakup. The main point regarding betrayal is that betrayal-driven behavior had a sexual basis and the rate and the reasons for men and women in engaging in betrayal were different. Regarding the amount of engagement in betrayal, men had perpetrated connubial betrayal more than women (14 men versus 3 women). They had easily committed betrayal as a result of not much severe connubial conflicts and dissatisfactions. However, women had committed betrayal either for taking revenge from husbands after making sure of his committing of betrayal or from their own family of origin due to obliging her to say yes to a coerced marriage or even after a long period of having connubial conflicts with their husbands and not experiencing sexual-emotional intimacy. Some women reported that they had been deeply tempted to take revenge after their husbands' betrayal was disclosed but prevented themselves from enacting their intention for some reasons, including a sense of guilt, fear of the consequences, and firm decision for divorce.

3.2.8. Suspicion

Suspicion was reported in relation to both the spouse's pre-and-post-marriage relationships. In the cultural context of the researched sample, non-marriage relationship with an opposite sex, which is religiously deemed as banned, esp. for girls, is considered as unacceptable. Most men dispense with marrying to such a woman in case of knowing about her previous relationships. There were some people among the researched sample that were afflicted with mental obsession about the likelihood of such relationships. This issue, esp. for husbands whose wife was grown in her step-father's house, had been transformed into a serious problem. Since from a religious point of view, the relatives of the step-father are deemed as Namahram (the people who are religiously banned to make contact with each other), familial relationships with the male relatives before marriage and the possibility of non-religious contact of the daughter with the male relatives of the step-father had been turned into a bothering preoccupation and mental worry for the husbands. Accordingly, the behavioral consequences such as

excessive controlling of wife, extreme restrictions on relationships with the family of origin and suspicion about the wife's current relationships paved the way for marriage breakdown through the intensification of connubial and intergenerational conflicts. The concern of one of the husbands comes in the following paragraph:

> *There is an issue that has annoyed me in the past few years. I can't get along with it at all…the problem is that she had been raised in a family in which all the men coming there had been religiously banned for her to contact with. How can be sure that nothing had happened there during this long time? How can I accept that those who used to come there were good guys? One time we had a discussion and she got crossed with me and went to her mother's house. Later, I understood that her mother had not been at home and she had spent the whole afternoon with her step brother in that house. I am sure that sth has occurred; I mean it existed before too and still continues.*

In the post-marriage period, suspicion had been manifested in form of individuals' dubiety in their spouse's fidelity and accordingly making attempts for the excessive control and accusing each other with betrayal.

> *It was not important for me any longer. When I was still loyal to him, he behaved with me as if he was sure about my betrayal. He always used to check my home phone and cell phone. Even after going to my own father's house, I had to explain for one hour about where I had gone, who I had talked with, who had I gone with, who had been there, why I had gone early and come late; fortunately enough, he didn't install any camera at home! He was simply sure that I had betrayed him and considered me as a whore who was supposed to be gotten rid of. He blemished me too much that we got far from each other and…. Well, you know better that when a woman does not see any affection from her husband, she would feel a gap in her soul as a consequence. So, I preferred to fulfill my needs from another source. It was not the sort of thing that I myself had chosen; the main person to be blamed is he, who obliged me to enter into such relationship (a 36-year-old woman).*

3.2.9. Financial problems

Financial problems were among the issues which had led to dissatisfaction and connubial conflicts through different mechanisms. The first such mechanism was blaming the spouse for not being able to financially support the family. In the cultural context of the researched sample, the financial support of the family is up to the husband and some men were unable to fulfill the primary needs of the family due to being unemployed or having a low-paid occupation. Thus, the consequent pressures emanating from such a situation had led to blaming and accusing behaviors by wives and intensifying connubial conflicts. The second mechanism was conflict over the way of spending money; in other words, the prioritizing of needs was different from the viewpoints of husband and wife and both recognized different needs as prior. Most financial conflicts were related to this point that the women have more propensity toward allocating money for their psychological needs such as beauty and social status while the husbands viewed such spending as a token of recklessness, and ungratefulness. The third mechanism through which financial poverty created and intensified the connubial conflicts was paving the way for the meddling of the families of origin. The couples who had received financial aid from their family of origin or were residing in the paternal house of either side were more susceptible to getting damaged. Financial problems in this mechanism had damaged marriage more by developing inter-generational conflicts.

3.2.10. Addiction

Addiction was one of the reported factors that had led to marriage breakup, esp. opting for divorce. Among the 28 studied couples, except for 5 couples, addiction contributed to the breakup of all marriages. The point that needs to be taken into account is that addiction had a sexual basis and it was just a men's problem. None of the women had addiction problem from among the couples who were studied. In addition, in some cases, the already formed connubial conflicts emanating from addiction had resulted in consequences which had hastened the breakup procedure, like connubial aggression and the engagement of families of origin in conflicts.

3.3. Conflict Factor or Breakup Factor?

The initial question from the participants was "why did your marriage fail?" Further investigation into the reasons of marriage failure was also based on answering to this question. But, at the end of the interview, another question was asked too. After presenting the list of reported problems by the applicant of divorce, s/he was asked considering the absence of which factor, would they dispense with divorce? The expressed responses revealed that the following quadruplet factors have led to applying for divorce: 1) addiction, 2) betrayal, 3) aggression, 4) severe conflict with the spouse family (esp. physical struggle). Therefore, all of the factors can be considered as the dissatisfaction and conflict factors or as those factors which pave the way for the occurrence of the aforementioned quadruplet problems. In other words, although among the studied samples numerous factors were introduced as causes of marriage failure, one of the sides opted for putting an end to connubial relationship when one or some of the cases among the above-mentioned quadruplet factors had already been raised.

4. Discussion

The aim of the present research was to examine the reasons for marriage breakup from the perspective of the couples who were applicants for divorce. This research had two basic differences with the previous studies on the reasons for marriage breakup. First, in contrast to the previous researches which were mainly on the basis of statistical data, this research was conducted with a smaller sample and by using the in-depth interview. Second, the previous researches had not distinguished between the reasons of dissatisfaction and the reasons for opting for divorce, but these two groups of variables were separated from each other in this research. The findings indicate that in the cultural context of the researched sample, there are only a few numbers of factors that had compelled the couples to adopt practical measures for putting an end to their connubial relationship (addiction, aggression, betrayal, and severe conflict with the spouse's family of origin). Although there are a lot of factors that bring about connubial dissatisfaction and conflict, individuals get ready to leave the relationship only in extreme situations.

As a matter of fact, putting an end to marriage does not occur as a result of abstract reasons or higher level psychological needs, but opting for divorce has concrete reasons which make the maintenance of the shared life almost impossible. Perhaps this situation is a consequence of the cultural norms governing on the Iranian society which reserves a lot of value for preserving the institution of family, and divorce is often deemed as an unacceptable affair except in extremely dire situations. In addition, in the cultural context of Iran, marriage is viewed as a lifelong obligation and there are serious legal-economical obstacles toward putting an end to connubial life. The reasons for the long list of some previous researches which has sometimes enumerated more that 30 reasons for divorce are because either it has focused on the causes for the non-distinguish ability of dissatisfaction reasons and the reasons for divorce or the fact that the problems which are not that much dire can be the reason for putting an end to marriage in the cultural context of the researched samples in these studies. However, it must be mentioned that distinguishing between these two sets of factors does not mean that the reasons of dissatisfaction are ineffective in the occurrence of divorce but their effects have been identified in various other researches by helping the occurrence of the four factors which are mentioned in the present research, including aggression, betrayal, addiction, financial problems and conflict over sexuality-driven roles. But some of the factors in the previous researches, esp. those which have been done in Western countries, have not received ample attention. For instance, coerced marriages or marriage for escaping from the social pressures emanating from staying celibate have not been alluded to as the issues that are effective on marriage consequences. In the Western culture, love and right to choose are considered as the prerequisites for the formation of marriage. Hence, there is no room in the family and marriage literature for interference in the problems that have risen as a result of a coerced marriage or marriages which have been consummated with motives other than love and inter-individual appeals.

Another finding that requires special attention is the prominent role of families of origin in their offspring's marriage breakup. In the cultural context of the researched sample, instead of this point that

the quality of marriage must be an outcome of compatibility between the couples, it is more up to the compatibility between a large group consisting of the couple and the families of origin with each others. It is natural that the likelihood for the intensification of conflicts and inter-individual disagreements is more in the second manner and the connubial unit becomes prone to serious threats and dangers. This issue has not been attended to in the family consultation and marriage literature either. Most theories of couple therapy have focused their interventions on the connubial duet and the theories that have attended to the role of families of origin (like Framo, Boen) have focused on the inter-generation transmission of behavioral-attitudinal-excitement patterns and the families' meddling in the connubial affairs of their offspring and accordingly paving the way for their marriage breakup have been overlooked; an issue that might have more prominence in pluralistic societies but is not considered as an important issue in individualistic cultures.

All in all, the findings of the present research indicate that the theories and researches of family and marriage consultant which have been formed in the individualistic cultural context of the West do not describe at least some parts of the connubial experiences in the cultural context of the researched sample. Theoretical and research localization and designing interventions on the basis of contextual knowledge are important suggestions and at the same time challenging that can be deduced from the findings of the present research.

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