

A Study of Divorce and Conflict (Case Study: Typology of Divorce and Role Conflict of Divorced Women Covered by the Relief Committee in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province)

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Abstract

Introduction: This study aimed to evaluate the typology of divorce and its impact on women's role conflict. The subject domain included the variable of the dual role using the Parsons' theoretical framework of action and Pareto's reasonable action based on rational divorce (ambitious, nominative, agreed, passive) and irrational divorce (forced and hasty).

Method: This study was conducted based on a quantitative survey. The statistical population included all divorced women covered by the Relief Committee of Chaharmahal & Bakhtiari province in 2015. 400 women were selected using Cochran's formula and systematic quota sampling. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to study the sample. The measurement instrument was evaluated using construct and face validity (factor analysis) and the reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.85). Data were analyzed at descriptive and inferential levels using statistical software of SPSS and AMOS.

Results: The results showed that all the variables are correlated at the level of $p = 0.0001$. Indicators evaluating the final model of the typology of divorce and conflict showed that this model is supported by the data. Other indicators showed that the structural equation model is a relatively good fit to the data. The indicators of absolute goodness of fit and modified goodness of fit were higher than 0.85. The root-mean-square error (RMSE) and relative chi-square were lower than the acceptable range. Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Normed Fit Index (NFI) were higher than 0.88. In general, indicators evaluating the final model showed that the proposed model is supported by the data; in other words, the model is a relatively good fit to the data.

Discussion: The conflict of rational divorces is less than irrational divorces. Regarding the role of the agent, action on the decision to divorce has different effects on the duality of divorced women's role.

Key words: Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Relief committee, Role conflict, Typology of divorce

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The changes that have occurred in modern societies have led to the blurring boundaries between work and family life. These changes have created a challenge in men's traditional role as breadwinner and women's role as mothers in the home. In the 1980s, the term "work-family

conflict" appeared with increased participation of women in the world of work. Confrontation of the working role of women with their family roles will lead to a role conflict because the job role fades the roles of women and they must perform their other tasks. Although early studies on work-family conflict have focused on employed women, today more than ever, women work outside the home and men are involved in their family roles. In today's world, work-family conflict is known as a major theme affecting families.

In recent years, it is necessary to pay a special attention to the problems of families because of the growing number of female-headed households and in particular, divorced women. Female headed households are often

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faced with many problems, including housekeeping, child rearing, home affairs, covering the cost of living, and doing business obligations. Each of these problems puts psychological pressure on this group of women. More importantly, numerous problems of divorced women must be considered because they are very agonizing for this group. The divorced women are faced with a conflict because of the multiple roles of family and career. Thus, employed and headed women are constantly trying to create a balance between job requirements and at-home roles. This conflict has a considerable effect on the responsibility and relationships within the family. In addition, it is reflected in the events and social roles. Thus, engagement in environmental issues will lead to the loss of power and force.

Having a positive impression of the situation after divorce makes the conflict between divorced women more obvious because women think that they will enjoy financial and psychological benefits by breaking up their marriage, but the fact is that given the cultural context and the dominant view on divorce in Iranian society, divorce will have many negative consequences for women and “damaging effects of divorce on women are much more than men”. However, these facts are not considered. Although, women before divorce suffer from many hardships, they will be faced with more crises and tensions after the divorce. Divorced women are more vulnerable than other women. Their problems can be categorized socially, economically, culturally and psychologically. Each of these problems will affect the others directly or indirectly; for example, economic concerns and financial responsibilities for children will increase mental health problems and anxiety. The consequences of divorce for women are not to the same extent and may be mild or severe with regard to living conditions. “The loss of social support”, “isolation”, “reduction of social relations”, “feeling of insecurity”, “exclusion”, “negative moral attitudes of society”, “social labels”, “people’s negative feedback” “overt and covert gender-based harassment and violence” are the harms that women experience after divorce in society. The attitude of popular culture to divorce leads to disparaging divorced women in society. Furthermore, cultural and religious tensions will have additional damages on the spirit of women. In our culture, divorced women are considered as a threat to relationships and life of family, friends, and relatives, and it will make them more isolated and may even be the cause of deviant behaviors. The narrow judgments, cynicism, and insecurity of the public reduce women’s cultural activities and prevent the role of women in the development process, resulting in marginalizing and exploiting women” (Kalantari et al., 2011). Thus, according to the enumerated problems after divorce, women bear a disproportionate conflict that may vary depending on the type of divorce.

This study attempts to answer the question that “what type of divorces has the highest impact on work-family conflict among divorced women?”

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Conflict is a natural and inevitable phenomenon in individual and organizational life, and emerges for various reasons in various forms. The term “conflict” has been interpreted in various ways because of the frequency and importance of this phenomenon in the life of a person, group, and organization. In this section, we briefly refer to the most important definitions:

According to Webster’s dictionary, conflict is defined as a battle between opposing forces and contrast between instincts and the religious and ethical morals and ideals. According to Dubrin (2004), a conflict of individuals and groups is a natural thing and the result of the competitive environment and occurs when the needs, wants, goals, beliefs, or values of two or more people are different; in addition, it is often associated with feelings, including anger, helplessness, frustration, anxiety and fear. Conflict is a process in which one feels that the other one do activities preventing the achievement of interests and goals. Conrad and Scott (2002) considered conflict as communicative interactions of people who are dependent on each other and feel that their interests are contradictory, inconsistent or incompatible.

Although several studies have been separately done in the field of divorced women and conflict of family and career and each study has paid a special attention to such issues, simultaneous joint investigation of these issues in the form of a research study is relatively new. Accordingly, the article tries to point out some relevant studies on these two issues. Forouzan and Biglarian (2003) conducted a study entitled “female-headed households, opportunities, and challenges” to examine the situation of women-headed households and the opportunities and challenges faced by this group of women. The study was conducted based on the findings of a field study on 4280 female-headed households in five provinces. It was suggested that women have access to equal opportunities like men to eliminate poverty in these two groups. Shaditalab et al. (2005) conducted a field study entitled “income poverty as one aspect of poverty in female-headed households” to investigate different dimensions of psychological, economic, and social empowerment in female-headed households. According to the results, social participation was low in this group because of the multiplicity of roles and responsibilities for managing family. Mu’id Far and Hamidi (2007) conducted a study entitled “female-headed households, untold and

social damages". Forasmuch as female-headed households are vulnerable people, the combination of secondary and in-depth interviews was used to present a true picture of the life and problems of female-headed households. Problems presented in this study have been caused by economic problems. Hosseini et al. (2009) investigated the mental health of female-headed households covered by the Welfare Organization of Tehran. The results of the study showed that 77 percent of female-headed households have no health and issues such as depression, low self-esteem, severe anxiety, and lack of proper physical condition are caused by work conflicts.

Research has shown that poor physical fitness is associated with work-family conflict (Feroon et al., 1991). In addition, Frone et al. (1997) found that family conflict at work will lead to higher levels of distress and tension. Haynes et al. (1984) noted that burnout resulted from balancing work and family responsibilities may lead to coronary heart disease. Finally, the results of many studies on married men having leadership positions show that the whole range of chronic diseases is positively linked with work-family conflict (Burley, 1995; Kopelman et al., 1983; Small and Riley, 1990).

A number of studies have considered behavioral consequences of this conflict. Some studies have investigated the relationship between work-family conflict and alcohol polydipsia (Frone et al., 1997). In addition, Cascio (1991) found that work-family conflict is negatively associated with productivity. The absence from work is also associated with this conflict (Haynes et al., 1984).

A number of negative attitudes are related to work-family conflict. For example, it has been found that job dissatisfaction is related to work-family conflict (Burke, 1988; Kossek, and Ozeki, 1998; Thomas and Ganster, 1995). Additionally, some studies show the relationship between work-family conflict and anxiety (Matthews et al., 1996), burnout (Burke, 1988), low organizational commitment (Wiley, 1987) and work stress (Burley, 1995; Small and Riley, 1990). Further, many researchers have examined the effects of work-family spillover requirements in which the stress has moved from the job to the family and vice versa. They have found that negative attitudes of each area will spread to other areas (Kossek, and Ozeki, 1998; Matthews et al., 1996; Williams and Alliger, 1994). For example, some studies show the negative relationship between work-family conflict and life satisfaction (Burr, 1992; Bedeian et al., 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1992; Rice et al., 1992). In addition, work-family conflict is associated with psychological distress (Burke, 1993; Frone et al., 1994; Hughes and Galinsky, 1994). Marital burnout is also related to this conflict (Burke, 1993; Higgins et al., 1992; Matthews

et al., 1996). Therefore, it is quite clear that work-family conflict leads to a wide range of harmful consequences for individuals and families as well.

Household division of labor based on gender is something as old as human history. Paleontological studies show forms of sexual division of labor in many periods; for example, it is said that in the Paleolithic era, man lived in societies based on hunting and food gathering. In those societies, men hunted and women gathered fruits, vegetables, and grains. In the last century, the traditional pattern of sexual division of labor in the family was changed somewhat due to deep social and cultural changes in the West. In the 1960s, Young and Willmott investigated women's increasing employment outside the home and more participation of men in housework. They concluded that British families are increasingly symmetrical; the roles of husbands and wives become more similar, and ultimately will be the same. Other researchers disagreed with this conclusion and believed except in some new patterns of family, sexual division of labor still exists in most families (Abbott and Wallace, 2004). Some of these researchers suggested that changes in sexual division of labor in the family are much slower than changes in attitude of people towards this issue; for example, although men with egalitarian consider the right to choose a job or housekeeping for women, many of them say they are not willing to prefer housekeeping over their career. Surveys on the expectations of adolescents compared to adult roles show that many girls are expected to work outside the home before and after having children. However, it is expected that the responsibility for the children disrupts their jobs. Although boys expect that they are involved in parenting to some extent, they do not expect that it disrupts their job (Burr, 1998). Some also believe that public opposition to more traditional roles for men and women is limited to general statements and many adults still adhere to traditional views; for example, in an American survey in 1985, fifty percent of men and more than forty-five percent of women agreed that it will be much better for everyone if men make money and women take care of home and family. Senior high school students were asked "what is the most favorable form of work regulation and responsibility for couples having preschool children?" Their first priority was that men have a full-time job and women completely leave their job (Kammeyer et al., 1989). Statistics on the hours spent on household work also suggest in 1965, American men and women worked 4.6 hours per week and 27 hours per week at home, respectively. In 1975, men and women worked 7 hours per week and 21.7 hours per week, respectively. In 1985, men and women worked about 8.8 hours per week and 19.5 hours per week at home, respectively. Relatively new statistics also indicate that in England in spite of an increase in employment of married women, they are responsible for washing and ironing in 88% of houses. In

77% of houses, women usually prepare food at night. In 72% of houses, women clean the house (Morris, 1999). Women working part-time or full-time, in comparison to housewives, are more likely to receive regular assistance from their husbands in the housework, such as washing clothes and dishes. Despite the small percentage of men are fully involved in these tasks, cooking is still women's task and their employment outside the home does not have any effect on it. For most women, birth of a child affects sexual division of labor between husband and wife because their employment outside the home is severely affected and women are economically dependent on men, resulting in the reduction of the low participation of men in housework (If a child is born). In recent years, the new concept of "dual-career family", the family consisting of employed husband and wife, has spread dramatically, particularly in Western countries. According to the researchers, even in this type of family more pressure of housework is on women in spite of greater involvement of men in housework because they are expected to work full-time outside the home in addition to housework and child care. As a result, women work about fifteen hours per week more than their husbands (Shepherd, 1999).

HYPOTHESES

- The meanscore of female role conflict is different depending on the level of ambitious-rational divorce.
- The meanscore of role conflict is different depending on the level of nominative-rational divorce.
- The meanscore of role conflict is different depending on the level of agreed-rational divorce.
- The meanscore of role conflict is different depending on the level of passive-rational divorce.
- The meanscore of role conflict is different depending on the level of irrational divorce.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted based on a quantitative survey and using a researcher-made questionnaire. The statistical population included all divorced women covered by the Imam Khomeini (RA) Relief Committee of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province in 2015. The population consisted of 1050 families or 1947 people. 400 women were selected

using Cochran's formula $n = \frac{t^2 pq}{d^2 \left(1 + \frac{1}{n}(t^2 pq - 1)\right)}$. Given that

all demographic characteristics and information of help-seekers or divorced women covered by the Imam Khomeini (RA) Relief Committee of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province was available, respondents were randomly selected

and studied systematically in each city. The validity of the research instrument was examined using content, construct, and face validity. For the face validity, the statements of the questionnaire were investigated by university professors and experts in the area of social issues. Their comments on assessment of the statements led to the selection of appropriate statements. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the measurement tool. In fact, it is used to estimate the rating statements of the measurement tool. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each variable. It was 0.87, reflecting a high coefficient to conduct research. Data were analyzed at descriptive and inferential levels using statistical software of SPSS and AMOS.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

About 96 respondents were below 30 years old and 50 percent of them (200 people) were 31 to 40 years old and 26% of them (104 people) were between 41 and 50 years old. It should be noted that the average age of respondents was equal to 38.6 and the mean deviation was 11.4. The education level of about 176 respondents was primary school. 40 percent of them (160 people) were educated at the level of secondary school. 8 percent of them (32 people) were educated at the level of high school. 8 percent of them (32 people) had higher education.

The separation of about 38 percent of respondents (152 people) lasted one year. The separation of 28 percent of respondents (112 people) lasted three years. The separation of 19.75 percent of respondents (79 people) lasted five years. The separation of 5.5 percent of respondents (32 people) lasted six years. The separation of 3.75 percent of respondents (15 people) lasted seven years. The separation of 3.25 percent of respondents lasted eight years. The separation of 1.75 percent of respondents (7 people) lasted ten years. The average year of separation and divorce of respondents was 3.9 years with a mean deviation of 2.9. The job of about 40.75 percent (163 respondents) was related to services, vending, hairdressing, sewing, etc. 43% of respondents (172 people) were housewives and 16.25% of them (65 people) were unemployed and job seekers. About 71 percent of respondents (285 people) stated that they were personally divorce applicants. About 29 percent of respondents (115 people) stated that their wife was a divorce applicant. About 8 percent of respondents (32 people) stated that they somewhat received their dowry after divorce, and withdrew part of it. 84 percent of respondents (336 people) stated that they completely withdrew their dowry. About 46 percent (184 people) had a desire to remarry and 54 percent (216 people) had no desire to remarry.

TESTING HYPOTHESES

- First hypothesis: The mean score of female role conflict is different depending on the level of ambitious-rational divorce.

Ambitious-rational divorce	Average cluster	Number	Standard deviation
Low level	2.5114	176	0.65849
Medium level	2.6824	85	0.53440
High level	3.0000	139	0.00000
Total	2.7175	400	0.51318

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-test	Significance level
Intragroup	18.67	2	9.33	42.90	0.0001
Intergroup	86.40	397	0.21		
Total	105.07	399			

The results of the mean comparison showed that the mean score of female role conflict is significantly different depending on the level of ambitious-rational divorce ($P < 0.05$). The mean value of role conflict was 3 for respondents with ambitious-rational divorce at the high level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.6 for respondents with ambitious-rational divorce at the medium level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.5 for respondents with ambitious-rational divorce at the low level.

- Second hypothesis: The mean score of role conflict is different depending on the level of nominative-rational divorce.

Nominative -rational divorce	Average cluster	Number	Standard deviation
Low level	2.62	123	0.48
medium level	2.59	143	0.60
High level	2.93	134	0.32
Total	2.71	400	0.51

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-test	Significance level
Intragroup	9.41	2	4.70	19.52	0.0001
Intergroup	95.66	397	0.24		
Total	105.07	399			

The results of the mean comparison showed that the mean score of female role conflict is significantly different depending on the level of nominative-rational divorce ($P < 0.05$). The mean value of role conflict was 2.93 for respondents with nominative-rational divorce at the high level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.59 for respondents with nominative-rational divorce at the medium level. The mean value of role conflict

was 2.62 for respondents with nominative-rational divorce at the low level.

- Third hypothesis: The mean score of role conflict is different depending on the level of agreed-rational divorce.

Agreed -rational divorce	Average cluster	Number	Standard deviation
Low level	2.61	173	0.55
Medium level	2.73	150	0.48
High level	2.92	77	0.39
Total	2.71	400	0.51

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-test	Significance level
Intragroup	5.16	2	2.58	10.25	0.0001
Intergroup	99.9	397	0.25		
Total	105.07	399			

The results of the mean comparison showed that the mean score of female role conflict is significantly different depending on the level of agreed -rational divorce ($P < 0.05$). The mean value of role conflict was 2.61 for respondents with agreed -rational divorce at the high level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.73 for respondents with agreed -rational divorce at the medium level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.92 for respondents with agreed -rational divorce at the low level.

- Fourth hypothesis: The mean score of role conflict is different depending on the level of passive-rational divorce.

Passive -rational divorce	Average cluster	Number	Standard deviation
Low level	3	173	0
medium level	2.64	150	0.54
High level	2.67	77	0.55
Total	2.71	400	0.51

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-test	Significance level
Intragroup	7.65	2	3.82	15.59	0.0001
Intergroup	97.42	397	0.24		
Total	105.07	399			

The results of the mean comparison showed that the mean score of female role conflict is significantly different depending on the level of passive -rational divorce ($P < 0.05$). The mean value of role conflict was 2.67 for respondents with passive -rational divorce at the high level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.64 for respondents with passive -rational divorce at the medium level. The mean value of role conflict was

3 for respondents with passive -rational divorce at the lowlevel.

- Fifth hypothesis: The mean score of role conflict is different depending on the level of irrational divorce.

Irrational divorce	Average cluster	Number	Standard deviation
Low level	2.4	173	0.59
medium level	2.7	150	0.46
High level	2.9	77	0.34
Total	2.7	400	0.51

	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-test	Significance level
Intragroup	16.49	2	8.24	36.95	0.0001
Intergroup	88.58	397	0.22		
Total	105.07	399			

The results of the mean comparison showed that the mean score of female role conflict is

significantly different depending on the level of irrational divorce ($P < 0.05$). The mean value of role conflict was 2.9 for respondents with irrational divorce at the high level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.7 for respondents with irrational divorce at the medium level. The mean value of role conflict was 2.4 for respondents with irrational divorce at the lowlevel (Figure 1 and Table 1).

Indicators evaluating the final model of the typology of divorce and conflict showed that this model is supported by the data. Relative chi-square lower than 0.05, the root-mean-square error (0.53), goodness of fit index and adjusted goodness of fit index higher than 0.90, and the significance level higher than 0.05 reflected the desirability of the measurement model. Estimates of the model and goodness-of-fit indices

Table 1: Goodness-of-fit indices for structural equation

Independent variable: Typology of divorce										
		Absolute				Parsimonious		Comparative		
Holter	P-value	Chi-square	RMR	AGFI	GFI	PNFI	RMSEA	IFI	CFI	NFI
228	0.05	2.22	0.07	0.90	0.94	0.74	0.053	0.94	0.94	0.93

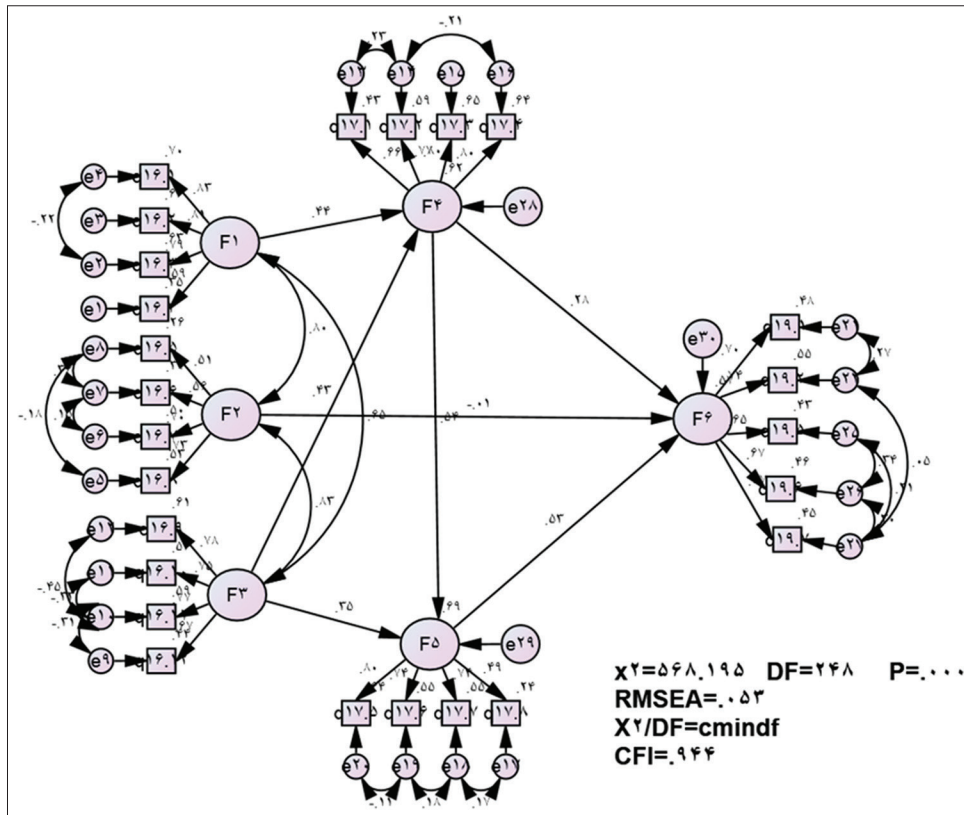


Figure 1: Structural model of the influence of divorced women's social roles

are presented in the above table. In general, we can say that if the shared variance between a latent variable or an observed variable increases, the measurement error will be reduced.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results showed that irrational divorce, nominative-rational divorce, and ambitious-rational divorce had the highest impact on the work-family conflict of divorced women. In addition, passive -rational divorce and agreed -rational divorce had the lowest impact on the work-family conflict of divorced women. According to the obtained results, ambitious-rational divorce had an inverse negative impact on the role conflict. Nominative-rational divorce had a positive direct impact on the role conflict. Agreed -rational divorce had a positive direct impact on the role conflict. Passive -rational divorce had an inverse negative impact on the role conflict. Irrational divorce (forced and hasty) had a positive direct impact on the role conflict. The results for an increase in duality of the role were consistent with the results of the studies conducted by Hosni *et al.* (2014), Booth and Amato (1991), Molina (2000), Wickrama *et al.* (2006), and Isar and Sadeghi (2013).

In the field of divorce, it is not almost possible for full awareness of the consequences, especially in today's risky era. According to a person's attitude to divorce and the rational readiness to get out of the relationship and paving the way for it, we can somewhat accept the surrounded claim and recognition of actors through the consequences of their actions. Our emphasis is on the "basis for a person's action" during a divorce, not the results. Like Weber, we define the rationality of action as the recognition of the agent of an action. Thus, recognition of "observer" of an action is the criterion of rational divorce based on interpretations of social agents. From this perspective, a rational act is the one considered rational by people who use tools and the means to follow specific purpose or profit (not necessarily financial) and are aware of the effects of their action. Many actors who have gone through rational divorces spend much time on considering the action and its consequences and become ready to face the consequences after it. In fact, they carry out a goal-directed rational action aimed at improving the quality of life. Most people related to this type of divorce (except for hasty divorce) take a strong action to accomplish divorce because they consider divorce as a rational and helpful event and a solution or a means of overcoming the unsuitable conditions of the marriage.

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