

**AN EXPLANATORY STUDY OF AFTER DIVORCE
COMPLICATIONS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE :
CASE STUDIES FROM MMABATHO/MAFIKENG AREAS.**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation for the degree of Masters in Social Science (Sociology) at the University of North West hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University, that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thabo Titus Molokele', written over a horizontal line.

Thabo Titus Molokele

CHAPTER ONE

1. BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

It has been observed that more and more marriages are breaking down in greater number than ever before. Divorce is one of the most harmful and least discussed of social phenomena. Over one – half of all marriages end in divorce, and there is a wealth of psychological research showing that divorce harms women especially financially and children psychologically. The negative results of such divorces and separations have motivated this study.

Since the stability of a nation is rooted in a stable family life, life after divorce is viewed as a social and also as a holistic problem which does not only affect the individuals concerned but also the society to which the individuals belong.

Joseph (1990:59) concludes that the divorce Law Reform Act 1969 laid down the irretrievable breakdown of marriage and grounds for divorce. The petitioner no longer had to prove a matrimonial offence (such as adultery or cruelty). Thus every time the Law made it easier to get a divorce, the divorce rate increased.

The increasing divorce figures indicate something is seriously wrong with society. The legal position was based on the view that a divorce would be granted only if some “Matrimonial offence”, such as adultery, could be proved. It was only in 1969 that the doctrine of the irretrievable breakdown of marriage was instituted as ground for divorce. Certainly it would be difficult to prove that society is more decadent now than in the past. (Joseph 1990:62).

The high divorce rate indicates that marriage as an institution is threatened, especially as more unmarried couples are living together. In the past, on the other hand, because of the obstacles to divorce, (particular cost and the need to prove a matrimonial offence) the divorce rate was abnormally low. Nor can it be assumed that marriage as an institution is threatened by the increase in unmarried couple living together, as many to these couples intend marrying or come round to it eventually.

The divorce rates are going up in most industrialized countries. People are now marrying later than the proportion of unmarried people in their twenties is increasing. The rise in the number of single people is also partly due to the higher divorce rates. (Joseph 1990:57).

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Divorce is one of the major concerns of society at the present time because of the increasing number of marriages that break down. It appears that divorce and separation have been on the increase not only in Mmabatho Mafikeng areas in the North West Province in South Africa but all over the world. Since the stability of nation is rooted in a stable family life, life after divorce is viewed as a social problem which does not only affect the individuals concerned but also the society at large.

Based on the above fact one will notice the seriousness of divorce. Thousands of Women and Children in Mmabatho Mafikeng areas in the North West Province have fallen victims of divorcee. Divorce occurs after the family is disorganised, when one or both parties have a strong desire to dissolve their relationship.

According to Haralambos and Holborn (1991:509), there are threats to marriage whereby it is argued that marriage is becoming less popular – decreasing numbers of people are getting married. More people are

developing alternatives to conventional married life, there are increasing numbers of marital breakdowns reflected in rises in the divorce rate.

It has been observed that marriages are breaking down in greater numbers than ever before. The negative results of such divorces or separations have motivated this study.

1.3 MARRIAGE

A marriage is a multifaceted bond based on commitment, love and intimacy. The relationship is at once an intensely private affair but a public one as well (Skolnick, 1983:206). However, Reiss (1980) defines marriages as a socially recognised union of individuals in the roles of husband and wife with the key function of legitimating parenthood.

Zinn and Eitzen (1990:265), felt that the couple must work out mutually satisfactory solution to such crucial areas of potential conflict as the division of labour, how decisions will be reached, the apportionment of money, the use of leisure time, whether to have children or not and how many and when, how the children will be raised, the resolution of conflict.

Couples have always faced adjustments but the problems inherent in marriages are now compounded by a critical difference with the changing definitions of roles of men and women. In the past, women and men entered into the marriage relationship with an unquestioned set of roles and responsibilities that each would fulfil. The husband would work outside the home and provide for the material needs while the wife would take care of the home, raise the children, and provide for the emotional needs of the family members. He would achieve and she would support.

Zinn and Eitzen (1990:266), further observe that contemporary Society is undergoing a profound shift in the role expectations for men and women whereby the economic conditions in society that require greater numbers of women to work outside of the home are creating new roles. Wives with outside jobs have less time and energy to spend on household tasks. They also have new income and skills that enforce their decision making within the family.

The marriage relationship is crucially affected by who makes the money, how much discretionary income is available, the demands of the workplace on one or both marital partners, and other work-related issues. Whereas each partner once knew with certainty what behaviours were expected, now there is ambiguity. Couples must now decide who will do household tasks, who has the power and in what domains and whether one or both partners will work outside the home. Most couples now enter marriage without a blueprint for sure answers to these questions.



1.4 THE FAMILY

Horton and Hunt (1984:232) state that a family may be (1) a group with common ancestors, (2) a kinship group united by blood or marriage, (3) a married couple with or without children, (4) an unmarried couple with children (5) one person with children. When we speak of the family we ordinarily think of a husband and wife, their children, and occasionally an extra relative. Since this family is based upon the marital or “conjugal” relationship, it has been called the conjugal family today, however, it is most often referred to as the nuclear family. The consanguine family is based not upon the conjugal relationship of a husband and a wife but upon the blood relationship of a number of kinspersons.

Elliot (1986:4) also opines that the Modern Western Societies “the family” denotes a unit consisting of a husband and wife, and their

children. This unit is widely thought of as a group based on marriage and biological parenthood, as sharing a common residence and united ties of affection, obligations of care and support and a sense of common identity.

Horton and L. Hunt (1984:233) the consanguine family is an extended clan of blood relatives together with their mates and children, the term extended family is often used to refer to the nuclear family plus any other kin with whom important relationships are maintained.

Elliot (1986:4) further observes the family as that group within which the most fundamentally appreciated of human qualities and values takes falsehood and deceit, of kindness and sympathy, of indifference and cruelty, of co-operation and forbearance, of egotism and antagonism, of tolerance, justice and impartiality, of bias, dogmatism and obstinacy, of generous concern for the freedom and fulfilment of others, of the mean desire to dominate whether in overt bullying or in psychologically more subtle ways (Fletcher, 1973:42).

FUNCTION OF THE FAMILY

The family in any society is an institutional structure which develops through a society's effort to get certain tasks done. (Horton. 1984:238).

THE SEXUAL REGULATION FUNCTION

The family is the principal institution through which societies organise and regulate the satisfaction of sexual desires. All societies expect that most sexual intercourse will occur between persons whom their norms define as legitimately accessible to each other.

THE REPRODUCTION FUNCTION

Every society depends primarily upon the family for the business of producing children. Other arrangements are theoretically possible, and most societies arrange to accept children produced in a marriage

relationship but no society has established a set of norms for providing children except as part of the family. (Horton 1984:239).

THE SOCIALIZATION FUNCTION

All societies depend primarily upon the family for the socialization of children into adults who can function successfully in that society. The family is the child's first primary group and this is where its personality development begins. By the time the child is old enough to enter primary groupings outside the family, the basic foundations of its personality are already firmly laid. The kind of person it will be is already profoundly influenced. One to the many ways in which the family socializes the child is through providing models for the child to copy. (Horton 1984:240).

THE AFFECTIONAL FUNCTION

Whatever else people need they need intimate human response. Psychiatric opinion holds that probably the greatest single cause of emotional difficulties, behaviour problems and even of physical illness, is lack of love, that is, lack of warmth, affectionate relationships with a small circle of intimate associates. The evidence is overwhelming that our need for companionship and intimate, affectionate human response is vitally important to us. Indeed, this is probably our strongest social need.

THE STATUS DEFINITION FUNCTION

In entering a family one inherits a string of statuses. One is ascribed several statuses within the family-age, sex, birth and others. The family also serves as a basis for ascribing several social statuses as, for example, a white urban, middle-class catholic. In any society with a class system, the class status of a child's family largely determines the opportunities and rewards open to it and the expectations through which others may inspire or discourage it. Each child starts out with the class status of its family. The child normally absorbs from its

family a set of interests, values and life habits which make it easy to continue in the class of its family, difficult to achieve a higher class status, and painful to accept a lower class status.

THE PROTECTIVE FUNCTION

In all societies the family offers some degree of physical, economic, psychological protection to its members. In many societies any attack upon a person is an attack upon that person entire family, with all members bound to defend the family member or to revenge the injury (Horton and Hunt 1984:242).

THE ECONOMIC FUNCTION

As stated earlier, the family is the basic economic unit in the most primitive societies. Its members work together as a team and share jointly in their produce. Settle (1987) suggests that a family can be defined in six ways:

1. **FAMILY AS A ROMANTIC IMAGE:** When the romantic image is assumed to be the norm, a large number of families appear to be deviant in form and structure.
2. **FAMILY AS AN IDEOLOGICAL ABSTRACTION:** Settle (1987) noted that the way families are defined often depend upon the entity interacting with the family and the purpose the definition serves. In this way, a “family” is an ideological abstraction. If we use abortion legislation as an example, it is clear that the legal definition of a family’s rights and abortion responsibilities regarding abortion may be quite different from the religious guidelines and both may vary from the medical professional’s oath to provide medical care to “the family”.
3. **FAMILY AS A UNIT OF TREATMENT:** The family can also be a unit to be treated mentally and medically. Alcoholism,

anorexia, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse and family violence are a few examples of social problems that locate both cause and treatment for the family members in the family unit.

4. **FAMILY AS A LAST RESORT:** Settle (1987) noted that the family as the last resort is best described by a line from Robert Frost (1946): “home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in. “Family is there when the marriage fails, the children are in trouble, the job is lost, no one else care.”
5. **FAMILY AS A PROCESS:** Family as a process fulfils the basic needs of intimacy and continuity. In our rapidly changing society, shared meanings, tradition, goals and symbols provide a measure of stability for family members.
6. **FAMILY AS A NETWORK:** Closely related to the last approach is the view of family as a network. Even in a society characterised by geographic and social mobility, kin serve an important function during rites of passage such as graduations, weddings, funerals and births. Fictive kin (close friends who are “adopted” as family but are not related by law or blood) have become a valuable addition to this network. In some instances, for particular area with an instant family network to ease the stress associated with numerous, often short – term relocations.

1.5 DIVORCE

Divorce is the final and legal termination of marriage. It might also be defined as a legal status, indicating a dissolved marriage relationship.

Divorce is one of the most stressful events anyone can experience.

Divorce brings changes to all personal aspects of life. It changes the way you relate to your children and requires you to find different ways to taking care of your physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs. It means reassessing the things that are going well and

poorly in your life and entering new territories that sometimes are exciting, overwhelming, and frustrating. All of these conditions must be faced and dealt with in the midst of large social pressure.

Divorce is a verb, as well as a noun, a process that occurs over time, as well as a discrete legal event. Although divorce is almost always a substantial disruption in people's lives, some individual welcome separation and divorce because the experience offers relief from family conflicts, physical or psychological abuse, and the psychopathological behaviours of certain family members, whereas others face divorcing with regret, sadness and fear. It is probably fair to suggest that divorce is either an all positive or all negative process for only a few, for most there is an array of responses, including both relief and regret. (Ganong, 1994:27).

Divorce is a life crisis in which social support is simultaneously most threatened and most needed while according to Ahrons (1980), divorce is a process involving the dissolution of a marriage, which requires major family re-organization. It is a process which affects the individual adults involved, their children, the parents, and the society which they form part. (Friedman, 1984:3).



Oakland (1984:11) states that divorce is one of the most stressful events anyone can experience. It brings changes to all personal aspects of one's life. It changes the ways you relate to your children and requires you to find different ways of taking care of your physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs. Oakland (1984) further explained that divorce is a legal act. It changes one's marital status and brings attendant change in rights and responsibilities. The divorce decree has the force of law and its terms are binding.

Fisher (1981) states that divorce is a metaphorical surgery which affects all areas of life of the individual. For many people, divorce is a broken experience and before they can go on with their lives, they need to be

able to pick up the pieces. This period often includes deep emotional feelings of despair, disappointment, revenge, hopelessness and helplessness.

Figley and Mclubbin (1983) explained that divorce is becoming an almost common, everyday occurrence, we have almost ceased to view it as a crisis. However, divorce can be a catastrophic event, especially if it is unwanted and unexpected.

Shaffer (1989:354) stated that divorce is not a single life event. It should rather be seen as a series of stressful experiences for the whole family, beginning with the marital conflict before the actual divorce, and including many subsequent changes in roles, routine and responsibilities. Hetherington (1979) is of the same opinion and believed that the divorce process includes at least three, and usually four, stages.

- The first stage is a breaking-up period when the prior equilibrium of the family is replaced by separation and the impending divorce.
- The second stage is a period of experimentation, during which the family, with the mother now usually at the head, tries various options in an attempt to cope with the new situation.
- The third stage begins when a new equilibrium is reached, especially when the new family becomes firmly organised as a single – parent household.
- The fourth stage is characterised by a second re-organization when the parent married again and the children have to adjust to a stepparent and a new family structure.

Divorce and separation are distinct marital statuses; although separation may be seen as a half-way house, part of the dynamics of

marriage or a prelude to divorce. It is estimated that 40% of couples who separate before they reconcile, although this reconciliation is often only temporary, a rehearsal for a later and more permanent marital dissolution.

1.6 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DIVORCE

Heaton, Albrecht and Martin (1985:490) proposed two models for explaining why marriages are likely to fail. The first model, the perpetual risk model, considers certain factors such as the age of the wife at marriage, the difference between the wife's and husband's age, and whether the wife and the husband share the same religion to present problems that are difficult to overcome regardless of the duration of the marriage.

In the second model, the adjustment model, it is suggested that the longer the duration of the marriage, the less likely it is that these factors will become problematic and result in a divorce. The authors found that the perpetual risk model better described the relationship between the above variables and the timing of divorce.

Heaton, Albrecht and Martin (1985:491) suggest that it is not just single factors that predict the likelihood of either marriage or divorce, but a combination of factors and their interaction. Thus a couple may be the ideal ages, have the same religion and educational attainment, have an adequate income and similar values yet experience differential maturity, develop new (unshared) interests, or face situational crisis (infidelity, spouse abuse, drug or alcohol abuse.) that result in divorce.

Age at marriage – In general women who marry before the age of 20 years, have a greater likelihood of facing a divorce than those who marry later. Norton and Glock (1979) reported that couples who marry in their teens are twice as likely to be divorced as those who marry at a later age. The age of marriage predicts not only maturity, but those

who marry later are more likely to have completed higher levels of education and have higher incomes than those who marry at a younger age.

Age difference between husband and wife also predicts marital instability. Teachman (1982) reported that the most stable marriages are those which the husbands are one or three years older than their wives. Marriages most at risk are those in which the husbands are younger or four or five years older than the wives.

Racial characteristics is when marital status is examined by race, the highest percentage of divorce is found for black men and women, the lowest percentage was found for whites. Early age, premarital pregnancy, lack of economic resources and education deficiency help to explain the higher separation and divorce rates for black, (Norton and Glick: 1979).

Cutright (1971) offers other explanations for this differential, such as higher fertility and racial discrimination which adds stress to the marital relationship. Since black men often encounter difficulty finding stable employment, the only way for the family to survive is for them to leave the home, contributing to the matrifocal structure of the lower-class black family.

Social class in cases of desertion, lower-class women were unlikely to be able to seek legal authority to redress a broken marriage. The lower-class families are more likely to face economic stress caused by unemployment, unstable employment, poor housing, and fewer resources. Economic stress is strongly associated with marital conflict and divorce.

Ross and Sawhill (1975) found that stability of income appears to be a key factor in preventing divorce and is more important than the husband's occupation, education or actual income. Other researchers

found that the wife's earnings also predicted the likelihood of divorce, noting that women with lower financial resources may be financially "trapped" in "their" marriages, in contrast to those women with an independent source of income.

Marital instability appears to decline with increasing education, although this may also be attributed to age at marriage (Bumpass and Sweet 1972). Those with more education tend to marry later, and also tend to have higher incomes. When all individuals who were married at the same age were compared, few differences were found.

Premarital pregnancy – leads to a forced or rushed marriage which eventually ends in divorce. About one-half of all marriages in which the wife is premaritally pregnant end in divorce within the first five years. This is more than double the rate of non premaritally pregnant married couples (Furstenberg, 1976). Since those with premarital pregnancy are most likely to be young, it is not clear whether it is the younger age at marriage or the responsibilities and financial burdens associated with pregnancy that contributed to higher divorce rate.

However, it becomes clear that these factors work together to create the circumstances leading to divorce. Teenagers who marry early are more likely to be pregnant than those marrying later. Pregnant teens are most likely to have short courtships, less likely to have continued their education, and less likely to have stable, well-paying jobs.

According to Louw (1991:508) the reasons for divorce differ from couple to couple, but some other common reasons are: Difference in background: The greater the difference in background between marriage partners, the more likely it is that the marriage will end in divorce.

Parental example – if the parent's marriage is successful it provides a positive model for the children regarding mutual support, acceptance

and solving of problems. If, on the other hand, the parents' marriage is unhappy, this provides poor models for the children.

Difference in role concept – we are living in a time of major role changes. There are divergent views of the marital roles of men and women. If no agreement or compromise is reached, difference in role perception may become a continuing source of dissatisfaction. Age and age difference. Marriage between adolescents is seen as high-risk marriage because so many of them end in divorce. A major reason for this is that one or both of the young marriage partners have not yet achieved the psychological maturity necessary for a successful marriage.

1.7 TYPES OF DIVORCE

According to Berner (1992) there are six types of divorce:

1. The emotional divorce – centers around the problem of the deteriorating marriage.
2. The legal divorce – based on grounds.
3. The economic divorce – deals with money and property.
4. The community divorce – involves the changes of friends and Community that every divorce experiences.
5. The psychic divorce – manifests the problem of regaining individual autonomy.
6. The co-parental divorce – deals with custody, single parent homes and visitation.

1.8 THE ROBLEMS OF THE SINGLE PARENT

By single – parent we mean the absence of one spouse either a wife or a husband in a family due to divorce.

Hodges (1991:1996) observes that single – parent families share several characteristics in the developmental pathways of the children.

There are numerous disadvantages that increase the probability of problems in these children's development.

The most salient problems of the typical single parent are economics and energy. Most single parent families have fewer financial resources than to intact families. In part because of problems of financial resources and in part because of the enormous time demands of parenting, most single parents are exhausted. Child rearing, done well, is extraordinary time consuming, even for two parents. To do this task alone is a burden that is difficult to imagine if one has not been through it (Hodges, 1991:196).

The single parent cannot afford to be sick. No matter how sick the parent, the children still must be fed and cared for. When the child is ill, the single parent may have to stay home) and sometimes lose salary.) or leave the child alone. Two-parents families in which both parents are employed have similar problems with child's care, but they usually have greater financial resources and can share the workload.

Single-parent families have problems for variety of other reasons:

1. The entire culture is organised around two parents families. School district often do not have policies that permit mailings to two different addresses concerning school activities. The degree to which two parents families are accepted as the norm is demonstrated by the fact that even in communities in which the majority of children are no longer living with both biological parents, the schools and child-related organizations are oriented towards two parents families.
2. Single parent limits the wisdom of family (Blechman and Manning, 1976) because no parent can have the full range of competencies that can be provided by two parents, the quality of problem solving is unlikely to be as good in single-parent families.

3. Emotional support may be more limited.
4. Sex – role development can be impaired by the absence of one parent. Although the absence of a parent can lead to more androgynous orientation, substantial evidence shows that a child's perception of the meaning of belonging to a particular biological sex is determined in part by exposure toward close relationships with adults of both sexes.
5. Single parenting may encourage inappropriate use of the child as confidant or adviser.
6. The single parent may be traumatized by the loss of other parent and may never feel complete or whole (Mendes, 1979). This parent tries to act as both parents to the child and compensate the child for the loss of the other parent. Such efforts lead to stress, fatigue, anger, guilt and failure. A parent who tries to fulfil all roles for the children needs help to attain a more realistic expectation about what is possible or reasonable. This parent needs help in more appropriate problem-solving technique to solve the needs of the parent and the children. (Hodges, 1991:199).
7. The parent who feels overloaded with work may give older children too much responsibility for the care of younger siblings, producing stress for the other child. Also younger children can sometimes resent the authority of the older child, particular when the ages are close or when the older child handles the authority in an arbitrary or hostile way (Mendes, 1979).

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When an older sibling is given parental responsibility for a child, the child should be sure that the parent makes the line of authority clear. In particular, rules should be clear and authority to impose sanctions should be well defined. Neither child should be subject to the tyranny of the other. In particular, the parent should be sure that the older sibling has adequate maturity to provide control and safety. Minuchin, (1974) warned that such a role may be harmful to the older child's development.

8. When the single parent is the mother, finances tend to be a major issue. The burden of single parenting requires more money, and yet women are less to obtain it, on the average, single mothers earn about 46% of the amount earned by single fathers. (Norton and Glick, 1986).

Blechman (1982) convincingly argues that research on single parenting is so flawed that it is questionable what is really known about these families. Problems listed in Blechman's review include the following:

1. Studies frequently confounded income and social class. When income was statistically controlled, the relationship between, family type and adjustment became trivial.
2. Studies often failed to take into account cause and length of parent absence, sex of single parent and amount and type of contact with absent parent.
3. Studies sometimes matched the upper income group of single families with the lower income group of intact homes.
4. Unrepresentative sample were common.
5. Other important variables were realized income, occupational

prestige, availability of flexible working hours, perceived environmental control, precipitous drops in income, and drops in status.

With reference to single parent childhood, the degree of disorganization the single parent experiences during the divorce crisis also seems to have an adverse impact upon the caretaker – child relationship. Parents experiencing divorce often become increasingly punitive, less rational in their control attempts, and less supportive with their children. Such alterations in parental behaviour appear to stem from the emotional trauma, the stigma and the role strain which were previously described as results of marital separation process. Parental behaviours of this nature tend to elicit disobedient and acting out responses in children, which, in turn evoke further repressiveness from parents (Nick Stinnett et al 1980:434).

Your relationships with your children are certain to change after the divorce. For many men there is a dramatic reduction in the amount of time they are allowed to see their children. In fact, their parental rights typically are terminated and they are reduced to a visitor role. Being single can have its drawback and problems. Couple – orientated activities become uncomfortable, and some old friendships just die.

In addition to these personal issues, you will also be affected by inflation and less income, legal changes in your family and new social expectations of how single parents should behave. Life after divorce resembles rebuilding a house damaged by a tornado.

Concomitantly, men are being pressured to participate more actively at home and with their children. These changes bring the traditional post divorce child support and custody patterns into question. The parental role is being described more as that of an executive than a caregiver. Father and mother are both being expected to take responsibility for all facets of home, cooking, cleaning and other household.

1.9 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This research is based on the fact that few, or no studies have been conducted on the problem of life after divorce as a sociological problem in the North West Province, in the Molopo area, in Mmabatho/Mafikeng region.

This study aims to contribute information to the North West Provincial government and more especially the community which is facing the dramatic effect of divorce which affects all areas of life of the individuals.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study explains the impact of life after divorce on individuals. It has come up with plans and recommendations that will help the community to deal with divorce and separation. This study aims to contribute as follows:

- To add information on the knowledge base on dealing with the problems of divorce and separation.
- To influence attitude of both couples who are experiencing marital problems and need curative services like marriage counselling, to assist them solve their problems.
- To create understanding and trust between couples and other role players in the community.
- To enhance respect between couples through pre-marital counselling.

1.11 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The study aims to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of the members of the community towards the impact of life after divorce in the North West Province in the Molopo area with special reference to the Mmabatho Mafikeng region.

It has been observed by the researcher that marriages are breaking down in greater number than ever before. The negative results of such divorce or separation have motivated this study.

1.12 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the following aspects in the North West Province in the Molopo areas with special reference to the Mmabatho Mafikeng region as follows:-

- * The attitudes of members of the community towards the effect of life after divorce and separation in the North West Province.
- * The impact of life after divorce on children
- * The problems of single-parent towards life after divorce in the North West Province.
- * The increasing figures of divorce and separation in the North West Province.
- * The attitudes of the in-laws towards life after divorce in the North West Province.
- * The effect of spouses towards life after divorce in the North West Province.

1.13 DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of life after divorce as a social problem is acknowledged by many authors in different perspectives. Thousands of women and children in the North West Province in the Molopo area with special reference to the Mmabatho and Mafikeng region have fallen victims of divorce. Based on the above facts, one will notice the seriousness of divorce. Divorce is one of the major concerns that leads to the breakdown of families and consequently of society.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 THE NATURE OF DIVORCE.

Divorce occurs in a context that is usually characterized by chronic parental conflict, pre-occupied parents who may be less sensitive to their child's needs, a reduced standard of living, post separation, chronic stress for the child and parents. Given the great variation in how families cope with divorce, it is remarkable that there are any normative reactions (Hodges, 1991:8).

When a couple divorces, their children lose a psychological support system. As disciplinarians, single parents, fathers and mothers, may be less controlling and less capable of being controlling if they wanted to be than parents who are partnered. (Burner, 1992:4).

The single-parent situation inhibits parental authoritarianism likewise, the co-operative and consultative environment found in two-parent families disappears with divorce. The remaining parent loses someone with whom they can talk, share responsibility and compare perceptions. (Burner, 1992:4).

Burner (1992) further explains that the children in a divorce must confront a different world. First, they have lost their models and their protectors. Gone is the support system. No longer are two parents sharing values with their offspring. In fact, no parental values are transmitted.

Heaton, Albrecht and Martin (1985 further explain that the divorce represents a traumatic event for the children. Although the impact varies depending on age, sex, developmental level, and family cohesiveness and support, all children go through similar reactions and need to complete sequential developmental tasks in order to recover from the trauma. However, as divorce becomes more common and children's storybooks, movies and television shows reflect this growing lifestyle, children find it easier to adjust to divorce.

The child views divorce not as a problem between parents but as a threat to his security. The younger the child, the less he can understand, the more his need for both parents, and the more his need for a stable family unit, the more divorce will leave him feeling betrayed, angry, hurt and untrusting. (Burner,1992:4).

The memories of a painful divorce can provide ambivalence in the child which festers into emotional problems in adulthood. Examples of extreme results of this deprivation can (1) an inability or unwillingness to form lasting emotional ties with others, and (2) perpetuating the "failure syndrome" by entering into marriage, having a family and becoming divorced.

The parental divorced is earthshaking for the child. Young children typically have operated on the assumption that they could depend on the predictable availability of both parents. When that assumption proves incorrect, a child may question many other assumptions about the world, for example, whether he or she can count on the availability of any parent. Such concern leads to insecure or avoidance of attachment, interference with healthy object relations, and re-organization of cognitive understanding. (Hodges, 1991:8)

It should be remembered that parents are also under significant stress prior to the divorce and during the adjustment period immediately after the separation. Thus, parents may have limited ability to be helpful to their children during this time.

Bloom, Asher, and White (1978) summarized a large number of studies that document the overwhelming negative effects of divorce on adult:

- * The suicide rate for divorced men is three times higher than for married men.
- * The risk of death by homicide is far higher for divorced people than for other groups.
- * Car accidents average three times higher for the divorced than for the married. These rates double between six months prior to and six months after the divorce.
- * The widowed and divorced have higher age-adjusted death rates for all causes of death combined than married people of equivalent age, sex and race. Particularly, death of tuberculosis, cirrhosis of the liver, malignant neoplasm of the respiratory system, diabetes and arteriosclerotic heart disease are higher for some divorced groups.



Women are more likely to experience stress prior to the separation (Caldwell, Bloom, and Hodges, 1984). Men are usually in more stress after separation (Hodges and Bloom, 1984). Women are more likely to retain custody of the children and the residence of marriage, to talk to others to obtain relief from stress, and to have a highly developed social support system. Social support has been demonstrated to serve as a mediator in reducing the stress of divorce (Caldwell and Bloom, 1982). Thus, women typically experience less loss and

access better coping skills for dealing with the stress of divorce. Finally, because women are twice as likely to instigate the separation, they generally have higher self-esteem.

Having children increases the stress of marriage and lowers marital satisfaction. Having children also increases the anger and conflict after the divorce (Bloom, Hodges, and Caldwell, 1983).

Hetherington, Cox, and Cox (1979) noted in their study of preschool children that family life after the divorce was extremely disorganized for at least a year: Meals were served at irregular times, the parent and children were less likely to eat together, bedtimes were erratic, young children were read to less than were children from intact families.

2.1.2 THE CONSEQUENCE OF DIVORCE

According to Lach, J (1999:14) children of divorced parents are less likely to end their own marriages today than their predecessors were back in the early 1970s. Before 1975, new research found people from divorced families were 2.5 times more likely to have dissolved their marriages than their counterparts from intact families. By 1996, the likelihood had slipped to just 1.4, says Nicholas Wolfinger, Professor at the University of Utah and author of the 1999 study, "Coupling and Uncoupling : Changing Marriage Patterns and the Intergenerational Transmission of Divorce".

Many people who are concerned about social justice for women and children seem to be morally blind when it comes to the rights if not the humanity of divorced and separated fathers. In today's social and political climate, it is not considered appropriate to speak in defense of divorcing and divorced men,

or even of divorced fathers. This prevailing anti –male, anti-father attitude, employed in tandem with a lot of misinformation, flawed data, and sexist stereotypes, has succeeded in convicting most divorcing fathers that they are less than human.(Dority, 1994:35)

Dority (1994) goes on to say that in the era of the “deadbeat dad”, most believe that they cannot continue to be a father to their children after divorce and that they certainly couldn’t perform adequately as single parent. When contemplating the possibility of a separation or divorce, most involved fathers assume that they would forfeit their active parental role and become an every-other- weekend “visitor” in their children’s lives. Beginning very early in the divorce process, fathers begin to receive consistent confirmation of this assumption. Certainly some fathers voluntarily abdicate their parental responsibilities even in the many extenuating circumstances.

Death, illness and divorce leave children with a terrific sense of loss and parents should be direct and honest but not overly detailed in helping them cope with those events. “All involve getting through a period of grieve” says Barbara Coloros, a noted parenting educator and the author of *Parenting Through Crisis*. “The key is getting through it, not getting around it or over it or denying it”. Don’t try to manage the child mourning, she says. “Give the headlines first, the shut up and just be present for your children for whatever they need.”(Kelly, 2001:51).

One explanation, which Wolfinger confirms in his research, is that the negative effect of divorce on children are weakening. Divorce has become more socially acceptable in the past 20 years and no longer takes such a strong toll on kids, he explains. Without such heavy emotional baggage, children are

better equipped to succeed in their own marriages. (Lach, 1999:14)

But there is another fact at work: declining marriage rates among children of divorce. Wolfinger used data from the General Social Survey, a random sample of 22 000 individuals that has been conducted annually by the National Opinion Research Centre at the University of Chicago Since 1972 were 73 percent more likely to marry than those from their declining faith in the institution of marriage.

Children of divorce who were younger than 20 years old had very high rates of marriage, both in 1973 and 1994. Children who were older than 20 followed a very different course in 1973, they had the same marriage rates as their peers who grew up in two-parent households. In 1994, they were 26 percent less likely to get hitched than people from intact families. Wolfinger also noted that demographic variables, such as educational attainment, race, gender, and presence of siblings, do not affect the relationship between parental divorce and getting married.

One reason for the decline in marriage rates, Wolfinger suggests, is an increase in cohabitation. Additional research has shown that children of divorce are disproportionately likely to live with their partners and less likely to ever marry them. "Divorce rate for people from divorced families and for people from intact families will never converge" Wolfinger says. "they'll come close, but most of time divorce will still be hard on kids".

The sad, bad times are tough for the grown-ups. They can be wrenching for children, particularly when parents are steeped in their own sadness and grief and unable to offer reassurance or

even clear explanations. When children face serious parental illness or lose a parent or relative to death or divorce their faith in the world where all things can be righted is forever altered. These kids learn too soon that life is not fair and that awful things can happen.(Kelly, 2001:51).

It is further explained that in time and with help kids learn that life does indeed go on. At different ages and developmental stages they will need to revisit and recall the trauma. And even certain happy moments-like a graduation or a wedding may also be a bit wistful for years to come. Coroloso considers an old saying: in the good times and the bad, remember, this too will pass. These children understand that “both are a part of life”.(Kelly, 2001:51).

Divorce opponents like Judith Wallerstein seem to think most of parents see divorce as a marvellous opportunity for the whole family. In her book, Wallerstein argues that children do not care if their parents are happy they just want the stability of a two-parent household, without which they will later fail through adulthood and have a hard time forming good relationships.(Pollitt, 2001:82)

This conclusion, like her other gloomy generalizations (“parenting erodes almost inevitably at the break up and does not get restored for years, if ever”) is based on a small, non-representative sample of families who were going through divorce in 1917 in affluent Marin country, Calif. Wallerstein took evidence that divorce harm kids, and of course she find it now well into their mid-30s, her interviewees still blame their parents break up for every rock on the path to fulfilment but the very process of participating in a famous on-going study about the effect of divorce encourages them to see their lives through that lens. What if she has spent as much money studying

children whose parents had terrible marriage but stayed together for the kids?

Wallernstein points out that many children of divorce feel overly responsible for their parent's happiness. But what about the burden of knowing that one or both of your parents endured years of misery for you?

2.1.2 FATHERS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO

There is a tragic crisis faced by fathers who want very much to continue to parent their children after divorce. Under current conditions, there are several reasons for a wife to battle strenuously to obtain sole custody. The more custody the mother has for the child, the financial support the court will award her. Often, however, the main reason is totally unrecognised by the courts: the bitterness and need for revenge which attends so many marital break ups. Instead recognizing the devastating effects this can have on everyone and attempting to minimize them, the legal system encourages the use of the children as weapons in divorce court.(Dority, 1994:34).

Attorney Ronald K. Henry summed it up in testimony before a U.S house subcommittee on June 30, 1992

We know that children are born with two parents. We know that children want love, and need two parent still, we take two parents. Still, we take two loving parents into court at their most emotionally distraught and weak moment, and say to them, "here are your weapons. Fight it out and the last one standing owns the child".

The court system begins with the presumption that women are better suited to care for younger children than are men. Lawyers routinely tell divorcing fathers that they have little chance of getting custody and that making the attempt will require thousands of dollars and a bitter court battle that will be very hard on all concerned, including the children. Just many men have resisted giving up the economic advantages they have enjoyed, many women cling to their traditional domain of power. Various attempts are made to rationalize this behaviour, such as the pervasive belief that men do not really want custody or continued involvement with their children. This is reminiscent of the arguments given for denying women full of participation in economic life just as sexist. (Dority, 1994:35).

It is further explained that when a marriage breaks up, regardless of the couple's financial status and child care arrangements, the courts presume that the wife has an equal right to the money and property her husband's and / or her labor has produced. Why is it not also presumed that the father has equal rights to the children they have produced? If the father has participated in parenting that is, child care and decisions regarding the children- why doesn't the father still have at least an equal right to continue parenting his children?

Instead, the systems turns fathers into visitors with every – other – weekend “privilege” when mother sees fit to co-operate to see his children (in more than 20 states, visitation is legally defined as a “privilege” rather than a “right”). The mother makes all decisions about the children's education, health, religion, appearance, rules of behaviour and discipline. Only the mother is expected or permitted to participate in the daily development of the children. (Dority, 1994:35).

Yet this system still demands his money. He becomes an economic object rather than a father. Like mothers, fathers accept the burdens of parenting so they can share in its rewards. But the system takes the reward of parenthood from a divorcing father and leaves him with nothing but the burdens.

If you examine the fine print from recent surveys on British parental roles, you will find that fathers are spending a higher proportion of time with the children than ever before (though the headlines usually focus on the fact that mothers are still easily outpacing their partners in this domain). Better – heeled working mothers may pay child minders to pick up the slack, but there is not always an option further down the scale which is why, according to one government report, nearly half the main cares of children in parts off South Wales are men.(Evans, 1998:22).

Why do fathers presence still excite such suspicion and denial? Yet there is persuasive evidence that once children are weaned, fathers and mothers are potentially equally capable of nurturing them. The trouble is that by this stage the pattern is usually set. Little girls get used to playing at being moms; boys do nothing of the sort. During pregnancy the gap widens, and once a baby is born even the least “maternal” woman has little choice but to acquire the basic skills. Fathers who ostensibly have the choice, often find themselves frozen out by partners who resent any encroachment on a role which offers security and power.(Evans, 1998:22).

There are three principal predictors of child- support compliance: The fairness of the original court order, access to the children, employment stability. Regardless, the divorced father is expected to maintain his children’s standard of living and support a separate life for himself. Sometimes this is

genuinely impossible, because support payments are set with no provisions for economic realities such as unemployment, or serious accident or illness, and second families are not taken into account. (Dority, 1994:35).

Fathers also lose contact with their children after divorce or separation. One third of the British babies are born to unmarried parents and the proportion is growing. In 1989 the government moved to bring the law into line with this reality through section 4 of the children's Act, which states that an unmarried father may be granted a parental responsibility order if it is in the children's best interests, provided both parents sign the papers or the father wins a legal battle for the right (which takes around six months to secure). Legal failure means he can be frozen out forever.(Evans, 1998:22).

2.1.4 A REVOLUTION IN (AMERICAN) FATHERING

The number of fathers solely responsibly for the care of their children is growing at almost twice that of single mothers. One-fifth of single parents today are single fathers (more than 2 million of them). This is up from 1970, when single mother families comprised approximately 90 percent of the single – family population. Among the minorities, the rate of increase is as high or even higher. Between 1970 and 1995, the rate of African – American single dads increased 329 percent; For Hispanic single fathers, 450 percent. And though the Media almost always focus on mothers when portraying working single parents, nearly 30 percent of working single parents are now men. (Gillenkirk, 2000:18).

Divorce is difficult, regardless of a mate's age. But according to a recent study, middle-age women who divorce show a surge in positive emotions while divorced middle-age men become depressed.

Middle-age women who divorced become more outgoing and action – oriented, the study found, while middle-aged men who divorced had lower achievement goals, because they were more anxious and were less extroverted, warm and outgoing.

Depression did not affect the women. Women had an increase in positive emotions and happiness. They also had an increase in openness to fantasy and new actions in both their inner and outer world. They became more experimental, open to fantasies and actions and willing to try new activities and go to new places. This did not happen because they were trying to escape reality, but it was a way for them to create interesting inner world”, he contends.

(Jet, 1999:46)

The presumed joint custody or shared custody by both parents of children of divorce is now the law of the land in at least 40 states. Why are these changes occurring now? In many respects, because they had to. The startling failure rate of American marriages, with more than half now ending in divorce, means an equally startling rise in the number of new single parents and fathers with joint custody. That a large number of single parents turn out to be father has much to do with the changing nature of family and nurturing in this country. The law is beginning to catch up. Divorce laws are taking into account the importance of children maintaining relationships with dad as well as moms after divorce. There are more than 40 states that now presumptively call for joint custody of children. (Gillenkirk, 2000:18).

Divorce is devastating to young children, and since 80 percent of divorces occur during the first nine years of marriage, the majority of children in divorce are young. Divorce almost always means a great deterioration in the quality of parenting a

child receives, Wallerstein asserts, because both parents become pre-occupied with the task of re-establishing their economic, social, and sexual lives. Joint custody arrangements work well only for some children; court – enforced visitation can require a frighten young child to travel long distance alone or seriously interfere with the friendships and activities of older children. (Bush, 2000:1124).

Special-needs children are likely to have a particularly hard time; the end of the parents' marriage is likely to mean that the children's needs are no longer adequately met. A far smaller percentage of divorced parents than married parents pay for their children's college education's, even when they have adequate means. The grown sons of divorced fathers are far less likely to have a close relationship with their fathers, and the children of divorce are more reluctant to care for their aging parents.

Even those children who seem the most cherished by their divorced parents, suffer long-term consequences, Wallerstein argues. Nearly all the children whose lives she followed into adulthood struggled as they tried to establish healthy relationships with the opposite sex or to become parents themselves. A far greater percentage than those from intact families never married or lived in committed relationships. Many others impulsively rushed into inappropriate early marriages without giving much thought to the kind of partner they wanted or needed. Many had much too low expectations of partners and of marriage. The fear of loss, terror at conflict, and lack of good models of long-term marriages all make it more difficult for those whose parents divorced to establish good, lasting relationships themselves. (Bush, 2000:1124).

According to Jet, (1999:46), “divorce had a negative impact in the domain of consciousness for men. There was a lower achievement in striving and a decline in self-discipline. They also had a lowered mental ability to stick to unpleasant task.” Jet (1999) further explained that midlife marriages for women is the converse of getting divorced. The woman will have a decrease in gregariousness, activity, positive emotions and fantasy of action. Women who marry in midlife must cut down on her explorations of interpersonal behaviour.

2.1.5 THE CASE AGAINST DIVORCE



It's hard to think of a social phenomenon more harmful, and less discussed, than divorce. More than half of marriages end in divorce, and a mountain of psychological research shows that divorce injures women especially financially and children psychologically. Many argue that divorce cannot be as bad for kids as living in a home with parents who hate each other, but Bill Galston of Progressive Policy Institute recently summarized the social science literature on his Question: “Divorce itself (as opposed to the bad relationship) has an independent negative effect on the well-being of minor children, ... In areas such as the following: School performance, high school completion, college attendance and graduation. Labor-force attachment and stable work patterns, crime, depression, psychological illness, suicide, out-of-wedlock birth, and the propensity of children of divorce to become divorced in turn. (Waldman, 1996:37).

Parental marriage instability affected boys and girls differently, boys were often found to be more vulnerable (Hetherington, Cox et al; 1986; Shaw, 1992; Buchanan, Maccoby et al., 1992), more aggressive and displayed more behavioural problems than girls (Teja and Stolberg, 1993; McCabe, 1997).

However, these gender differences were not consistently documented. Also children's reaction for parental marriage instability depend on the age of the child (Tschann, Johnston et al., 1990), emotional response being more intense for children of parental divorce (Palosaari and Aro, 1994; Pagini, Boulerice et al., 1997) (Cadina, 2001:247).

Research has documented that the economic impacts of divorce are strikingly different for men than for women and children. Women and children generally experience large declines in their standard of living after divorce, whereas men often experience gains. The economic hardship experienced by divorced women and their children, coupled with decreases in popular and political support for public welfare programs, has prompted policy makers to focus on private child support as a potential means of assisting single-parent families.(Bartfield, 2000:203).

When parents divorce, they undergo a volatile and profound personal emotional journey. At the same time they face a fundamental structural change in their family system. Central to the new family structure is the ongoing parental alliance. This includes parents' new, independent relationships with the child and new rules and behaviour toward each other. Recent research on both married and divorced families had documented that the quality of the parental alliance affects the child's adjustment, the parent's self-esteem, and the quality of the parents' nurturing and discipline. In additional when parents separate, their co-parent relationship affects the child's continuing connections to extended families and the parents' ability to move ahead with their lives and become fully available to subsequent intimate relationships. (Whiteside, 1998:3).

Another reason there is so little debate is that the rise of divorce was, in part, a response to a very real problem. Before the 1960s, women had trouble escaping from constraining or abusive marriages. Countless millions were subjected to lives of misery because they could not or would not get out of horrible marriages.

No one wants to go back to the old days, and criticism of divorce should not be viewed as a fundamental attack on feminism or women's rights. But feminists need to concede that the current situation is unacceptable, too.(Waldman, 1996:37).

Some authors suggested the possibility that prolonged parental marital distress could be even more damaging to the child's emotional and social development than parental divorce. Namely, marital conflict and the divorce itself could be the source of children's problems. This is an issue of a practical importance in deciding whether it is better for the children if incompatible parents divorce or stay together. (Cudina, 2001:247).

Other variable were also found to modify children's emotional response: parental availability, parental adjustment to divorce and post-divorce conflict, subsequent economic hardships and life stress (Amoto, 1993), available social support (Amato and Booth, 1996).

It is important to emphasize not only that a co-operate co-parental alliance is possible following divorce and that is very beneficial to children, but also that there are specific parental behaviours that enhance the positive parenting environment. The task is to maximize the possibility that a child has two good parents, rather than engaging in a debate over who is the better parent.

Therefore, a parent should communicate information to the other parent and behave in a way that reassures the other parent that good parenting is occurring. Parents can be cordial and respectful, even if they cannot be friendly. Parents should underscore the parenting practices that they agree on and be explicit about the values they intend to continue to teach their children despite changes in the family structure. These positive actions should be expected, encouraged, and rewarded by therapist, Attorney, Judges and the General Community. (Whiteside, 1998:3).

The disagreements about child rearing are a normal part of parenting, particularly when both parents are concerned about the child. Joint parenting with the goal of consistency across households is a more difficult task than parallel parenting or parenting in which one person is in charge. More important than frequency of disagreement is the degree to which disagreement is imbued with unresolved emotional issues, and the degree to which conflicts are outweighed by positive exchanges between parents.

Whiteside further explains that parent's tactics during conflict affect whether the conflict escalates or comes to resolution, as well as the degree to which parental conflict is detrimental to child adjustment (Camara and Resnick, 1998, 1988; Fische, and Scanzoni, 1989, Johnson & Campbell, 1993), for example, Camara and Resnick (1989, 1988). Categorized expression of conflict between parents as verbal attacks, avoidance, compromise, and psychological expression of anger. They found that strategies used by parents that involved verbal attack, psychological violent behaviour, or avoidance of the other parent were associated with poorer child adjustment. Parents who used these strategies also were less likely to develop a co-operative co-parent relationship. Conversely, parents' ability to

compromise and to resolve disputes is related to a higher level of co-operation and increased closeness between parents. In turn, children show higher social skills and lower aggression. Katz and Gottman (1993) reported that the “Mutually hostile” pattern of marital interaction predicted both marital dissolution and externalising behaviour in children. However, divorce per se, independent of this pattern, was not associated with a higher level of externalising behaviour.

2.1.6 SINGLE PARENTHOOD AND SOCIAL COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN OF COLOR

Increase in divorce has dramatically altered the family lives of children. The increasing number of children residing in single-parent households often has been linked to many of the nation’s most serious social problems, including delinquency teenaged pregnancy, in fact, it is widely believed that single-parent families represent a risk fact for children’s development. (Kesner, & McKenry, 2001:136).

In contrast in the early 1960s nearly 90% of all children lived with both of the biological parents until 18 (McLanahan & Teitler, 1999). There has been a 28% increase among whites and 543% increase among African Americans in single-parent families over the past 40 years. (Bianchi, 1995, U.S. Bureau of the census, 1993). In 1992, 37% of single-parent families were precipitated by divorce, 34% were never married families, 24% were separated parents, and 5% were headed by a widowed parents (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992).

Traditional developmental approaches assert that two-parents role models are essential for the normal development and well – being of children, and that departures from the nuclear family are problematic. Some researchers have demonstrated that

parental absence is associated with decreases in parent-child contact and parental supervision and that these behaviours, in turn, result in behavioural problem and social and cognitive deficiencies in children (McLanahan & Teitler, 1990).

Behavioural disturbances have also been found to be more common among children experiencing divorce than those within two-parents, harmonious homes (Jenkins & Smith, 1993)(Kesner & McKenry, 2001:136).

Traditional perspectives on the impact of single-parent structure on children's development have failed to consider that these structural effect may be short – lived or mitigated by other compensatory Mechanisms (Acock & Demo, 1994). Many children in single-parent families continue to have significant contact with their fathers or find new father figures or alternative role models (McLanahan, & Teitler, 1999; Acock & Demo, 1994)(Acock and Demo (1994) refer to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) notion of "social address" in their arguments that family structure alone provides little information about the social experiences important to a child's development. One's family structure or social address reveals little about family dynamics, the time family members spend together, relationships with other kin, family communication patterns, childbearing practices and values, and other important elements of the immediate family and broader social contexts (Acock & Demo, 1994)(Kesner & McKenry, 2001:136).

Divorce, once meant to liberate families from necessary misery, appears to have caught many children in its grossfire. In the 1970's, the traditional wisdom that children might be harmed by divorce came to be viewed as quaint as hopelessly outdated as father knows best. The Creative Divorce. A 1970's best. Seller and The Brady Bunch, a popular sitcom about a

sprawling blended family, signalled a shift to a positive new attitude. (Driedger, 1998:38).

Studies have shown that children of divorced parents are disadvantaged in a variety of ways as compared to children who grow up with both parents. They are less likely to perform well in school, more likely to exhibit behavioural problems, and more likely to have psychological and social difficulties. These results are surprisingly consistent for children from different social class background and difference race ethnic group. They also persist regardless of whether the custodial parent remarries after the divorce. (Hanson, 1999:1283).

The argument that predivorce conflict accounts for the apparent negative effects of divorce is based on two assumptions: (1) parents who subsequently divorce exhibit more conflict than parents who stay together, and (2) parental conflict reduces child well – being. In a social environment in which the marriage contract is directionary and bonds holding marriages together are based on emotional exchange, parents who frequently disagree and engage in hostile interaction are likely to divorce.

Finally, the fact that parental conflict accounts for as much as 50% of the “divorce effect” does not mean that the other 50% is due to divorce itself. Parents who divorce are likely to differ from parents who stay married in ways other than conflict. For example, parents who divorce may have problems such as alcoholism, they may be less adept at managing family life, or they may less committed to their children than parents who stay together. Each of these “unoberservables” is a potential alternative explanation for why children from non intact families. However, the fact that parental divorce is significantly associated with child. Well-being even after controlling for pre-

existing differences in child well-being suggests that these other pre-divorce factors may not play an important role in explaining why children from divorced families do less well. In some, the analysis suggests that a good deal can be learned about the consequences of marital disruption for children by examining the effects of divorce with reference to the conditions in families prior to divorce. (Hanson, 1999:1283).

2.1.7 **CHILDREN'S ADJUSTMENT IN CONFRONTED MARRIAGE.**

For 30 years, the event and process of divorce have been viewed as the major cause of the many observed behavioural symptoms and longer – term adjustment problems in children and adolescents whose parents are separated or divorced. Divorced families often have been viewed by the Media, Public and Mental Health professionals as seriously flawed structures and environments, whereas the married or intact family was characteristically seen as a more positive and nurturing environment for children. There has been a dramatic upsurge in the past 10 years in family research studying aspects of marriage and parenting that affect child adjustment and in longitudinal studies assessing children in both married and divorced families. (Kelly, 2000:963).



This newer research, generally more large-scale and sophisticated in design and statistical analysis, provided us with a more complex understanding of the source of children's adjustment problems in both married and divorced families. Such studies have found that the adjustment problems of children of divorced can in part be accounted for by the experiences of these children within marriages that later end in divorced, and they bring into question the utility of much earlier divorce research that failed to assess pre-divorce

variables and use comparison or control groups of the children who had never experienced divorce. (Kelly, 2000:963).

The impact of parental divorce on the subsequent religious behaviour of their children is unclear. Despite well-established connections between divorce and religion. Indeed, high levels of apostasy among children of divorced parents suggest that family disruption is closely related to religious disaffiliation. Further, the stability of religious identification is associated with the strength of bonds to family and religious communities, as evidenced by Sherkat (1991) and Hadaway and Marler (1993) in their studies of the effects of family background on the propensity to change religious affiliation. (Lawton, Leora, Bures, Regina, 2000:99).

In this article, we hypothesize that religious mobility is more likely among children of divorced parents than among those from intact families. Parental divorce can produce discontinuities in social structures that lead to a weakening of bonds to both one's family and religious community. Because of this weakening of ties, it is likely that children of divorce parents will experience weakened ties to their childhood religious identification. When that happens, crossing the boundary out of one religious community and into another may be both more feasible and desirable.

Children are never too young to be impacted by divorce and the subsequent decisions about their care. The developmental needs of preschool children are typified by their wish to be cared for and protected by the significant family adults who keep their world stable. Ongoing parental conflict destabilizes children and can evolve into significant emotional and behavioural difficulties. Adult reassurance and trustworthy behaviour

regarding the continuity of relationships and safety cannot be overdone on this era. (Pruett, & Pruett, 1999:1544).

Are children better off when they remain in two-parent families characterized by marital conflict, or are they better off when their parents dissolve their marital relationship? Recent demographic trends show that divorce rates in the United States increased sharply in the 1960s and remained relatively high into the late 1980s. What are the implications of this trend? Many family sociologists have focused on the consequences of divorce for children's well-being. (Jekielek, 1998:905).

Contemporaneously, recent debate over divorce law has considered making divorce more difficult to obtain for parents with children. Research demonstrated that children of divorced parents do worse, on average, than children in biological two-parent families on a variety of outcomes.

Direct negative effects of high conflict include children's modelling of parental behaviours, failure to learn appropriate social interaction skills, and physiological effects. Children incorporate repertoires of angry, impulsive and violent behaviours into their own behaviour as a result of observing their parents' responses to frustration and rage. Because parental examples of discussion of conflict, attempts at compromise, and resolution of conflict are generally absent in high-conflict marriages, these children do not learn social skills and control of aggression necessary of successful peer relationships. (Kelly, 2000:963).

High marital conflict indirectly affect child adjustment, mediated through the mother-child and father-child relationship. Persistent, intones marital discord, and marital dissatisfaction, pervasively undermines the quality of parenting,

including discipline, parent-child aggression, and affective responses.

2.1.8 DIVORCE TRANSITION: IDENTIFYING RISK AND PROMOTING RESILIENCE FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS.

The promotion of resilience has been defined by Garmezy as “the Maintenance of Competent functioning despite as interfering emotionality”. (1991:466). Research as well as clinical experience shows that “interfering emotionality” often overwhelms coping processes in the context of divorce as high emotionally competing as disqualifying parental narratives vie for the children’s loyalties. These often invite them to bear witness or testify to two completely opposed accounts of the same series of “Family events”. Such accounts, combined with bids for “loyalties of attachment” do lead to high interfering emotionality in some divorces, particularly those that come to the attention of clinicians. The loss of competent functioning is shown in different aspects of the child’s development such as daydreaming, short attention spans, difficulties in learning, poor peer group relations, and more violent symptoms of different kinds such as night terrors, behavioural difficulties, and attacks on parents and other children. (Barnes, 1999:425).

As significant as adults’ perceptions of their children’s views are, understanding children’s perspectives is of equal significance in how children perceive their early family experience. Children of primary years should be consolidating their parental attachments, capacities for intimacy, and trust in order to develop social competence. Such competence prepares them for school and peer relationships, and eventually for love relationships. Impulses come under self-control, and behavioural consistency develops, if the child feels safely

connected to his parents and other family members. (Pruett & Pruett, 1999:1544).

Divorce and family reordering, as different but often connected stressful life events, challenge many of the early assumptions of systemic family theory, which was based on a unitary notion of family “Coherence” as the “thing” that the therapist needed to discover and address. At times of parental break-up, the notion of family itself becomes open to new questions by fathers, mothers, children and therapists. Individual narratives struggle as to which shall become the dominant couple discourse of “myself as right” with the “other as wrong”. Parents’ discourses with their children conflict and disqualify one another. Children are thrown open to questions of “What is my family? Is it that through which I am created through sperm and egg – a distinction of biology? Is it through the distinction of family as household, in which case how am I to relate to this parent who has moved out and who is no longer of my household? Or is “Family” that with which I am familiar, have close knowledge of, an intimate and close to (which may, for a time, be neither parents)? (Barnes, 1999:425).

Parental conflict is evidently an important stressor of children’s life; parental marital disruption may also have negative implications for children. Post-divorce experiences such as decreased income, absence of one parent, decreased parental warmth and inconsistent or more punitive discipline practices, unstable or erratic lifestyle, and poor parental psyche and adjustment – have been linked to negative child outcomes (for summaries see: Amoto 1993; Seltzer 1994; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Although these characteristics of divorce may affect child outcomes, the differences in the well-being of children from divorced and intact families have been found to

fade with time (Hetherington, Cox & Cox 1982). (Jekielek, 1998:905).

Children's home environments, although erratic in the first year or two after divorce, have been found to stabilize after a two year post-divorce crisis period (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). Mother (who usually have custody of children after divorce) are more warm and consistent in their parenting two years subsequent to divorced. Therefore, in examining the relative and interactive effects of parental conflict and parental marital disruption, Jekielek (1998). Include both a simple measure of whether a marital disruption occurred at all, and a more complex version that takes the timing of disruption into account.

Fathers in high – conflict marriages withdraw more from the parenting role and from their children than do fathers in low – conflict marriages. It is well established that mothers are gate keepers of the extent of the father – child relationship, both during marriage and after divorce, and that mothers' attitudes toward fathers' parenting role affects the extent of fathers' parenting more than fathers' own attitude. Angry mothers in high – conflict marriages may exclude fathers from parenting functions as a retaliatory gesture and to preserve an arena of power within the marriage. In addition, fathers' parenting styles may be more tied to marital quality than are women's styles. Fathers in deteriorating marital quality than are women's styles. Fathers in deteriorating marital relationships are more negative and intrusive with their children compared with mothers in poor marriages or father in satisfactory marriages. Thus, for the child in the high-conflict marriage, the indirect consequence may be not only less father involvement, but more negative interactions with and feelings of rejection by the father. Finally, parents in high-conflict marriages are more depressed than

those in low-conflict marriages, which is linked to more impaired family functioning. (Kelly, 2000:963).

Kelly, J.B further explained that the manner in which parents resolve their conflict has been determined to affect the impact of high conflict on children's adjustment. Chronic, unresolved conflict is associated with greater emotional insecurity in children. Fear, distress, and other symptoms in children are diminished when parents resolve their significant conflict, as opposed to no resolution, and when parent use more compromise and negotiation methods rather than verbal attacks. The beneficial effects of these more resolution – oriented behaviours have been reported whether occurring behind closed doors or in front of the child.

2.1 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES.

Cites Parsons (149, 1955, 1964). Provides a sophisticated exposition of the functionalist argument. Family tasks, Parsons argues, are either 'expressive' (nurturant/emotionally supportive) or instrumental' (directed towards material goals) and it is in principle possible for women and men to perform either set of tasks. However, 'the bearing and early nursing of children establish a strong presumptive primary of the relation of mother to the small child and this in turn establishes a presumption that the man, who is exempted from these biological direction (Parsons, 1955). Parsons explains the primary of the housewife-child-carer role for women. He also argues that the sexual division of labour, however it may have come about in the course of bio-social evolution, contributes to the functioning of contemporary society in specific ways and is consequently reinforced. (Elliot, 1986).

Parsons identifies three ways in which this happens. First, he suggests that the separation of home and workplace intensifies tasks specialisation. Second, he argues that women's limited participation in

paid employment eliminates tension-producing rivalries between husband and wife for occupational status and success. Third, he claims that the restriction of the number of the family's status-giving occupational roles to one role, that of the husband, makes the family's status in the community relatively definite. In Parsons' view, this makes for certainly on social interaction and therefore for psychological security.

Parsons' argument has been widely criticised (Beechey, 1978; Edgell, 1980; Morgan, 1975; Oakley, 1976). On the grounds that (i) it is biologically based' (ii) Familial and occupational roles cannot adequately be categorised as expressive or instrumental – an argument that is supported by the observation that familial tasks such as washing, ironing and cleaning are scarcely expressive tasks and occupational roles involve expressive elements such as the containment of interpersonal frictions, (iii) the economic significance of women's domestic labour and wage labour is not recognised; (iv) the way in which mothering limits women's political and economic power and leads to their subordination is nor recognised; (v) the tension and dilemmas which women experience and which have led to pressures for change are unrecognised and explained.

Unlike Parsons, Marxist theorist tend to assert women's subordination to men within the family and in the wider society and this, rather than the sexual division of labour, is their primary concern. However, men as men are seen as benefiting only indirectly from women's subjugation. Marxist theorists tend to locate women's subordination to men in the logic of capitalism, see it as benefiting the capitalist system and argue that the socialism would achieve women's liberation from capitalist exploitation and therefore from male domination.

The foundations of this approach to gender were laid by Engels (1884). In this account of the mergence of the Monogamous family as a social arrangement for the protection of private property. In Engels' view

early hunting and gathering societies were characterized not only by the communal ownership of property and group marriage but, because paternity was uncertain, by Matrilineal descent systems and 'Mother – right', Engels also assumed that there was a sexual division of labour in early human societies; Men hunted and were the main food providers, women cared for children and did the 'housework'.

Radical – Feminist theorists face the task of accounting for patriarchy. Attempts to theorise patriarchy have moved in three major directions. Firestone(1970) roots patriarchy in the relations of human reproduction. Millett(1970), on the other hand, sees patriarchy as an ideological and psychological structure, while Delphy (1977) develops an account of patriarchy as a system of material (economic) relations. (Elliot, 1986).

2.2.1 EXPLAINING THE RESORT TO DIVORCE.

Explanations of the Modern resort to divorce have variously sought to identify (i) the factors which make modern marriage break-down-prone; (ii) the factors which facilitate the ending of an unsatisfactory marriage by divorce, and (iii) the distinguishing characteristics of those who divorce.

(i) Sources of strain in Modern Marriages.

According to Fletcher (1973). Mutuality of consideration and freedom for personal development within marriage require continuous individual effort in working out a satisfactory relationship. We have, in Fletcher's view, come into an age of more complex expectations but of more explicit discontents, made marriage potentially more rewarding but also potentially more unstable. Moreover, specific sources of stress which may make it difficult, if not impossible, to find the expected satisfactions have been identified.

Hart(1976) suggested that there are ambivalences and difficulties in combining the role of wife and mother with that of paid employee and in working out a marital relationship which does not, as hitherto, merge the wife's aspirations with those of the husband but treats husband and wife as independent and equal persons. Again, it has been argued that because conventional gender structures define women as almost totally responsible for, and men as marginal to, the family's expressive tasks, women go largely unnurtured and unsupported in marriage and so are unlikely to find the satisfactions they had been led to expect. Moreover, it is likely that the feminist view of marriage as inherently oppressive for women has lessened women's commitment to their marriages.

Finally, there is the argument advanced by Goode (1966) that failure to realise personal fulfilment goals is now seen as a sufficient reason for abandoning the marriage. Priority, says Goode, is given to the achievement of personal satisfactions and we ask whether the disruption of marriage suits our needs, not whether it is 'moral'.

(ii) **The opportunity structures of divorce.**

It is often argued that whether or not unsatisfactory marriages end in divorce or continue to function as unsatisfactory marriages is related to the opportunity structures of divorce – that is, to the ease with which the marital partners may extricate themselves from their marriage and the alternatives available to them for restructuring their lives. Thus changes in the opportunity structures of divorce have been seen by

some writers as contributing to upward trends in divorce.

Hart (1976) identifies four factors as facilitating the modern resort to divorce. First, she reiterates the often-made argument that the liberation of divorce law has made it easier to end a stressful marriage. Second, she argues that legal aid has reduced the cost of divorce to the poor and widened its availability. Third, she suggests that the growth of state welfare has facilitated the establishment of one-parent families. Fourth, Hart argues that the lessening rigidity of the sexual division of labour has not only increased the autonomy of women and men and their ability to dispense with marriage but has also increased social interaction between the sexes and widened their access to potential new partners. Hart suggests also that at an individual level the decision to divorce may be influenced by the availability of alternative accommodation, access to other sources of economic support or domestics labour and, importantly, the potential availability of a new partner. Clearly the ability to divorce depends on the state of the law regarding divorce.

(iii) **Divorce – prone categories.**

Research in the U.S.A and in Britain has consistently shown that divorce is not evenly distributed across the population but is related to (i) religious commitment, (ii) social class, and (iii) the demographic characteristics of the marriage.

Religious commitment seems to be associated with relatively low levels of divorce. In addition, American data suggest that the divorce rate of Roman groups. The

mechanisms whereby religious protects the couple against divorce are unclear. Thorne and Collard (1979) say that it could be that the marriages of “religious couples” are as unhappy as the marriages of other couples but that religious commitment represents a barrier to divorce; alternatively, their marriages could be happier because of the security, support and direction they find in religion.

Social class differences in divorce have been amply documented. American census data (report Thorne and Collard 1979) have consistently shown an inverse relationship between social class of the husband, (as measured by such indicators as occupational status, income level or educational attainment), the higher the rate of separation and divorce.

Finally, the demographic features of marriages appear to be associated with its stability/instability. It has been consistently shown that marriages in which (i) one or both of the partners were in their teens at marriage, (ii) the bride was pregnant, (iii) the parents of one or both of the partners had divorces, (iv) the bride was of higher socio-economic status than the groom, (v) one or both of the partners has been previously married, are likely to founder.

2.3 THE DIVORCE EXPERIENCE

A growing body of divorce research has shown that the divorce experience reaches beyond the lives of the marital partners to encompass their children and to some extent their kin and social networks. It involves five major ruptures. First, divorce represents the

severance of what, within the context of contemporary family ideologies, was expected to be a close, intimate, affective relationship.

Second, divorce ruptures parental relationships, with one partner (usually the husband) effectively losing his (or less often her) parental role, which the other gains custody of the children but loses the support of a spouse in parenting. Third, divorce ruptures the social networks of the partners. (Elliot, 1986).

Joint friends may solve the dilemma of 'siding' with one partner by abandoning the couple altogether, while friendships which emanated from the husband's workplace may be lost of wife, neighbourhood and other friendship cultivated by the wife may be lost to the husband, and both partners may lose their in-law kin relationship.

Fourth, resources which had one sustained one household must now be redistributed between two households; consequently, both partners and their children are deprived of material resources which had been their during the marriages.

Fifth, on divorce the status of 'married person' is superseded by that of 'divorced person' so that the individual's social identity is ruptured. The former status is firmly structured and socially honoured, the latter is weakly structured and stigmatised. The literature suggests that few couples negotiate these divorce ruptures without discomfort to one or both of the partners and or to their children.

Maintained that a major hazard of the divorce experience for children is the parent's diminished capacity to parent throughout the marital break-up period. The effect of this, they assert, may be consolidated to create long-term maladjustments. Wallerstein & Kelly say that the central factor in the child's response to divorce is the parents' own adjustment to it. They find that children experience most psychic pain where they are dragged into their parents' conflicts, where divorce

brings their parents little relief, and or where the departing parents maintains irregular or little contact with them. Finally, and somewhat surprisingly, Wallerstein & Kelly report that many marriages which had been unhappy for the parents had been reasonably comfortable for the children.; Many of the children would have preferred to 'hobble along' in the marriage. Some studies have suggested that the separated and divorced are at particular risk of suicide, accidents and admission to psychiatric hospitals. (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

In one-parent family not only are the children without one parent by the parent is without a spouse, 'Spouseless' state is regarded by many of the men and women in the study as bringing beneficial autonomy, freedom and opportunity for self-development. There are some indications that lack of the respective skills may have its problems, for example, some lone fathers experience difficult in managing the household budget. Lone parents are without a partner in the child-care and household management tasks. (Elliot, 1986)

One aspect of this is that they are without the customary provider of certain kinds of domestics services. Men are without their 'domestic labourer', women are without their 'handyman'. The lone parent is without an established and socially legitimated sexual partner.

Research finding suggest that they are also without the sexual freedom of the single person. The lone parents are without the companionship of an age-peer in the home and without a social partner in a society in which the unaccompanied person is not easily included in mixed gatherings. Lone mothers may find alternatives sources of support and intimacy within same-sex friendship networks but lone fathers seem to be cut off from the interests and activities they once shared with male friendship groups by child-care responsibilities. Lone mothers in general have less power and standing in society than men, the lack of a spouse means that the lone mother family is at a relative disadvantage in its dealing with the outside world.

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Finally, most researcher emphasise the aloneness (as distinct from loneliness) of the solo parent and their ambiguous status as a not – married – not unmarried person. To be formerly married, says Chester (1977), is not at all the same thing as to be unmarried. Lone parent thus confront the world on their own but not as single persons. Their social situation, say George & Wilding (1972), is full of ambiguities which place them outside the normal stream of family life.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design to be used in the study is exploratory descriptive design which according to Babbie (1986:91), is an attempt to develop an initial, rough understanding of some phenomenon and precise measurement and reporting of the characteristics of some population of phenomenon understanding.

It is exploratory type of survey, with a motive to get facts, with regard to the effects of life after divorce in the North West Province with special reference to Mmabatho, Mafikeng areas.

3.2 POPULATION

Mafikeng the Capital Town of North West Province in South Africa. It has population of approximately 500 000. The targeted respondents for the study will be people of the age group ranging from 20 years up to 40 years, who are residents of Mmabatho, Mafikeng areas.

3.3. SAMPLE SIZE

The scope is based on Mmabatho, Mafikeng residents. Two independent groups, each consisting of 25 individuals were used as a sample. A sample of divorced individuals were compared to a sample of married individuals. A simple random sampling method was used to select subjects for the study.

3.4 THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire was used to gather the required information. It was divided into 25 questions and biographical information of the respondent.

3.5 PROCEDURE

Instead of mailing the Questionnaire to the subjects, a person to person interview were conducted by the researcher with the subjects to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the Questions in the Questionnaire, as it was written in English. As some subjects could not communicate in English, they were conducted in their language of preference.

3.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to the uncooperativeness of the people, 75% of the study was done in two weeks. This was because the researcher was moving on a broader scope so as to gather more information from various people as possible than fewer who were not prepared to answer to Questionnaires. Near places were also chosen because of lack of finance and mode of commuting.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The data of this study was analysed by using mostly univariate tables.

3.8 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS/ DESCRIPTIONS OF RESPONDENTS.

This study was interested in examining the demographic characteristics/descriptions of Respondents of the community who recites in the Mmabatho/Mafikeng area in the North West Province. That means, their age, sex, educational levels, marital status and occupational class. Place of origin. Religious Affiliation. Salary range.

SAMPLE SIZE N = 50
MALES = 25
FEMALES = 25

1.1. GENDER DISTRIBUTION

TABLE 1.1

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Males	25	50%
Female	25	50%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents were interviewed 50% were males and 50% were females. It shows that both males and females have the same percentage.

1.2 AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTION



TABLE 1.2

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
20 – 25 years	10	20%
26 – 30 years	16	32%
36 – 40 years	18	36%
45 and over	6	12%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 18 were between the age of 36 and 40, 16 were between the age of 26 and 30 and 6 were between the age of 45 and over, 10 were between the age 20 – 25.

1.3 MARITAL STATUS DISTRIBUTION

TABLE 1.3

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

MARITAL STATUS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Married	6	12%
Unmarried	16	32%
Divorced	20	40%
Widowed	8	10%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 20 were divorced while 16 were unmarried, 6 were married and 8 were widowed.

1.4 DISTRIBUTION OF PLACE OR ORIGIN

TABLE SIZE 1.4

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Rural	25	50%
Urban	25	50%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents were interviewed 25% were rural and 25% were urban. It shows that both rural and urban respondents have the same percentage.

1.4 OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

TABLE SIZE 1.5

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

OCCUPATIONAL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Employed	18	36%
Unemployed	18	36%
Self employed	14	28%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 14 were self employed whereas unemployed and employed have the same number of 18.

1.5 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

TABLE SIZE 1.6

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

EDUCATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Primary	10	20%
Secondary	10	20%
High School	12	24%
Tertiary	18	36%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 18 had undergone tertiary, 12 had undergone high school level, 10 had undergone primary and another 10 had secondary level.

1.7 RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

TABLE SIZE 1.7

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RELIGIOUS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Catholicism	12	24%
Protestantism	10	20%
Christians	14	28%
Hinduism	8	16%
And others	6	12%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 14 were Christians, 8 were Hindu, 10 were Protestants, 12 were Catholics whereas 6 belong to other Religious affiliations.

1.8 SALARY RANGE

TABLE SIZE 1.8

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

SLARY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Between R1000 – R2000	12	24%
R2000 – R3000	12	24%
R3000 – R4000	18	36%
R4000 – Above	8	16%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents 18 received salary ranging between R3001 and R4000.00, 12 received salary ranging between R2001 and R3000.00, another 12 received salary ranging between R1000 and R2000, whereas 8 received salary ranging between R4000 and above.

1.9 Are you presently divorced?

TABLE SIZE 1.9

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONDENTS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	36	72%
No	14	28%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 36 were divorced whereas 14 were still married. From the findings this shows that more people are divorced.

1.10 At what age were you married?

TABLE SIZE 1.10

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Between 20 years - 25 years	16	32%
Between 26 years – 30 years	34	68%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 34 were married between the age of 26 years and 30 years whereas 16 were married between the age of 20 years and 25 years. From the findings this shows that more people are married between the age of 26 and 30 years.

1.11 When do you think is the average age for someone to be engaged in a holy matrimony?

TABLE SIZE 1.11

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Between 20 and 25 years	18	36%
Between 25 and 30 years	32	64%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 32 were of the opinion that the right time for marriage is between 25 – 30 years of age. Whereas 18 respondents believe that the right time for marriage starts from 20 – 25 years.

1.12 Do you believe in double barrel surname?

TABLE SIZE 1.12

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	30	60%
No	20	40%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 30 believe in double barrel surnames whereas 20 did not believe in double barrel surnames. From the findings it shows that more people believe in double surnames.

1.13 For how long have you been married?

TABLE SIZE 1.13

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than one year	14	28%
More than one year	8	16%
More than two years	14	28%
Three years and above	14	28%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents less than one year 14 were married, more than one year 8 were married, more than two years 14 were married and three year and above 14 were married. From the findings it shows that more than one year less people were married.

1.14 How many partners were you going out with before you married the one you had divorced?

TABLE SIZE 1.14

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
One partner	12	24%
Two partners	20	40%
Over three partners	18	36%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 20 people were going out with 2 partners, 12 people were going out with one partner whereas 18 people were going out with over 3 partners.

1.15 For how long have you dated your divorced partner before marriage?

TABLE SIZE 1.15

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
6 months	20	40%
I year	30	60%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents 30 had dated their partners for one year while 20 had dated their partners for 6 months before their marriage.

1.16 What were you really looking for in a partner before marriage?

TABLE SIZE 1.16

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Trustworthy	12	24%
Love and caring	24	48%
Understanding	24	48%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 24 were looking for a partner who has love and caring. Another 24 were looking for partner who has an understanding, whereas 12 were looking for partner who is trustworthy.

1.17 Is your divorce partner a career one?

TABLE SIZE 1.17

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	25	50
No	25	50
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 25 were not having careers, whereas 25 were having careers.

1.18 Did the career have any impact on your marriage?

TABLE SIZE 1.18

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	34	68%
No	16	32%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 34 were disturbed by their careers in their marriage whereas 16 did not have any disturbance in their marriage. This shows that careers have impact in people's marriage.

1.19 How many kids do you have in your marriage?

TABLE SIZE 1.19

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1 kid	12	24%
2 kids	14	28%
3 kids	24	48%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 14 have 2 kids in their marriage, 12 have 1 kid in their marriage and 24 have 3 kids in their marriage.

1.20 Is your cultural background allowing you to have kids Before marriage?

TABLE SIZE 1.20

SAMPLE SIZE NO: 50

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	22	44%
No	28	56%
TOTAL	50	100%

Out of the 50(100%) respondents, 28 people's culture did not allowed them to have children before their marriage. On the other hand 22 people's culture allowed them to have children before marriage.

3.9 FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

It was to the researcher's perplexity to note that during the weeks of this research, that November and December 2001, most of the divorce case occurred earlier in the marriage, while the newly – weds are starting to build their marriage relationship.

This shows how serious is the need for counselling – professional and home brewed counselling, and also the pre and post marriage counselling. It was also discovered that most of the divorced marriages were built on careers, i.e. all partners are self succient – both earners.

As a result of a struggle of power – sharing in marriages the result was total divorce. The researcher noted the family life is not regarded as the pinnacle of marriage, but equality is the new norm. There are also misunderstandings and widespread ignorance about cultural polices in regard to marriage. The partners have given the parents the impression that they (partners) can be all things to themselves at all times.

CHAPTER FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends the following:

Since so many families are now experiencing the crisis of divorce, there is a great need to devise new social mechanisms responsive to the need of such families. One method might be the establishment of community divorce clinics that closely affiliated with the court system, and the could receive referrals from this source.

While involvement in such programs should remain voluntary, strong recommendations for participation should be given by the courts and other concerned agencies.

The functions of such divorce clinics would include counselling, sponsorship of educational programs on divorce as well as supplying information about welfare entitlements, housing, day care, self-help groups and lists of helpful agencies in the community.

4.1 **DIVORCE COUNSELLING**

Whether divorce counselling is conducted within or outside of such clinics, it can and should be used to clarify and later objective conditions and subjective definitions which are components of the divorce situation for the family members. A major characteristic of divorce therapy, therefore, is that the problem is not some fatal flaw of character possessed by the divorcing individuals. Instead, it is the situation which is causing the difficulty, and must be redefined as an opportunity for growth rather than despair.

The next phase of divorce counselling has been referred to by Brown (176) as "restructuring". Such a process has been defined as rebuilding a satisfying life style for individuals within the emotional, legal, parent-child, economic, and social relationship areas. It is also apparent that this concept is consistent with the idea that objective and subjective aspects of the situation must be gradually redefined as either Manageable, or as an opportunity for positive growth.

In the area of emotional concerns, it is often the case that feelings of loss, grief, separation anxiety, guilty, and failure for both the adults and children must be dealt with. During this process counsellors may focus upon the trauma of family members, and assists in redefining the stigma of negative norms against divorce as a means of redefine the situation a one of acceptance and opportunity for growth. Restoration of the parents' emotional adjustment is also important in order to maintain constructive parent – child interaction patterns.

Because legal issues can become an inflammatory aspects of post-divorce situations, the restricting phase of divorce counselling will also focus upon resolving these matters. Such an effort by counsellors, working in conjunction with lawyers, will help eliminate one of the major causes of post-divorce conflict. Weiss (1975), for example, has argued that formerly married individuals often fins excuses to continue their conflict as an expression of their persisting attachment. As previously described, the quality of the Post-divorce relationship also has important effects upon the adjustment of children involved in divorce.

Divorce counsellors must, therefore, develop proficiency with interventions, which encourage negotiation processes and conflict management skills for resolving legal issues and other factors, which serve to continue post-divorce conflict.

Another function of the second phase of divorce counselling specifically involves the parent – child relationship. The concern is with the maintenance of supportive parental behaviour and rational control attempts, while suppression any coercive and inconsistent parenting, which may appear. Counselling, which deals with these behavioural dimensions, is focusing upon one aspects of the family and situational context which influences the child to respond with either positive or negative behaviour. Other interventions should also seek to directly maintain the positive responsiveness of the child to the custodial parent, which, in turn, should reciprocally elicit more nurturant and rational behaviour from the parent.

During the crisis of divorce, other focal points of divorce counselling pertinent to the parent-child relationship are concerned with making the separation explicit to the children, and ameliorating custody battles. In the first case, an honest, matter-of-fact approach should be used with the child/children, so that a clear definition of the family situation is acquired. Such an approach must provide children with a realistic perception of the quality of their parents' relationship. Rather than seeking to protect children from the real nature of the situation, an honest approach is crucial in order to insure that children will have a sense of trust in the parents. Divorce counselling which acknowledges such objectives helps prevent the reported feelings of guilty and responsibility children often feel for their parents' disrupted marriage.

Secondly, in the area of custody decisions, a useful procedure is to employ conjoint sessions, in order that the needs and emotions of all family members including the children, can be expressed. At times during the therapeutic process, the counsellor must function as a child advocate who encourages children to express their feelings about future living custody arrangements.

Within the economic domain, divorce counselling should focus upon defining the single-parents' role performance in the provider role. Such intervention is necessary in order to assist single-parents with their increased responsibility in this domain, and eliminate some of its incompatibility with other family roles. Areas of concern should include advisement as to child care, time use, opportunities for job training, family budgeting, living arrangements, credit, welfare, and health insurance. Counselling about these matters will provide for efficient use of economic resources, while eliminating some of the role incompatibility that is a structural problem during the divorced condition.

A final area of concern is the re-establishment of certain social relationships. With reference to the situation of divorce, one of its problematic aspects may be the absence of a partner who supplies therapeutic, affectional, and sexual needs to the single-parent. The fact that these old ties are abruptly severed underscores the need for establishment of new social relationships. The

divorce counsellor's function in this area should involve helping clients to plan for their social need. Referrals from the counsellor to adult social groups will often assist single-parents to re-establish social ties.

A therapist should also seek to enlist the support of the extended family and friends, in order to alleviate ambivalence about the divorce process, and to provide emotional support. In the case of children, maintenance of social relationships is also important. Surrogates such as kin, teachers, siblings, peers, and adult friends have been found to be significant factors in the adjustment of children. Family therapist should encourage the continuation of such involvements, and, where possible, the counsellor should seek their co-operation in structuring a responsive social network of surrogates for the child.

4.2 EDUCATION FOR DIVORCE



Besides counselling for divorced and separated families, community-based divorce clinics might also sponsor classes and small group sessions which provide information about the divorce situation. Such groups have been variously referred to as 'Seminars' for the separated' or situation/transition groups' or either 'divorce experience workshops'.

The overall purpose of the educational experiences is to supply cognitive information about the divorce crisis, as well as emotional support. Similar to divorce counselling these educational experiences can be concerned with the same areas inclusive of emotional concerns, legal matters, parent-child relationships, economic. Matters, and social relationships, supplying information in these areas will serve to clarify the ambiguity of the situation for the divorcing family. The educational support groups may not be characterised by the intense involvement of divorce counselling, they have the advantage of efficiently providing information and support to a large number of individuals. Examples of their usefulness might include the alleviation of the "divorce stigma" by having group members share their experiences, and provide information about the frequency and normality of divorce. Instruction

of parenting skills might also be provided in order to maintain the quality of the parent-child relationship during the divorce crisis.

The crisis situation for the custodial parent when the perspective of single-parents is considered, a number of elements also serve to define the nature of the crisis. First of all, factors which contribute to the severity of the marital separation crisis are the experiences of emotional stress, despair separation anxiety, and anger directed at the former partner. Another matter which contributes to the stressfulness of the crisis for the adults involved in that the status of being a divorced family member of often provided negative qualities by sub-cultural norms. Changes in the family structure also contribute to the remaining parent's difficult in meeting new role obligations.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that marital break-up brings unpredictability, unreliability and insecurity into human beings. It also brings bewilderment, anxiety, anger, grief, shame. But above all a yearning for, and or a sense of rejection by the departing parent.

Furthermore the increasing divorce figures indicate something is seriously wrong with society. Most of the factors which were found to be related to marriage breakdown could be prevented from straining the marriage, through pre-marital or marriage counselling. In the traditional society marriage counselling is provided by the extended family while in urban areas this may be provided by welfare agencies like the society for marriage and family life or by social workers.

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APPENDIX 1

**SUBJECT : APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT
AN ACADEMIC (MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE)
RESEARCH IN THE HIGH COURT OF SOUTH
AFRICA.**

BY : THABO TITUS MOLOKELE

1. Reference is made to this office minute dated 2001-12-20.
2. The application of the above-mentioned is approved.


THE REGISTRAR

APPENDIX 2

IN THE HIGH COURT OF SOUTH AFRICA (BOO PROVINCE)

DEAR SIR/MADAM

BE INFORMED THAT THIS OFFICES' STATISTICS FOR THE DIVORCE MATTER IS 133 TO DATE OF 2001.

YOURS FAITHFULLY

R. N. N. N.

THE REGISTRAR

REGISTRAR OF HIGH COURT
BOPHUTHATSWANA PROVINCE
MAFIKENG

REGISTRAR HIGH COURT
PRIVATE BAG X2010
2001 -12- 20
MAFIKENG
REPUBLIC OF S. AFRICA

APPENDIX 3
QUESTIONNAIRE

Information in this Questionnaire is solely for privacy and confidentiality is guaranteed. Please answer the Questions as asked. Put a cross next to the appropriate answer in the Questionnaire. Where a Question does not apply to you, the answer "not applicable" can be written.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Mother tongue
4. Age at marriage
5. Age at marriage breakdown
6. Present marital status
7. Number of children
8. Highest educational qualification attained
9. Where were you born?

SECTION B

10. What do you understand by divorce?

.....
.....

11. What effects does divorce has on human being?

.....
.....

12. What matters should be taken in order to prevent divorce?

.....
.....

13. Is there any life after divorce?

Explain.

.....
.....
.....

14. In your opinion how does courts handle divorce cases?

.....
.....

SECTION C

15. Did you/your husband pay lobola for your wife/you?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Have you been to the traditional initiation school?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Before you got married, did anybody tell you what you were expected to do in marriage?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Were you told about problems that you would encounter in marriage?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. Did you have a child or children before you got married?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Was pregnancy or the already born child or children a strong motivation for you to get married?

YES	
NO	

21. Did you stay with your in-Laws in your marriage?

YES	
NO	

22. How would you describe your mother-in-Law?

YES	
NO	

23. Did your in-Laws contribute to your marriage breakdown?

YES	
NO	

24. Would you describe your partner as a heavy drinker at the time of your marriage?

YES	
NO	

25. Was your sex life satisfactory?

YES	
NO	