

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES ON THE SPREAD OF DIVORCE IN IRAQ

Zahra' Khalaf Zair Aajib¹

¹Assistant Lecturer, Sociology Department, College of Arts, University of Baghdad,

Zahraa.K@coart.uobaghdad.edu.iq¹

Abstract:

The study aimed to examine the impact of social and economic changes on the spread of divorce in Iraq. It also sought to identify the differences in the social and economic factors influencing divorce according to variables such as the duration of marriage, place of residence, and the family's monthly income. The research employed a descriptive-analytical approach, and the study sample consisted of (69) divorced men and women from the city of Karbala. The primary research tool used was a questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed the following:

1. Social changes have a significant impact on the spread of divorce in Iraq.
2. Economic changes have a significant impact on the spread of divorce in Iraq.
3. There are differences in the social factors influencing divorce attributed to the variable of age at marriage (in favor of those aged 26–30 years), duration of marriage (in favor of three years or less), place of residence (in favor of those living in a governorate), and family monthly income (in favor of those earning less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars).
4. There are differences in the economic factors influencing divorce attributed to the variable of age at marriage (in favor of those aged 18 years or younger), duration of marriage (in favor of three years or less), place of residence (in favor of those living in rural areas), and family monthly income (in favor of those earning less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars).

Keywords: Social Changes, Economic Changes, Divorce

Introduction:

Marriage is the fundamental foundation upon which the family—and consequently, society as a whole—is built. It becomes evident, therefore, that human societies are composed of interconnected families. Marriage represents the most essential pillar of human relationships that constitute the fabric of societies since the dawn of human history. From the moment God created humankind, the system of companionship and marriage was established. Thus, marriage is regarded as the only means to ensure the continuity of humanity and the sole institution capable of preserving humans. Consequently, both traditional and formal systems work to protect marriage by reinforcing the values, customs, and traditions of human societies through the establishment of a set of laws and regulations governing this relationship. Consequently, marriage has received considerable care and attention to ensure the achievement of its intended purpose.

Marriage serves to achieve stability, tranquility, and mutual harmony between spouses. Therefore, these systems and laws were designed to regulate the behavior of both partners within the family and in their interactions with other social groups. Moreover, the family plays a vital role in nurturing and socializing its members, shaping them into social beings who constitute the foundation of society. Hence, the family is regarded as the nucleus of society, its cornerstone and fundamental pillar.¹

¹ Ibrahim Othman (2008): Principles of Sociology, Al-Quds Open University, Dar Al-Fikr for Printing, Distribution, and Publishing, p. 15.

The issue of divorce has attracted the attention of many psychologists and sociologists due to its negative effects on both the individual and society. Although divorce is, in essence, an individual decision, it is in fact influenced by the surrounding social factors and circumstances. An individual typically begins to contemplate divorce when reaching a dead end—when continuing the marital journey with the other partner feels impossible. Divorce refers to the dissolution of a marital relationship in accordance with religious and legal principles. It is a phenomenon that exists in nearly all human societies, both traditional and modern, and is prevalent across various modes of life—nomadic, rural, and urban alike. However, its prevalence varies from one society to another depending on differing social, cultural, economic, political, and religious circumstances.¹

Therefore, divorce is a social phenomenon that originates within society and gives rise to unhealthy social relations. It entails several consequences, the most significant of which are the dissolution of marriage, the disintegration of the family, and the weakening of the fundamental bonds that hold society together. It is an undesirable outcome of marriage—an unfortunate counterpart to it. Divorce is an ancient social phenomenon that has existed since the emergence of human societies, where marriage marked the beginning of family formation, and divorce signified the end of immature marital life. It has always accompanied the institution of marriage, and various civilizations throughout history—long before the revelation of divine laws—recognized and practiced this social phenomenon.

The causes of divorce among primitive societies may vary—sometimes they are quite simple, while in other cases, they can be more complex. However, this does not necessarily mean that divorce rates are excessively high, as certain constraints and barriers often limit their occurrence, such as the woman's dowry, public opinion, and prevailing social attitudes that encourage the preservation of marriage.

The most common causes of divorce in many societies include the wife's infertility, neglect, failure to adequately fulfill her marital responsibilities, and undesirable temperament. In contrast, some societies regard marriage as an unbreakable contract that cannot be dissolved under any circumstances; in such contexts, divorce is entirely prohibited, and death is considered the only legitimate conclusion to marital life.²

Hence, the present study was conducted to examine the impact of social and economic changes on the spread of divorce in Iraq.

Problem Statement: Divorce is an important social phenomenon that necessitates thorough study. Its effects extend beyond the individual to encompass society. Divorce is a prevalent phenomenon in contemporary societies, often serving to end unhealthy relationships and resolve conflicts. This phenomenon is closely linked to the development of society, the evolution of social relationships, and the maintenance of bonds among individuals and social groups. It is observed that the repercussions of divorce are not confined to the family alone; they also contribute to the emergence of other social problems, such as juvenile delinquency and crime. Divorce significantly influences personality development and behavioral guidance, and it has far-reaching negative consequences, including family disintegration, increased hostility and resentment, and adverse impacts on children.

¹ Salwa Al-Khatib (2009): Social Changes and Their Impact on the Rise in Divorce Rates, a Scientific Article, Journal of the Faculty of Arts, King Abdulaziz University, Vol. (17), No. (1), pp. 159-222.

² Hana Hassan Sadkhan Al-Badri (2022): The phenomenon of divorce, a study of causes and results (a social field study in the city of Diwaniyah), Al-Ameed Magazine, Vol. 11, No. 42, pp. 127-158.

Divorce often results in the wife losing self-confidence and experiencing a sense of personal destabilization. This occurs primarily through two mechanisms: first, the stigma attached to her by her family and society as a divorced woman, and second, the perception of her merely in her role as a woman. Both factors negatively affect the psychological well-being of the divorced wife.

It is evident that the social changes that have swept through Iraqi society have had a negative impact on the continuity of marital relationships. Cultural openness to other societies has contributed to the weakening of religious and value-based norms rooted in the prevailing culture, leading to increased conflicts and disputes among family members, particularly between spouses, ultimately resulting in divorce. The core problem of this study, therefore, lies in addressing the following central question: **What are the social and economic changes affecting the phenomenon of divorce in Iraq?**

Research Questions:

1. What are the most significant social changes affecting the spread of divorce in Iraqi society?
2. What are the most significant economic changes affecting the spread of divorce in Iraqi society?
3. Are there differences in the impact of social and economic changes on the phenomenon of divorce in light of social changes, with respect to the variables of: age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and monthly family income?

Study Hypotheses:

There are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level regarding the extent to which social and economic changes affect the spread of divorce in Iraq, attributable to the following variables: age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and monthly family income.

Study Objectives:

1. To identify the most significant social changes affecting the spread of divorce in Iraqi society.
2. To identify the most significant economic changes affecting the spread of divorce in Iraqi society.
3. To examine the differences in the impact of social and economic changes on the spread of divorce considering the variables: age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and monthly family income.

Study Significance:

Theoretical Significance:

The study will benefit researchers, students, and those interested in examining the phenomenon of divorce. Once published and added to academic libraries, it will serve as a reference for anyone seeking to utilize the findings of the study.

Practical Significance:

The findings of the study will provide strategies that contribute to reducing the spread of divorce in Iraqi society. They will also offer potential solutions for managing the social and economic changes that influence the prevalence of divorce.

Scope of the Study:

Geographical Scope: The study will be conducted in the province of Karbala.

Human Scope: The study will focus on divorced men and women of both genders from the years 2024 to 2025.

Temporal Scope: The study began in December 2024 and concluded in February 2025.

Study Terms:

Divorce (Linguistically): It refers to separation, release, or the dissolution of a marriage contract, either in whole or in part.¹

Divorce (Legal Definition):

From a legal perspective, divorce is the dissolution of an existing contract between a husband and wife, subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions; otherwise, it is considered null and void.²

Divorce (Additional Definition):

Divorce is also defined as the termination of the marital bond and the issuance of a legal declaration nullifying this relationship. It may also be used to refer to the separation between spouses³.

Divorce is defined as the termination of marital life according to religious and legal provisions. Given the serious impact of this phenomenon on the family and society, societies have regulated and restricted its practice, permitting it only in specific cases. Although allowed by religious law, it is considered the most disliked of lawful acts in the eyes of Allah.⁴

Operational Definition of Divorce:

Divorce is the legal and religious termination of marital relationships, either by mutual agreement between the spouses or by the husband's decision, as he holds the legal and religious authority to do so.

2. Social Changes: Social changes refer to factors related to individuals' lives, including their level of material income, adherence to religious practices, and the ability to meet the family's essential material needs to ensure its continuity and proper functioning within society. Insufficient fulfillment of these needs may contribute to divorce, as can interference by the husband's or wife's family in domestic life.⁵

Operational Definition of Social Changes:

Social changes, operationally, are defined as the set of circumstances surrounding an individual that distinguishes them from others. These conditions shape the broader environment affecting both the individual and others. In this context, social conditions are limited to the network of relationships that develop between the individual and specific groups of people with whom they interact closely, whether these are family members, members of the community, school peers, or chosen friends.

3. Economic Changes: These refer to factors related to individuals' living conditions that contribute to the occurrence of divorce, such as interference by the families of either spouse in

¹ Bin Ahmed Al-Farahidi Khalil, *The Book of the Eye*, edited by Mahdi Al-Makhzoumi and others, Vol. 5, Dar Al-Hilal Printing and Library, n.d., p. 544.

² Bahaa Al-Din Khalil, *Family Sociology*, Ahali Press, Egypt, n.d., p. 194.

³ Mohamed Atef Gheith (2006), *Dictionary of Sociology*, Alexandria, Dar Al-Ma'rifa Al-Jami'iyya, p. 139.

⁴ Mustafa Al-Khashab (1981), *Studies in Family Sociology*, Beirut, p. 325.

⁵ Salwa Abdel-Hamid Ahmed Al-Khatib (2009), *Social Changes and Their Impact on the Rise of Divorce Rates in the Kingdom from the Perspective of Saudi Women*, College of Arts, King Saud University, p. 78.

marital life, the level of household income, weak adherence to religious practices, and the inability to meet the family's essential material needs necessary for its continuity and for ensuring that it fulfills its proper role within society.¹

Theoretical Framework:

First: Definition of Divorce:

Linguistically, the term *alāq* (divorce) is derived from the verb *alāqa*, which denotes release or freedom from restraint. It is said, for example, that a woman is *ālīq* (divorced) when she is freed from the bond of marriage and released from her husband's authority. The word *alāq* thus connotes separation and disengagement.

In Islamic jurisprudence, divorce is defined as the dissolution of the marital bond established between the spouses through specific, legally recognized expressions.²

Originally, *alāq* is a verbal noun derived from *allaqa* (with emphasis), meaning the removal of either a tangible or intangible bond. In linguistic usage, both *alāq* and *ilāq* refer to the act of releasing or untying a restraint—whether physical, such as freeing a tethered horse, or abstract, such as dissolving the marital bond. The term thus conveys the general sense of release or abandonment. It denotes the dissolution of the connection between husband and wife. The root meaning is evident in expressions such as, “I released my camel,” “I set my captive free,” or “I divorced my wife” — all derived from the same root concept of *alāq*, signifying liberation from a form of confinement or attachment.³

In legal jurisprudence, divorce is defined as a lawful means of dissolving a marriage during the lifetime of both spouses, through a judicial ruling issued upon the request of one or both parties and based on specific grounds stipulated by law.⁴

Divorce is defined as the removal of the marital bond and the dissolution of the marriage contract, achieved without compensation through the declaration of divorce. In the case of women, it carries two meanings: one refers to the termination of the marriage contract, and the other to separation or release. Some jurists define divorce as the lifting of marital restrictions using a specific, explicit, or implied formula. It has also been stated that, from a religious perspective, divorce is the dissolution of the marriage contract through the utterance of the word “divorce” or a similar expression. Its foundation, prior to consensus, is established in the Qur'an, as in the verse: “*Divorce is twice; then, either retain [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment.*”⁵

Linguistically, *alāq* (divorce) is defined as the act of releasing a bond or setting someone free. In Islamic jurisprudence, scholars have unanimously agreed that it refers to the dissolution of marriage through specific words or actions indicating such intent. Divorce rates vary across societies, depending on a range of social, economic, political, and cultural factors. Studies and research indicate that divorce cases have multiplied since the beginning of the second half of the last century and continue to rise, particularly in developed countries. This increase is largely

¹ Salwa Abdel-Hamid Ahmed Al-Khatib, *Ibid.*, p. 78.

² Ibrahim Anis (2006), *Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet*, 2nd ed., Vol. 2, Baqri Press, Tehran, p. 563.

³ 'A'id Salem Muhammad Al-Janabi (1983), *Social and Cultural Variables of the Phenomenon of Divorce*, Dar Al-Hurriya for Publishing and Distribution, Baghdad, p. 15.

⁴ Abdel-Hadi Al-Jawhari (2002), *Political Sociology: Concepts and Issues*, 2nd ed., Al-Maktaba Al-Jami'iyya, Alexandria/Cairo, p. 183.

⁵ Yahya Eid Al-Khidr (2012), “Causes of Divorce in Kuwaiti Society from the Perspective of Divorced Women,” *Jordanian Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 78–103.

attributed to the economic and industrial transformations that have introduced numerous factors negatively affecting family cohesion and stability.¹

Divorce is defined as “a means of terminating the marital relationship between a man and a woman.” Its forms and characteristics vary between what is legal and what is religious, and the causes leading to it also differ. Divorce often represents a means of escape for one or both spouses from a distressing or restrictive marital life characterized by conflict and tension. It typically results in a range of negative consequences that affect both parties—particularly the divorced woman—and, when applicable, their children.²

Operational Definition of Divorce: Divorce is the process of annulling the marriage contract entered by both the man and the woman prior to the continuation of their marital relationship. This process enables each party to resume an individual status that grants them the right to remarry.

2. The Ruling on Divorce: Divorce is considered lawful, and its permissibility is unanimously established through the Qur’an, the Sunnah, and scholarly consensus.

From the Qur’an:

1. Allah Almighty says: “*Divorce is twice; then, either retain [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment.*”³
2. Allah Almighty says: “*O Prophet, when you divorce women, divorce them for their prescribed waiting period.*”⁴
3. Allah Almighty says: “*There is no blame upon you if you divorce women as long as you have not touched them or imposed a prescribed obligation upon them.*”⁵

Third: Theories Explaining the Phenomenon of Divorce: Several theories have been proposed to explain the phenomenon of divorce, including the following:

1. **Learning Theory:** The learning theory attributes divorce to the lack of mutual reinforcement between spouses. Each partner experiences a sense of deprivation resulting from the failure to satisfy their needs within the marriage or from being subjected to punishment, tension, and anxiety in their interactions. Consequently, the continuation of marital relationships becomes painful and intolerable. Divorce, therefore, serves as a means of relieving both partners from feelings of deprivation, stress, and anxiety caused by their coexistence. In this context, divorce may also provide everyone with an opportunity to seek fulfillment in a new marital relationship. According to this theory, every person withdraws from a marriage in which their physical, psychological, social, or economic needs remain unmet.⁶

¹ Ahmed Al-Majali (2015), “The Most Significant Social Causes Leading to Divorce from the Perspective of Divorced Men and Women in Al-Karak Governorate,” *Al-‘Ameed Journal*, Iraq, p. 43.

² Fouad Karima (2017), “Causes and Effects of Divorce,” *Arab Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(2), pp. 151–176.

³ Qur’an, Al-Baqarah, Verse 229.

⁴ Qur’an, At-Talaq, Verse 1.

⁵ Qur’an, Al-Baqarah, Verse 236.

⁶ Kamal Morsi (1991), *Marital Relationships and Mental Health in Islam and Psychology*, Dar Al-Qalam for Publishing and Distribution, Kuwait, 1st ed., p. 302.

2. Exchange Theory: The concept of exchange theory is based on several key principles, including:

- The scarcity of opportunities for an individual to maximize material benefits.
- The understanding that individuals do not always act rationally.
- The exchange between individuals is influenced by, and responsive to, external regulatory factors.
- Individuals often lack sufficient information about all available and existing resources or options.

These principles apply to every social action undertaken by members of society. Marriage, divorce, family life, and the bonds of affection that individuals seek through marriage all fall within the realm of benefits emphasized by exchange theory. The appeal of a current marriage largely depends on the advantages and disadvantages that spouses perceive in their relationship.¹

Peter Blau developed his concept of exchange theory in social life, considering it the fundamental principle underlying human nature. He argued that this exchange leads to the stabilization of social structures and facilitates social change. Although Blau begins by examining and analyzing social exchange at the level of individual relationships, he seeks to bridge the connection between this initial level and the level of organizations and society at large. Blau posits that exchange processes are fundamentally based on voluntary actions, where incentives and choices are linked to the expected responses from others. In his approach to social exchange, he views social life as a negotiation marketplace that allows individuals to choose from multiple alternatives.

It is evident that **social exchange theory** explains the occurrence of divorce because of the breakdown of marital life between the spouses, when their relationship becomes filled with conflict and tension. In such circumstances, the woman tends to evaluate the potential losses and gains associated with divorce. If she perceives that the benefits of divorce outweigh its costs, she is likely to proceed with it; conversely, if the losses appear greater, she will choose to remain in the marriage. These gains and losses are not limited to material aspects alone but may also be **emotional, moral, or social** in nature.

Third: Structural Functionalism Theory

The theory of structural functionalism posits that society—or the social system—is composed of multiple subsystems, the most significant of which are the family and the social order. According to functionalists, society operates as an integrated whole, much like a living organism performing its vital functions. This analogy, often referred to as the *organic analogy*, underscores the idea that social institutions collectively perform their respective functions for the benefit and stability of society.²

Talcott Parsons, in his book *The Social System*, asserts that “there is no structure without social functions, and no functions without social structure.” This statement reflects the interactive relationship between structure and function, emphasizing a high degree of integration between the two. In this view, structure and function are inseparable components that mutually sustain the coherence and continuity of the social system.³

¹ Abdullah Muhammad Al-Safi Abdul Karim (2012), “Effectiveness of a Guidance Program in Improving Self-Concept among Early Divorced Women,” *Journal of Psychological Guidance*, No. 32, pp. 39–93.

² Mustafa Abdul-Jawad (2009), *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, Dar Al-Maseera for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Jordan, p. 34.

³ Mohamed Atef Gheith (2006), *Dictionary of Sociology*, Alexandria, Dar Al-Ma'rifa Al-Jami'iyya, p. 139.

That is, the family system is a subsystem within the larger social system. It possesses its own structure, and each component of this structure fulfills specific functions. Any disruption in either the structure or the functions may expose the family to the risk of dissolution, such as divorce. This is because the family system is intrinsically linked to society; consequently, any imbalance within it affects all of its constituent parts. A dysfunction in this structure reverberates across other members of society, with its most immediate impact falling upon the nuclear family, potentially leading to divorce.

Fourth: Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Scholars of symbolic interactionism argue that the family should not be studied as an idealized model but rather examined as it exists in everyday life. No two families are completely identical; each family is characterized by its own unique patterns of interaction and relationships that distinguish it from other families. The family plays a pivotal role in instilling in individuals their future roles. Every family possesses a set of symbols and norms that it imparts to its children during early childhood, and these symbols and meanings vary from one family to another. The individual first attempts to internalize the role expected of them and then, through daily interaction with others, seeks to modify and adjust this role in accordance with the symbols acquired during childhood and the surrounding circumstances. Therefore, each marital relationship differs from others. The closer the symbols and meanings acquired by the spouses from their respective families of origin, the more this contributes to fostering mutual understanding between them. Conversely, the greater the distance—or even conflict—between their respective symbols and meanings, the more likely it is that a gap will emerge between them, ultimately leading to divorce.¹

Symbolic interactionism focuses on its study of the family on the nature of interaction among individuals within marital relationships. Family interaction is fundamentally shaped by the social roles performed by each member. Everyone in the family, whether they are husband, wife, or children, assumes multiple roles that they are expected to fulfill. The family plays a crucial role in defining the roles expected of its members, such as those of father, mother, son, and daughter, among others. Furthermore, individuals do not always perform the roles expected of them in an ideal manner. Initially, a person seeks to internalize the role expected of them, and subsequently, through daily interactions and considering surrounding circumstances, they attempt to adapt and modify this role. As a result, each marital relationship differs from others. One of the most significant challenges facing the family is the issue of role adaptation. It is not sufficient for an individual merely to understand the expected behavior; successful role performance depends on the extent to which they accept that role. Thus, it is not enough for spouses to share a common cultural background for marital life to succeed. Their future roles must be a continuation of the roles they have previously experienced. A young person is influenced by the behavior of their parents and adopts them as role models for future conduct. If the spouses come from entirely different reference groups, establishing a common ground becomes difficult due to their divergent cultural and social backgrounds.

Fourth: Types of Divorce

Given the gravity of divorce and the far-reaching consequences associated with the collapse of the family structure—whether affecting the wife, the husband, their respective families, or the sons and daughters within the household, the outcomes of the divorce process may be severe and difficult to predict. There are various types of divorce, some of which are outlined below:

¹ Salwa Abdel-Hamid Ahmed Al-Khatib (2007), *A Perspective on Family Sociology*, Al-Shaqri Library for Publishing and Distribution, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, p. 65.

1. **Revocable Divorce (□alāq Raj‘ī):** This is a form of divorce in which the husband retains the right to return his divorced wife to the marital bond without the need for a new contract or dowry, and without requiring her consent—even if she refuses—provided this occurs within the waiting period (□iddah), which lasts three months. All divorces are considered revocable unless they constitute a third divorce, occur before consummation, are in exchange for compensation (i.e., khul□), or are explicitly stated to be irrevocable.
2. **Minor Irrevocable Divorce (□alāq Bā’in Baynūnah □ughrā):** This type of divorce occurs when the marriage bond is dissolved, and the waiting period has concluded. After the □iddah expires, if both spouses mutually agree to resume their marital life, this can only be achieved through a new marriage contract and dowry, with the wife's consent.
3. **Major Irrevocable Divorce (□alāq Bā’in Baynūnah Kubrā):** This refers to a divorce that completes the three allowable repudiations, meaning the woman has been divorced three separate times. It may also apply to divorce before consummation, judicial divorce, or divorce by mutual agreement in exchange for compensation, whether financial or otherwise. In such a case, the husband cannot remarry his ex-wife unless she has married another man (*mu□allil*), the marriage has been consummated, and her relationship with the second husband has subsequently ended, either through divorce or death. A new marriage contract, a new dowry, and the wife’s consent are required for remarriage. Divorce before consummation is an exception to this rule.¹

Fifth: Causes of Divorce

An examination of most divorce cases in our present time reveals a multitude of causes that cannot be exhaustively enumerated, given the diversity of individual circumstances and the fact that certain issues affecting some members of society do not affect others. However, the most significant of these causes may be summarized as follows:

1. **Economic Changes:** This factor plays a crucial role in ensuring the stability of family life. Economic stability serves as a strong pillar in preserving the family from disintegration and collapse. Poverty or financial incapacity can act as a catalyst for the breakdown of the family unit, particularly when the household is unable to fulfill its basic duties, such as providing food, clothing, and other essential needs². In addition, some wives may intentionally engage in behaviors that push the husband toward divorce, for example, by excessively spending the household budget to prevent any financial surplus that he might use for leisure activities away from her. Such conduct may compel the husband to abandon the marital relationship.³

Economic problems are not solely attributable to the husband; they also involve the wife. In the current context, economic pressures have compelled many women to seek employment outside the home to supplement the family income. This shift, however, has led to numerous challenges that may threaten the stability of the family and increase the risk of separation.⁴

¹ Mahmoud Al-Sartawi (2012), *Jurisprudence of Personal Status (Vol. 1)*, Al-Quds Open University, Amman, Jordan, 9th edition.

² Ramzi Al-Arabi (2006), *Marital Conflicts*, Dar Al-Raqeeq for Printing and Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 89.

³ Hanaa Hassan Sidkhan Al-Badri, *ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴ Sayed Muhammad Badawi (1988), *Society and Its Social Problems*, Alexandria/Cairo, p. 45.

2. **Social Changes:** At times, society itself can pose obstacles to the continuity of marriage, leading it toward a dead end and a bleak outcome. For instance, societal pressures may discourage individuals who seek to improve their educational level, social standing, or professional career, even though such ambitions can hinder the formation of a family and make early marriage challenging. Society often values families that have an appropriate number of children, yet at the same time, it may impose limitations or expectations regarding childbearing, with marriages sometimes shaped by the traditional image of the family¹.

Customs, traditions, and social norms prevalent in Iraqi society—particularly in rural areas—encourage early marriage and consanguineous unions, often disregarding the girl's right to accept or refuse the marriage. In some cases, neither the man nor the woman is given a genuine opportunity to know each other beforehand. Such conditions frequently result in a lack of harmony, essential for sustaining family life, rendering marital life unbearable after a short period. This phenomenon is especially widespread in rural communities.²

Another significant cause of divorce is interference from extended family, which often becomes a source of tension and complicates the establishment of successful relationships between in-laws, particularly with the mother-in-law common issue in many marriages. Conflicts can arise when the culturally mandated respect for parents clashes with the couple's desire for independence or freedom from their influence. A husband or wife living with or near their parents may find themselves in a difficult position, torn between the desire for autonomy and the obligation to show love and respect toward their parents. For example, a mother-in-law may perceive the daughter-in-law as an outsider who has taken away her son, on whom she may have relied economically or socially. The mother may need considerable effort to adjust to this new situation, and she may experience anxiety regarding the new wife joining the family. As a result, she may become less trusting, less reassured, and less willing to make efforts to navigate these new dynamics, while harboring concerns about her married children prioritizing their own household over hers.³

Previous Studies

1. **Ayman Al-Shuboul (2010):**⁴

"The Social and Cultural Changes of the Divorce Phenomenon: An Anthropological Study in the Town of Tura"

This study aimed to describe the social, economic, and cultural transformations associated with the phenomenon of divorce and to examine their role in the increasing divorce rates in the town of Tura. The researcher employed the anthropological approach, relying on key informants and the in-depth interview as the primary data collection tool. The study did not specify the sample size.

The main findings of the study were as follows:

¹ Mahmoud Hasan (1967), *The Family and Its Problems*, Alexandria/Cairo, p. 32.

² Hanaa Hasan Sadkhan Al-Badri, *Ibid.*, p. 136.

³ Mustafa Al-Muslimani (1983), *Marriage and the Family*, Alexandria, n.d., p. 123.

⁴ Ayman Lashbul (2010), "Social and Cultural Variables of the Phenomenon of Divorce – An Anthropological Study in the Town of Al-Tura," *University of Damascus Journal*, Vol. 26, Issues 3+4, Damascus, Syria, pp. 647–705.

- There is a strong relationship between the culture of the community—its values, beliefs, and convictions—and the rising rate of divorce.
- The prevailing family problems in the community are largely value-based in nature.
- The value system of society, encompassing its ideas, norms, customs, and traditions regarding marriage, partner selection, the spousal relationship, and the personal traits and temperaments of both partners, as well as family interference, exerts either positive or negative influence on the nature of marital relations and their integration within the broader social context.

2. **Rana Asmarti (2012):¹**

“The Social Stigma Experienced by Divorced Women in East Asia”

The study aimed to explore the social stigma attached to divorced women and its impact on their lives within East Asian societies. The researcher employed the descriptive method and used a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. The instrument was administered to a sample of 300 divorced women distributed across East Asian cities, with 20 participants selected from each city.

The main findings of the study were as follows:

1. Divorced women are subjected to various forms of social stigma—both psychological and physical—stemming from persistent societal discourse in conservative communities, which often drives them into a state of distress and marginalization.
2. Divorced women in East Asia face multiple challenges arising from the harsh social customs and traditions that negatively affect their well-being and social standing.
3. **Mohammad Ibrahim Okkeh (2019):²**

“The Social and Cultural Factors Leading to the Phenomenon of Divorce in Light of Social Changes in Palestinian Society: A Study in the Southern West Bank from 2013 to 2016”

The study aimed to identify the social and cultural factors contributing to the phenomenon of divorce considering the social transformations occurring within Palestinian society, focusing on the southern region of the West Bank during the period 2013–2016. The researcher employed the descriptive method to examine and interpret the impact of social change on the spread of divorce within Palestinian society. In addition, the case study approach was adopted to gain deeper insights through field data collected via interviews.

The study population consisted of 4,443 cases, and the researcher utilized both the questionnaire and the interview as data collection tools. The study concluded with the following key findings:

- There were statistically significant differences in the **social and economic factors of divorce** attributable to the following variables:
 - **Age at marriage:** in favor of those aged **18 years or younger**.

¹ Rani Asmirti (2012), “The Stigma of Divorced Women in East Asia,” *Journal of Psychological Studies*, Switzerland.

² Mohamed Ibrahim Akka (2019), “Social and Cultural Factors Leading to the Phenomenon of Divorce in Light of Social Changes in Palestinian Society – A Study in the South of the West Bank from 2013 to 2016,” *Journal of Research and Scientific Publishing*, Palestine, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 141–181.

- **Duration of marriage:** in favor of those married for **three years or less**.
- **Place of residence:** in favor of those **living in villages**.
- **Family monthly income:** in favor of those earning **between 3,501 and 5,000 shekels**.
 - There were statistically significant differences in the **cultural factors of divorce** attributable to:
- **Age at marriage:** in favor of those aged **18 years or younger**.
- **Duration of marriage:** in favor of those married for **three years or less**.
- **Place of residence:** in favor of those **living in villages**.
- **Family monthly income:** in favor of those earning **1,450 shekels**.
 - There were statistically significant differences in the **social changes related to divorce** attributable to:
- **Age at marriage:** in favor of those aged **19–25 years**.
- **Duration of marriage:** in favor of those married for **three years or less**.
- **Place of residence:** in favor of those **living in villages**.
- **Family monthly income:** in favor of those earning **1,450 shekels**.
 - Overall, there were significant differences in the **social and cultural factors leading to the phenomenon of divorce in light of social changes in Palestinian society**—specifically in the southern West Bank (2013–2016)—attributable to:
- **Age at marriage:** in favor of those aged **18 years or younger**.
- **Duration of marriage:** in favor of those **divorced before consummation of marriage (during the engagement period)**.
- **Place of residence:** in favor of those **living in villages**.
- **Family monthly income:** in favor of those earning **1,450 shekels or less**.

4. **Salman Aoun Al-Sulami (2022):¹**

“Some Factors Leading to Divorce and the Role of the Family Counselor in Limiting Them”

The study aimed to achieve several objectives, most notably identifying the social and economic factors contributing to divorce from a sociological perspective. It also sought to explore the role of the family counselor in addressing these contributing factors, as well as the strategies and skills employed by counselors to reduce divorce rates.

The researcher adopted the descriptive–analytical method, which quantitatively and qualitatively represents the studied phenomenon. The study sample consisted of 33 family counselors. A questionnaire, designed by the researcher, was used as the main instrument for data collection. The findings of the study indicated the following:

- The study participants expressed a **high level of agreement** regarding the prevalence of **economic factors contributing to divorce**, which were represented in the following key aspects:
 - The wife’s **neglect of her duties** toward her husband and children.
 - **Low income** compared to the cost of living.
 - **Disputes over financial management** within the household.
- The participants also expressed a **very high level of agreement** regarding the **role of the family counselor** in addressing the factors that lead to divorce. This role was reflected in the following aspects:
 - **Mediating and reconciling** between spouses to resolve marital conflicts.

- **Raising awareness** about the need to reduce excessive marriage expenses.
- **Facilitating reconciliation** and promoting mutual understanding between couples.

Commentary on Previous Studies

1. Most divorced women are in their early years of adulthood—the prime stage of productivity and contribution—and there appears to be a correlation between the **short duration of engagement** and the **occurrence of divorce**.
2. The most prominent causes of divorce, as perceived by divorced individuals, include: **customs and traditions, failure to adhere to religious dress codes, mutual suspicion between spouses, overwhelming emotional impulsiveness, lack of rational decision-making, the wife's possession of a mobile phone, the husband's desire to marry a liberal woman, emotional detachment, bad temper, differences in temperament between spouses, temporary or convenience marriage ("misyar"), divergent understandings of marital relationships between men and women, the availability of alternative options for women facilitating their decision to divorce, excessive jealousy, financial disputes, family interference, domestic violence, frequent arguments and conflicts, weak religious commitment, and preventing the wife from visiting her family.**
3. The **societal value system**, encompassing its ideas, norms, customs, and traditions concerning marriage, partner selection, the spousal relationship, and the personal traits and temperaments of both partners—as well as family interference—has a **significant influence, whether positive or negative** on the dynamics of the marital relationship and its integration within the broader social framework.

Study Methodology: The **descriptive method** was employed to describe and analyze the phenomenon of divorce and to interpret the impact of social change on its prevalence within Iraqi society. A **questionnaire** will be used as the primary tool for data collection from the study sample.

Study Population: The study population consists of a sample of **divorced individuals in Baghdad Governorate**, comprising **50 divorced women and 50 divorced men** from the city of **Karbala, Iraq**.

Study Sample: A **purposive sample** was employed due to the difficulty of accessing all divorce cases within the study population. The total sample size for the questionnaire instrument amounted to **60 divorced individuals (men and women)**.

The following table presents the **demographic characteristics** of the study sample.

Table (1)
Frequencies and Percentages of the Variables Representing the Study Sample for the Questionnaire Instrument

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age at Marriage	18 years or less	23	38.3%
	19–25 years	13	21.6%
	26–30 years	17	28.3%
	31 years or older	7	11.6%
Total		60	100%

Duration of Marriage	During engagement	9	15%
	3 years or less	16	26.6%
	4–7 years	24	40%
	8 years or more	11	18.3%
Total		60	100%
Place of Residence	Urban	42	70%
	Village	18	30%
Total		60	100%
Family Monthly Income	Less than 30,000 IQD	24	40%
	30,000–100,000 IQD	23	38.3%
	More than 100,000 IQD	13	21.6%
Total		60	100%

Research Instruments: After reviewing relevant studies and specialized references, the researcher developed a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection in the field. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first included demographic and preliminary information about the respondents, while the second encompassed the study's domains and their corresponding items. The questionnaire was then distributed to the study sample.

Validity of the Research Instrument:

Face Validity: The validity of the instrument was verified by calculating the correlation coefficient between each item and the total score of the instrument. The results indicated that all items were consistent with the theoretical framework of the study. Statistical analysis further confirmed that all items of the instrument were statistically significant.

Reliability of the Research Instrument: The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which yielded an overall reliability value of (0.942). This indicates that the questionnaire possesses a high degree of internal consistency and reliability, as presented in Table (2).

Results of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the Reliability of the Research Instrument

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Number of Items	Sample Size
First Dimension: Social Factors	0.843	15	60
Second Dimension: Economic Factors	0.893	15	60
Overall Reliability	0.942	30	60

Data Analysis: The researcher employed a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to process and analyze the questionnaire data. In parallel, qualitative analysis was performed by linking, interpreting, and commenting on the interview data considering the theoretical frameworks adopted by the researcher. Finally, the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses were interpreted in an integrated manner.

Statistical Treatment: For the statistical analysis, arithmetic means, standard deviations, and percentages were calculated for the responses of the study sample to the questionnaire items.

Additionally, the *t*-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to measure the significance of differences in means according to the study's independent variables. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was also computed to verify the statistical validity and reliability of the instrument, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Study Results: The following section presents, analyzes, and interprets the study's findings considering the theoretical frameworks adopted by the researcher, with comparisons drawn to relevant previous studies.

Results Related to the First Research Question:

What are the social and economic changes influencing the spread of divorce in Iraqi society? To answer this question, arithmetic means and percentages were calculated for each item as well as for the overall score. A five-point Likert scale was applied, where (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1). For interpreting the results, the following key for mean values was adopted:

Table (3): Key for Mean Scores

Mean Range	Category
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
2.61 – 3.40	Neutral
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree

**Table (4): Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the First Dimension
— Economic Changes Related to Divorce**

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Degree	Rank
13	I believe that disparities in the economic status of spouses lead to divorce.	4.22	1.12	96.6%	Strongly Agree	1
3	I feel that extravagance by either spouse and spending on luxuries cause divorce.	4.15	1.13	96%	Agree	2
9	I believe that interference from the relatives of either spouse leads to divorce.	4.12	0.87	95%	Agree	3
12	I believe that poverty gives rise to family disputes that may result in divorce.	4.09	1.08	94%	Agree	4
15	I believe that the financial independence of either spouse contributes to divorce.	4.07	1.09	93.6%	Agree	5
5	I believe that interference by others in the couple's	4.06	1.12	92.3%	Agree	6

	decision regarding having children leads to divorce.					
1	I believe that limited family income leads to divorce between spouses.	4.00	0.47	91.6%	Agree	7
4	I feel that the numerous demands of family life contribute to divorce.	3.96	1.12	86.6%	Agree	8
2	I believe that cohabitation of the couple with the husband's or wife's family may lead to divorce.	3.76	0.83	80%	Agree	9
7	I believe that a spouse's failure to provide adequately for the family leads to divorce.	3.71	1.11	75%	Agree	10
6	I believe that poor economic conditions in society contribute to divorce.	3.66	1.32	73.3%	Agree	11
10	I expect that numerous or costly social obligations may cause divorce.	3.61	1.14	71.6%	Agree	12
14	I expect that friends' interference intensifies marital conflicts, leading to divorce.	3.56	1.11	71.5%	Agree	13
11	I expect that having many Facebook friends by one of the spouses may cause divorce.	3.55	1.12	71%	Agree	14
8	I feel that the nature of either spouse's job may lead to divorce.	3.44	1.12	70%	Agree	15
Overall Mean	—	3.99	0.65	81.6%	Agree	—

It is evident from the table that the most significant item is Item (13), which states, “*I believe that disparities in the economic status of spouses lead to divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.22). This is followed by Item (3), “*I feel that extravagance by either spouse and spending on luxuries cause divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.15), and Item (9), “*I believe that interference from the relatives of either spouse leads to divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.12). The least influential item was Item (8), “*I feel that the nature of either spouse's job may lead to divorce,*” which recorded a mean score of (3.44). The overall mean score for this dimension was (3.99), indicating a generally high level of agreement among respondents regarding the economic factors influencing divorce.

Table (5): Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Second Dimension — Social Changes Related to Divorce

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Degree	Rank
8	I expect that excessive imitation of others causes divorce between spouses.	4.48	1.23	96%	Strongly Agree	1
1	I believe that increasing suspicion by one spouse toward the other leads to divorce.	4.35	1.34	94%	Strongly Agree	2
6	I expect that the wife's frequent outings without her husband's permission lead to divorce.	4.22	1.11	92%	Agree	3
12	I believe that frequent visits from relatives or friends of either spouse lead to divorce.	4.09	1.09	90%	Agree	4
15	I believe that one of the main causes of divorce among spouses is modern technology, particularly social media and open media platforms.	4.00	1.01	89%	Agree	5
2	I believe that differences in educational level between spouses lead to divorce.	3.95	1.13	88%	Agree	6
3	I expect that exposure to global openness reduces mutual trust, leading to divorce.	3.88	1.15	87%	Agree	7
14	I feel that a lack of recreational opportunities for any reason contributes to divorce.	3.85	1.01	86%	Agree	8
10	I believe that traditional (arranged) marriage often leads to divorce.	3.75	1.00	83%	Agree	9
4	I believe that the husband's ability to easily marry another wife leads to divorce.	3.70	0.97	81%	Agree	10

13	I believe that age differences between spouses cause divorce.	3.69	1.03	80%	Agree	11
11	I believe that early marriage leads to divorce.	3.65	1.11	79%	Agree	12
5	I believe that the absence of a culture of dialogue between spouses leads to divorce.	3.60	1.14	78%	Agree	13
7	I expect that consanguineous (relative) marriage contributes to divorce.	3.59	1.09	75%	Agree	14
9	I believe that exposure to other cultures contributes to divorce between spouses.	3.55	1.03	74%	Agree	15
Overall Mean	—	4.11	1.13	92%	Agree	—

It is evident from the table that the most significant item is Item (8), which states, “*I expect that excessive imitation of others causes divorce between spouses,*” with a mean score of (4.48). This is followed by Item (1), “*I believe that increasing suspicion by one spouse toward the other leads to divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.35); and Item (6), “*I expect that the wife’s frequent outings without her husband’s permission led to divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.22). Next is Item (12), “*I believe that frequent visits from the relatives or friends of either spouse lead to divorce,*” with a mean score of (4.09). The least influential item was Item (9), which states, “*I believe that exposure to other cultures contributes to divorce between spouses,*” with a mean score of (3.55). The overall mean for this dimension was (4.11), indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the social factors influencing divorce.

From the main research question, the following hypothesis was derived:
First Hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) significance level in social changes attributed to the variables of age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and family monthly income.

To verify the validity of the first hypothesis, the researcher employed the *t*-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to measure the significance of differences in the arithmetic means of the overall score for social changes related to divorce, according to the variables of age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and family monthly income, as shown in Table (6).

Table (6): Results of the *t*-Test for Measuring the Significance of Differences in the Arithmetic Means of the Overall Score for Social Factors of Divorce According to the Variables of Age at Marriage, Duration of Marital Life, Place of Residence, and Family Monthly Income

Variable	F Value	Significance Level (p)	Significance	In Favor of
Age at Marriage	87.72	0.000	Significant	26–30 years

Duration of Marital Life	35.21	0.000	Significant	3 years or less
Place of Residence	155.46	0.000	Significant	Governorate
Family Monthly Income	49.35	0.000	Significant	Less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars

The data presented in Table (6) indicates the presence of statistically significant differences in the social factors of divorce attributed to the variables under study. These differences favor respondents aged between 26 and 30 years for the variable *age at marriage*; those whose *marital duration* is three years or less; respondents residing in *governorates* for the variable *place of residence*; and those with a *monthly family income* of less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars.

The interviews conducted with the respondents revealed several issues commonly observed among couples who divorce within the first year of marriage. These include age differences between spouses, differences in upbringing styles that lead to a lack of mutual understanding, cases where the woman was forced into marriage, and instances in which the husband diminishes his wife's value—whether at home or in front of relatives and friends. Another notable cause identified was infidelity by one of the partners.

The results of this hypothesis are consistent with the findings of Ayman Al-Shuboul's (2010) study and Salman Aoun Al-Sulami's (2022) research, both of which confirm a relationship between social changes and the variables of age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and family monthly income.

Second Hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) significance level in the economic changes attributed to the variables of age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and monthly family income.

To verify the validity of the second hypothesis, the researcher employed the *t*-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to measure the significance of differences in the arithmetic means of the overall score for economic changes related to divorce, according to the variables of age at marriage, duration of marital life, place of residence, and family monthly income, as shown in Table (7).

Table (7): Results of the *t*-Test for Measuring the Significance of Differences in the Arithmetic Means of the Overall Score for Economic Factors of Divorce According to the Variables of Age at Marriage, Duration of Marital Life, Place of Residence, and Family Monthly Income

Variable	F Value	Significance Level (p)	Significance	In Favor of
Age at Marriage	4.44	0.033	Significant	18 years and below
Duration of Marital Life	13.34	0.000	Significant	3 years or less
Place of Residence	25.65	0.000	Significant	Village
Family Monthly Income	19.21	0.000	Significant	Less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars

The data presented in Table (7) indicate the existence of differences in the economic factors contributing to divorce attributed to the variables of *age at marriage* (in favor of those aged 18 years and below), *duration of marital life* (in favor of three years or less), *place of residence* (in

favor of those living in villages), and *family monthly income* (in favor of those earning less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars).

The researcher believes that the deteriorating economic conditions of the husband—resulting from unemployment and the lack of job opportunities or governmental appointments for graduates in Iraqi society—often prevent him from meeting his wife’s financial needs, including food, clothing, housing, and other essential requirements. This challenge becomes more pronounced when the wife fails to understand or accommodate her husband’s economic circumstances. Conversely, an improvement in the husband’s financial situation may also lead to other marital conflicts, such as disputes over budgeting and spending, or even the husband’s decision to take a second wife and neglect the first. All these factors may ultimately contribute to the occurrence of divorce.

Study Results

1. The impact of social changes on the spread of divorce in Iraq is considerable.
2. The impact of economic changes on the spread of divorce in Iraq is also significant.
3. There are statistically significant differences in the social factors influencing divorce attributed to the variables of *age at marriage* (in favor of those aged 26 to 30 years), *duration of marital life* (in favor of three years or less), *place of residence* (in favor of those living in governorates), and *family monthly income* (in favor of those earning less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars).
4. There are statistically significant differences in the economic factors influencing divorce attributed to the variables of *age at marriage* (in favor of those aged 18 years and below), *duration of marital life* (in favor of three years or less), *place of residence* (in favor of those living in villages), and *family monthly income* (in favor of those earning less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars).

Recommendations

1. Promote family awareness programs focus on the art of marital relationships, conflict resolution strategies, positive interaction techniques between newlyweds, and methods of raising children.
2. Organize regular seminars and conferences addressing family issues and challenges, with proper coordination among them, to effectively train and prepare young men and women to assume the responsibilities of married life and manage family affairs.
3. Introduce a core educational course on marriage and its importance, particularly at the basic education level, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. This course would play a significant role in shaping the attitudes, ethics, and behaviors of young people from an early age, with a focus on instilling values of loyalty, belonging, and family cohesion in children.

References

I. Qur’anic Verses:

- Al-Baqarah, 2:236
- Al-Baqarah, 2:229
- At-Talaq, 65:1

II. Arabic References:

1. Ibrahim Anis (2006). *Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet* (The Intermediate Dictionary), 2nd ed., Vol. 2, Baqri Press, Tehran, p. 563.
2. Ibrahim Othman (2008). *Principles of Sociology*, Al-Quds Open University, Dar Al-Fikr for Printing, Distribution, and Publishing, p. 15.
3. Ahmad Al-Majali (2015). "The Most Important Social Causes Leading to Divorce from the Perspective of Divorced Men and Women in Al-Karak Governorate," *Al-Ameed Journal*, Iraq, p. 43.
4. Ayman Al-Shuboul (2010). "Social and Cultural Variables of the Divorce Phenomenon: An Anthropological Study in Al-Turah Town," *University of Damascus Journal*, Vol. 26, Issues 3–4, Damascus, Syria, pp. 647–705.
5. Khalil Ibn Ahmad Al-Farahidi, *Kitab Al-'Ayn*, edited by Mahdi Al-Makhzoumi et al., Vol. 5, Dar wa Maktabat Al-Hilal Press, n.d., p. 544.
6. Baha' Al-Din Khalil, *Family Sociology*, Al-Ahali Press, Egypt, n.d., p. 194.
7. Ramzi Al-Arabi (2006). *Marital Conflicts*, Dar Al-Raqeeq for Printing and Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 89.
8. Salman Aoun Al-Sulami (2022). "Some Factors Leading to Divorce and the Role of the Family Specialist in Reducing It: An Applied Study on a Random Sample of Social Specialists at the Reconciliation Committee in Al-Kamil Governorate," *International Journal for Research and Studies*, Saudi Arabia, Vol. 3, Issue 27, pp. 348–396.
9. Salwa Abdel Hamid Ahmed Al-Khatib (2007). *An Insight into Family Sociology*, Al-Shaqri Library for Publishing and Distribution, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, p. 65.
10. Salwa Abdel Hamid Ahmed Al-Khatib (2009). "Social Changes and Their Impact on the Rise of Divorce Rates in the Kingdom from the Saudi Woman's Perspective," College of Arts, King Saud University, p. 78.
11. Sayyid Muhammad Badawi (1988). *Society and Its Social Problems*, Alexandria, Cairo, p. 45.
12. 'A'id Salem Muhammad Al-Janabi (1983). *Social and Cultural Variables of the Divorce Phenomenon*, Dar Al-Hurriyah for Publishing and Distribution, Baghdad, p. 15.
13. Abdullah Muhammad Al-Safi Abdul Karim (2012). "Effectiveness of a Guidance Program to Improve Self-Concept among Early Divorced Women," *Journal of Psychological Guidance*, Issue 32, pp. 39–93.
14. Abdul Hadi Al-Jawahiri (2002). *Political Sociology: Concepts and Issues*, 2nd ed., University Library, Alexandria, Cairo, p. 183.
15. Fouad Karima (2017). "Causes of Divorce and Its Implications," *Arab Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 11, Issue 2, pp. 151–176.
16. Kamal Morsi (1991). *Marital Relationships and Mental Health in Islam and Psychology*, Dar Al-Qalam for Publishing and Distribution, Kuwait, 1st ed., p. 302.
17. Muhammad Ibrahim Akka (2019). "Social and Cultural Factors Leading to Divorce in Light of Social Changes in Palestinian Society: A Study in the Southern West Bank from 2013 to 2016," *Journal of Research and Scientific Publication*, Palestine, Vol. 35, Issue 3, pp. 141–181.
18. Muhammad Atif Gheith (2006). *Dictionary of Sociology*, Alexandria, Dar Al-Ma'rifah Al-Jamia'iyah, p. 139.
19. Mahmoud Al-Sartawi (2012). *Jurisprudence of Personal Status* (1), Al-Quds Open University, Amman, Jordan, 9th ed.

20. Mahmoud Hassan (1967). *The Family and Its Problems*, Alexandria, Cairo, p. 32.
21. Mustafa Al-Khashab (1981). *Studies in Family Sociology*, Beirut, p. 325.
22. Mustafa Al-Muslimani (1983). *Marriage and Family*, n.p., Alexandria, p. 123.
23. Mustafa Abdul Jawad (2009). *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, Dar Al-Maseerah for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Jordan, p. 34.
24. Hana Hassan Sadkhan Al-Badri (2022). "The Phenomenon of Divorce: A Study of Causes and Consequences (A Field Social Study in Al-Diwaniyah City)," *Al-Ameed Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 42, pp. 127–158.
25. Yahya Eid Al-Khadr (2012). "Causes of Divorce in Kuwaiti Society from the Perspective of Divorced Women," *Jordanian Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, Issue 3, pp. 78–103.

II. Foreign References

- Rani Asmirti (2012). *The Stigma of Divorced Women in East Asia*. Research published in the *Journal of Psychological Studies*, Switzerland.

Appendices

Study Questionnaire

Dear Citizen,

I am a researcher,, conducting a field study entitled: "*The Impact of Social and Economic Changes on the Spread of Divorce in Iraq*." I kindly request your cooperation in completing the attached questionnaire. Should you have any questions, please feel free to seek clarification either from the researcher or the personnel responsible for distributing the questionnaires.

Please note that all information provided will be used solely for the purposes of this study and scientific research and will be treated with complete confidentiality.

We sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Section One: Demographic Information

- **Name:**
- **Age:**
- **Gender:** Male () Female ()
- **Marital Status:** Married () Divorced ()
- **Age at Marriage:**
 - 18 years or younger
 - 19–25 years
 - 26–30 years
 - 31 years or older
- **Duration of Marital Life:**
 - During engagement
 - 3 years or less
 - 4–7 years
 - 8 years or more
- **Place of Residence:**
 - City
 - Village

- **Monthly Income:**
 - Less than 30,000 Iraqi dinars
 - 30,000–100,000 Iraqi dinars
 - More than 100,000 Iraqi dinars

Section Two: Economic Variables

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Sometimes	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I believe that a limited family income leads to divorce between spouses.					
2	I believe that living with the husband's or wife's family contributes to divorce.					
3	I feel that the spouse's extravagance and spending on luxuries causes divorce.					
4	I feel that the high demands of family life lead to divorce between spouses.					
5	I believe that interference by others in matters of childbearing leads to divorce.					
6	I believe that poor economic conditions in society contribute to divorce.					
7	I believe that a spouse's neglect in spending on the family causes divorce.					
8	I feel that the nature of a spouse's work leads to divorce between spouses.					
9	I believe that interference by either spouse's relatives leads to divorce.					
10	I expect that multiple or costly social obligations cause divorce between spouses.					
11	I expect that having many friends on Facebook by either spouse causes divorce.					
12	I believe that poverty leads to family disputes that cause divorce between spouses.					

13	I believe that economic status differences between spouses lead to divorce.					
14	I expect that interference by friends' fuels conflicts between spouses, leading to divorce.					
15	I believe that financial independence of the husband or wife causes divorce.					

Section Three: Social Variables

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Sometimes	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I believe that increased suspicion by one spouse toward the other leads to divorce.					
2	I believe that differences in educational levels between spouses lead to divorce.					
3	I expect that exposure to the outside world causes distrust, which leads to divorce between spouses.					
4	I believe that a husband marrying another woman leads to divorce.					
5	I believe that the lack of a culture of dialogue between spouses leads to divorce.					
6	I expect that the wife's frequent outings without the husband's permission cause divorce.					
7	I expect that cousin marriage leads to divorce between spouses.					
8	I expect that devotion to imitating others causes divorce between spouses.					
9	I believe that exposure to other cultures causes divorce between spouses.					

10	I believe that traditional marriage leads to divorce between spouses.					
11	I believe that being the first wife (or husband) causes divorce between spouses.					
12	I believe that frequent visits by either spouse's relatives or friends cause divorce between them.					
13	I believe that age differences between spouses cause divorce.					
14	I feel that lack of entertainment options, for any reason, leads to divorce.					
15	I believe that modern technology, represented by social media and open media, is one of the main causes of divorce between spouses.					