

Understanding The Causes and Effects of Khula and Divorce Among Young Couples in District South Karachi

Sheikh Muhammad Farooq ¹, Dr. Muhammad Tahir ²

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Abstract

Our study revolves around the causes and effect of Khula and Divorce amount your couples. We have focused the social, economic and Physiological effect by collecting response from 50 individual via online survey which was initially prepared and uploaded on Google Forms, we also have analyzed the date and conducted the Coronbach Alph (0.84) in order to ensure the reliability. We have also gathered the records of from the year 2019 to 2023, where our top priority is to extract the trends in the marital dissolutions. Our finding reveals several factors including financial instability, Changing Gender role, domestic abuse and substance abuse. Social Support, economic disparity and evolving societal expectation were also under review, these all highlight the need of targeted intervention to address the issue.

Keywords: Khula; Divorce; Marital Dissolution; Family Stability; Domestic Violence; Financial Instability; Gender Roles; Substance Abuse; Psychological Impact; Social Impact

Introduction

Marriage, commonly known as sacred institution, symbolizing love, commitment, and shared aspirations, whereas in District South, Karachi, a growing trend of divorces is being found among young couples, which has raised concerns, although the trend of divorce is substantially increased in Pakistan year by year, but the young couple where the emotion triggers are high could be an alarming situation. Our article explores these key triggers which could be reason for marital dissolution, by examining the psychological, sociological, legal, and economic factors which contribute to this phenomenon. Many of the previous researchers as Khan, M. A., Khan, F., and Younas (2012) have already identified early divorce causes in Pakistan, while Hassan and Asghar (2010) provide a detailed study in specific divorce trends in Karachi. Additionally, Husain (2005) and Khan, R. (2002) have discussed the role of gender, family, and community which could influences in matrimonial decisions.

In Pakistan the Legal framework which used for the divorce, includes the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, which plays a crucial role in defining marital dissolution, although this was revised with a New Law of West Pakistan Muslim Family Act 1961. A research Hashmi (2000) examines the legal implications of Khulla in accordance with the Law of Land, while some of the Non profitable Organizations like the Aurat Foundation and Edhi Foundation provide support

¹ Sheikh Muhammad Farooq is the student of Law, currently persuing his studies as doctorate in Law (phd) from Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education, he can be contacted via Email on shaikh6619@gmail.com

² Dr. Commander Muhammad Tahir (ret'd) is head of Department (Law) at Dadabhoi University, has completed his Doctorate in Political Sciences, and been serving as Key Scolars and Mentor for almost two decades, he can be contacted via email on drtahir949@gmail.com & Ph # 0332-3638992

regarding matrimonial challenges, although this support is only for the women. Teachman (2017), examines the intersection of marriage and financial stability and highlighted the Encomical Hardship occurred during the marriages. Recent studies by renowned scholars like Qazi and Hussain (2022), Khan and Rehman (2022), and Hussain and Fatima (2021) showed the struggle by the male partner and how the economic struggles influence divorce in Karachi.

Baxter et al. (2008) has explored the effects of online and offline meeting spaces on marriage stability. Bouchard and Lussier (2016) shows his finding on how infidelity impacts trust and ultimately leads to marital breakdown or ultimately couple seeking divorce. Ahmed & Awan (2020) have investigated gender and their relationship in family dynamics, while a feminist perspective was introduced by Asif and Bashir (2019). Another study of Social media's influence on modern relationships is discussed by the article published by Qureshi and Baloch (2018), while the legal challenges which effect the divorce rate was put forward by Sheikh and Hassan (2017). Our article will make an effort to understanding the cultural, legal, economic, and technological factors influencing marital dissolution to our readers, it also aims to contribute to a broader image of an evolving family structures and the complexities in modern relationships.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of our study are

- Identifying the Key Factors Contributing to any couple to seek Khula/divorce
- How these factor effect on the decision of individual?
- Role of digitalization and media in shaping modern relationship
- Offer Insight to Policy Makers to reduce the rate of Divorce.

Literature Review

Introduction to Divorce and Khulla Trends

In Pakistan, a variety of social, legal, and cultural factors influence divorce and Khulla (Khan et al., 2012). Divorce rates are being impacted globally by shifting economic and moral norms (Amato, 2010; Qazi & Hussain, 2022). Religious and traditional beliefs have a greater influence on these changes in Pakistan. According to Islamic law, Muslim women have the right to khulla, which permits them to dissolve their marriages when necessary (Hashmi, 2000). In order to comprehend how social, economic, legal, and contemporary developments impact divorces, this section first examines divorce trends globally before concentrating on Pakistan, particularly Karachi.

Global Perspective on Divorce and Khulla Trends

Regional differences in divorce are caused by cultural, economic, and legal factors. Divorce rates have fluctuated in Western nations, such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, as a result of changing social norms and financial pressures (Amato, 2010; Cacioppo et al., 2013). Perhaps as a result of strong legal systems, European nations such as Sweden and Norway are more stable (Teachman, 2017). Marital trends in Asia, especially in South Korea and Japan, have been impacted by modernization and shifting gender roles (Giddens, 1992; Myers & Shaikh, 2013). Rising divorce rates in the Middle East, where Islamic law controls family affairs, are a result of socioeconomic changes (Hashmi, 2000). These international perspectives offer a comparative framework for examining Khulla and divorce patterns in Pakistan.

Specific Focus on Trends Within Pakistan and Karachi

Pakistan's divorce rates, especially in urban areas like Karachi, show how traditional values and contemporary influences coexist (Khan, 2002). Economic independence, professional goals, and

changing social norms are all associated with rising divorce rates in urban areas (Hassan & Asghar, 2010; Qazi & Hussain, 2022). Social media in particular is becoming more and more influential in forming relationships and fueling marital discord (Qureshi & Baloch, 2018). The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act (1939), West Pakistan Family Court Act (1963) and other laws provide formal procedures for divorce and Khulla; however, their practical implementation is frequently impacted by cultural resistance (Pakistan Law Commission, n.d.).

Historical Evolution of Divorce Laws in Pakistan

The Pakistan Region Legal Framework is being influenced by the British era, wherein the Religious, and personal law were determined (Hashmi, 2000) after getting independence, the Pakistan has balance its legislation with Islamic and Modern governance.

The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939

Prior to Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, this Act has provided legal grounds for Muslim women to seek divorce, addressing issues like cruelty, desertion, and non-maintenance (Pakistan Law Commission, n.d.), wherein the burden of proof lies on the claimant. Over time, the amendments, enhanced its applicability, ensuring women's rights are safeguarded while maintaining Islamic legal principles, another important factor which is critical to mention that this act provided a framework, how they can a women seek Khulla.

Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961

It's a modernized Family Law ordinance, which has introduced reforms on polygamy, maintenance, and divorce grounds (Khan, 2002). This ordinance has not only adhered the Islamic teaching, but also mandated the legal procedure for Polygamy and fianancial obligation related to family issues.

Family Courts Act, 1964

Through this Act a standard divorce procedure was introduced for polygamy, divorce ground and maintenance (Husain, 2005). It is also very pertinent to mention that this law not only provides the Dissolutions aspect but also ensure specialized and expedited legal process, with mediation and conciliation before formal dissolution.

Hudood Ordinances, 1979

The standardized procedure and stringent evidentiary value required for cases particularly like zina (adultery) (Khan, 2002). It has sparked a controversy due to its impact of women rights.

Legal Procedure for Divorce in Pakistan

The Divorce process in Pakistan, required certain steps and Islamic principles along with involvement of some situational laws which have been defined step by step.

Initiating the Divorce Process

According to Islam the male partner holds the divorce rights, which were also envisaged in Quran and Sunnah along with the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act 1939, (Pakistan Law Commission, n.d.)

Mediation and Reconciliation

According to teaching of Islam a prior reconciliation is encouraged by number of scholar before finalizing divorce, although its Halal, but Allah Almighty don't like it, on such principle the

Muslim Family law has a prominent space of reconciliation, which gives a free and fair opportunity for reconciliation and to resolve the issue prior divorce (Khan et al., 2016).

Documentation and Notice

After the pronouncement of Divorce a written Divorce Deed (talaqnama) has to be submitted to the concern union council, wherein a designation of arbitrator serve notice to both the parties, regarding its authenticity and in another way giving another chance for the reconciliation particularly those under Muslim Family Laws ordinance (khan, 2002). If this efforts of the reconciliation failed, the Union council issued a divorce certification adhering to Family Court Act (1964). The same can be challenged in higher courts, ensuring Judicial oversight in divorce cases.

While Khula which is the right of women, can be initiated by the wife, with follows a structured legal process.

- The wife expresses her intent for divorce, often offering compensation (mehr) for separation.
- A formal petition is submitted in the family court outlining the grounds for Khula (Sheikh & Hassan, 2017).
- The pretrial was called by the Family Court Judge by giving a fair chance to both the parties to settle their disputes.
- These negotiations could settle the financial aspects as well as child custody.
- If reconciliation or Pre-Trial is declared failed, the court grants Khula.

Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Marital Decisions

Sociocultural elements including cultural norms, gender roles, family obligations, religion, economic pressures, social media, and family support systems greatly shape marital choices including marriage stability and dissolution. Cultural expectations drive gender roles and family obligations, so creating conflict between traditional values and modern aspirations, which can lead to marital strife. While also specifying reasonable grounds for divorce or Khulla, religion reinforces commitment thus playing a dual role. Economic difficulties, such as unemployment and financial instability, put marriages under pressure and sometimes cause divorce. The growth of social media brings both good and bad effects: more connectedness helps relationships but also creates unrealistic expectations and possible disputes. Family and social pressures also influence marriage choices since couples have to strike a balance between individual wants and group expectations.

Implications of Economic and Psychological Strain

Financial instability disturbs power dynamics in a marriage by causing stress and a feeling of powerlessness, therefore upsetting partners' ability to contribute equally to the family's financial well-being. This undermines self-esteem and fuels marital conflict (Teachman, 2017; Qazi & Hussain, 2022). Lack of long-term financial planning aggravates this economic pressure; conflicts over saving, investment, and financial security cause cumulative tensions that undermine the basis of the relationship (Teachman, 2017). Furthermore, these financial pressures can cause mental health issues including anxiety and depression, which puts even more pressure on marital relationships (Leonard & Eiden, 2007). At the same time, the legal systems regulating divorce or Khulla add more financial implications affecting post-separation financial stability by means of expenses including legal fees, asset division, and alimony (Khan, M. A., & Rehman, S., 2022; Teachman, 2017; Qazi & Hussain, 2022). Social Media has also triggered the mis understanding between the couple, eroding trust through online infidelity, and prompting un favorable social comparison which affect in relationship satisfactions (Baxter et al., 2008; Qureshi & Baloch,

2018; Cacioppo et al., 2013; Glass & Wright, 1992). Some of the common factor which lead the couple to seprate from with each may be infidelity, un met emotional needs, tension, lack of understanding, suspicious nature of any partner or financial hurdles (Khan, 2002; Khan et al., 2022; Amato & Previti, 2003). We can also not neglect The psychological outcomes of marital breakdowns which can lead to the continuous disruption in mental health, physcological trauma, and building an untrustworthy personality (Simons et al., 2016; Reis & Shaver, 1988). These affect are not limited to any specified partner but it may be extend to children, who often experience significant psychological and social impacts due to their parents sepration, an unwanted thug of war intiaded after the divorce for the custody of minor child, where in the custodian parents were seen in diverting the mind against the second partner (Simons et al., 2016; Myers & Shaikh, 2013; Teachman, 2017). Meanwhile, Gender roles may also be a significance cause, in modern erra where the wife is expecting to work as a husband could many time lead to unwanted conditions, allegations and others (Giddens, 1992; Ahmed & Awan, 2020; Khan et al., 2016). Lastly a family tradiotional system, where the entire family support the new comer either from bride or groom is reduced in this new erra, the tendency to forgo minor mistakes is also reduced day be days, mostly couple have complained from the relatives as they are interfering in their personal matter which atlast lead to matrimonial termination (Husain, 2005; Khan et al., 2016; Teachman, 2017; Sheikh & Hassan, 2017).

Table 1: Divorce/Khulla Statistics 2019-2023 (District South)

We have gathered the date of the divorce cases and following table provides an overview of divorce and Khula cases registered and disposed of in District South from 2019 to 2023. We have further categorized the reasons for such termination. Additionally, the table lists the number of conjugal rights cases, which shows slight variation throughout the years, suggesting a steady trend in the demand for divorce/Khula related to these issues.

Yea r	Registere d Cases	Dispose d Cases	Dissolutions Due to Maltreatmen t	Dissolutions Due to Non- Maintenanc e	Dissolution s Due to Peer Pressure	Dissolution s Due to Personal Will	Conjuga l Rights Cases
201 9	2222	1827	35%	25%	15%	25%	15
202 0	2117	1753	35%	25%	15%	25%	20
202 1	2577	2175	35%	25%	15%	25%	18
202 2	2720	2253	35%	25%	15%	25%	22
202 3	3579	3069	35%	25%	15%	25%	40

Table 2: Case Review – Abuse Cases

This table presents a review of individual cases involving abuse, which resulted in Khula or divorce due to maltreatment. Each case highlights the parties involved, the court jurisdiction, and the background leading to the dissolution of marriage. The table demonstrates that a significant number of cases are resolved in favor of the petitioner, particularly in instances of physical and emotional abuse.

Case No.	Parties Involved	Court Jurisdiction	Background	Outcome
Family Suit No. 1254/2019	Saima (Petitioner) vs. Zakriya (Respondent)	XXI Family Judge, District South	Saima sought dissolution due to maltreatment and abuse. Evidence of physical/emotional abuse presented.	Khulla granted to Saima.
Family Suit No. 948/2020	Sadaf Noor (Petitioner) vs. Ahsan Ali (Respondent)	XVI Family Judge, District South	Sadaf Noor sought legal separation due to abuse, providing substantial evidence of physical/emotional harm.	Khulla granted to Sadaf Noor.
Case 1866/2021	Kiran (Petitioner) vs. Hassan (Respondent)	Family Judge South	Kiran sought dissolution due to irreconcilable differences and a breakdown in the relationship.	Divorce granted to Kiran.
Case 2001/2022	Sabeen Abdul Sattar (Petitioner) vs. Hafiz Muhammad Sheharyar (Respondent)	17 Family Judge South	Sabeen sought dissolution by mutual consent and agreement.	Divorce granted by consent.
Case 1567/2023	Sana (Petitioner) vs. Imran (Respondent)	16 Family Judge South	Sana sought divorce due to irreparable differences.	Divorce granted to Sana.

Table 3: Case Review – Non-Maintenance Cases

This table explores cases where non-maintenance was cited as the primary reason for seeking divorce or Khula. These cases provide a window into how financial responsibilities, or the lack thereof, influence marital stability. Non-maintenance remains one of the leading causes of divorce in the study, and the data reflects its significant impact on marital relations.

Case No.	Parties Involved	Court Jurisdiction	Background	Outcome
Case 1846/2019	Faiza Tariq (Petitioner) vs. M. Noman (Respondent)	17 Family Judge	Faiza cited non-maintenance as the reason for dissolution.	Divorce granted to Faiza.
Case 1212/2020	Maham (Petitioner) vs. Naeem (Respondent)	16 Family Judge	Maham cited non-maintenance as a significant issue in the marriage.	Divorce granted to Maham.
Case 784/2021	Saima (Petitioner) vs. Khalid Naseer Khan (Respondent)	17 Family Judge	Saima sought dissolution due to non-maintenance.	Divorce granted to Saima.
Case 2014/2022	Ayesha Khan (Petitioner) vs. Waqar Ali (Respondent)	Family Judge	Ayesha sought dissolution due to non-maintenance affecting her marriage.	Divorce granted to Ayesha.

Case 569/2023	Rukhsar (Petitioner) vs. Waqas (Respondent)	19 Family Judge	Rukhsar filed for dissolution citing non- maintenance.	Divorce granted to Rukhsar.
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These tables give an empirical foundation for the study, showcasing trends in divorce and Khula cases and illustrating how maltreatment, non-maintenance, and peer pressure are recurring themes behind marital dissolution.

Methodology

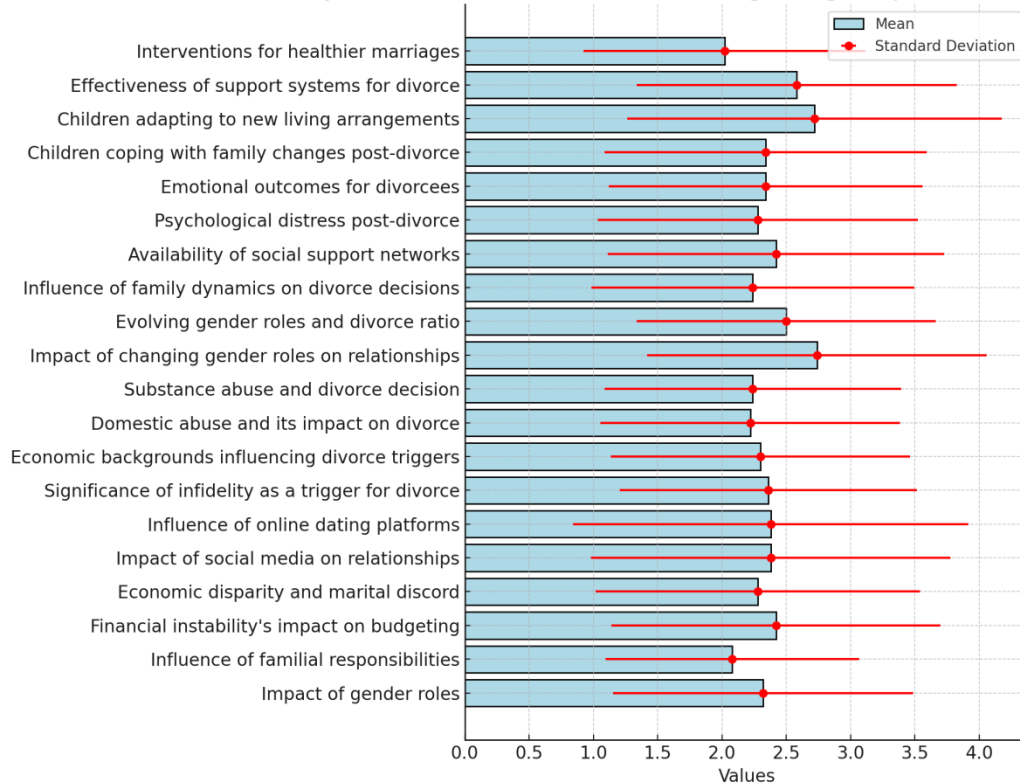
The research methodology employed for this study adopts a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The research is conducted in District South, Karachi, an area characterized by a high prevalence of divorce, Khulla, and separation cases, particularly among the younger generation. The population for the study comprises individuals, both male and female, who have sought divorce or Khulla from the courts. Following Creswell's (2008) definition of population as people with similar characteristics, the sample is drawn from two groups: one consisting of respondents to a questionnaire, and the other for pilot testing. According to Arikunto (2010), a sample is a limited subset that represents the entire population, and the pilot test, with a reliability score of 0.82 (Cronbach's Alpha), ensures the validity of the research. The primary research instruments are questionnaires and interviews, with the questionnaire designed on a five-point Likert scale to measure responses ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The research questions focus on various factors influencing marital decisions, such as societal expectations, economic disparity, domestic abuse, and the impact of online dating platforms, among others.. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research, with informed consent obtained, confidentiality assured, and ethical approval from the relevant review board. This methodology ensures a comprehensive exploration of the factors contributing to the rising rates of divorce and Khulla in District South, Karachi.

Quantitative Research Extracts

QUESTIONS	STANDARD DEVIATION	MEAN
1. To what extent do societal expectations regarding gender roles impact marital decisions among couples aged 20-30 in District South, Karachi?	1.168	2.32
2. Please rate the influence of familial responsibilities in shaping the decisions of young couples regarding marriage continuation or termination.	0.986	2.08
3. Indicate your level of agreement on how financial instability contributes to disagreements over budgeting among couples aged 20-30 in District South, Karachi.	1.279	2.42
4. Rate your perception of how economic disparity leads to increased marital discord among young couples in the specified area.	1.262	2.28
5. To what extent do you agree that increased connectivity through social media positively or negatively influences marital relationships among young couples?	1.398	2.38
6. Please rate the impact of online dating platforms on shaping the expectations and dynamics of relationships among couples aged 20-30 in District South, Karachi.	1.537	2.38

7. Rate the significance of infidelity as a trigger for divorce or Khulla among couples in District South, Karachi.	1.156	2.36
8. Provide your opinion on how economic backgrounds influence the triggers leading to divorce/Khulla among young couples in this region.	1.164	2.30
9. Indicate your level of agreement on how domestic abuse contributes to the decision to seek divorce or Khulla among couples aged 20-30 in District South, Karachi.	1.165	2.22
10. Rate the influence of substance abuse in the decision-making process for divorce/Khulla among young couples in this region.	1.152	2.24
11. To what extent do you agree that changing gender roles have impacted marital relationships among young couples in this region?	1.321	2.74
12. Please rate how evolving expectations regarding gender roles contribute to the rising divorce/Khulla/separation ratio.	1.164	2.50
13. Rate the significance of the influence of family dynamics on the decisions of young couples to seek divorce or Khulla.	1.254	2.24
14. Provide your opinion on how the availability of a social support network impacts the choices made by couples facing challenges in their marriages.	1.310	2.42
15. Indicate your level of agreement on the extent to which individuals who have undergone divorce or Khulla experience psychological distress.	1.246	2.28
16. Rate how emotional outcomes differ among young individuals who have undergone divorce/Khulla compared to those who haven't.	1.222	2.34
17. To what extent do you agree on how children within the specified age group cope with changes in family dynamics following divorce or separation?	1.255	2.34
18. Rate how children adapt to altered living arrangements resulting from their parents' divorce/Khulla.	1.457	2.72
19. Rate the effectiveness of proposed measures or support systems in addressing the increasing ratio of divorce/Khulla/separation in District South, Karachi.	1.246	2.58
20. Provide your opinion on how interventions can be tailored to promote healthier and more sustainable marital relationships among young couples in this region.	1.097	2.02

Survey Results on Marital Decisions Among Young Couples in District South, Karachi



The importance of religious values in shaping individuals' beliefs about marriage and divorce cannot be overstated. In many cultures, religion serves as the guiding framework for understanding marital roles, expectations, and the sanctity of marriage. In Pakistan, religious teachings significantly influence the decisions of individuals regarding marriage continuation or dissolution (Ali, 2023). Alongside religion, cultural norms and family expectations play a major role in shaping attitudes toward marriage. These societal pressures often create a unique blend of expectations that can either support or challenge marital relationships (Khan, 2022).

However, alongside these traditional influences, economic factors also significantly contribute to marital tensions. Financial instability is a major stressor in relationships, and many young couples face difficulties managing financial obligations and aspirations (Jamal & Iqbal, 2021). When economic disparities arise—whether due to income inequality or the inability to meet financial goals—couples often find themselves at odds, leading to frustration and, in some cases, marital discord (Zahid, 2023).

Another alarming effect which was found is evolving of gender role, more women in pakistan are interested in higher studies and better oppurtunities, wherein the Pakistani culture where the Male was posed as an alpha of the family, some time was cornered in such situation, and not wanted to be her partner as better postion then him, this attitude of mis-confidence triggered various emotions and leads to disagreement over pity matters, although some of the couples are jointly fighting and leading it to better way than others (Shah, 2020, Zahid, 2023).

The evolving techonology and social media platforms has also a prominent trigger for the divorce, many of the partners were engaged with unknown persons which cause misunderstanding between the parties, some time the social comparision could also lead to conflict which lateron become the causes of matrnimomial termination (Farhan & Jamil). The exherebated watchtime of young adults has also increase leading to trigger the emotion of being neglected by the partner.

Although the cultural and family dynamics have posed a significant role in reconciliation and resolving the dispute, which in modern era has going to be end, the wives now a days do not want any intrusion in their matrimonial life and not wanted to adjust with the male parents, some time the relatives of partner (both Male and Female) also come against to a specified partner and provoke to separate from him/her (Ahmed & Shah, 2021). Although the collective influence of family members and communities can push couples to make with societal expectations which sometimes are not in their personal favor (Farooq, 2020).

These society cultural and economic factor contribute to make harsh decision life divorce or Khula, the financial pressure, gender expectations, technological influence all contribute to unprecedented challenges (Ali & Raza 2020). A need of broader program to address such issues are needed, the support system should be upheld, counseling centres and educational program with specified aim to address such issues is extremely needed, which is the only way to get rid from such complexities. Moreover the media and other platform could also play a crucial role in answering such issues and to minimize such triggers.

Recommendations

The findings of this study reveal that marital dissolution among young couples in District South, Karachi, is influenced by a combination of economic, social, psychological, and cultural factors. Financial instability, domestic abuse, substance abuse, changing gender roles, social media influence, and inadequate family support emerged as significant contributors to the increasing trend of divorce and Khula. In light of these findings, it is imperative that policymakers, family courts, educational institutions, social welfare organizations, and community leaders adopt a coordinated approach to address the underlying causes of marital breakdown and promote family stability. The following recommendations are proposed:

- **Premarital Counseling Programs**
- **Strengthening Family Counseling Centers**
- **Financial Literacy and Economic Support**
- **Addressing Domestic and Substance Abuse**
- **Awareness Regarding Healthy Gender Roles**
- **Regulation and Awareness of Social Media Usage**
- **Enhancing Social Support Networks**
- **Mental Health Support Services**
- **Public Education and Family Values Campaigns**
- **Further Research**

The implementation of these recommendations may contribute significantly toward reducing the rate of marital dissolution, strengthening family institutions, and promoting healthier, more stable, and sustainable marital relationships within Pakistani society.

Conclusion

Our study has not only presented the actual facts and figures but we also gathered data and extracted some of the Key triggers, although these triggers are circumstantial, but proper education and counseling can minimize these triggers, the reconciliation efforts in the matrimonial dispute could also not neglected. Any how the continuous research on the topic with a greater sampling and finding short as well as long term effect would be helpful.

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