

**CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN AFTER  
DIVORCE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
DISTRICT**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Kerala in Partial  
Fulfillment of Requirements for the Masters of Social Work Degree  
Examination**

**Submitted by**

**Name : DEVIKA RAJAN**

**Exam Code : 91520402**

**Candidate Code : 91521115012**

**Subject Code : SW 2.4.5**



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK  
LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
SREEKARIYAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

**UNIVERSITY OF KERALA**

**2021-2023**

# CERTIFICATION FOR APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “ **Challenges faced by Women after Divorce in Thiruvananthapuram District**” is a record of genuine work done by Ms.Devika Rajan, Fourth semester Master of Social work student of this college under my supervision and guidance and that it is hereby approved for submission

Date : 16/08/2023

Thiruvananthapuram

Research Guide

Dr.Sabu P. Thomas

Department of social Work

Loyola College of Social sciences

Thiruvananthapuarum

Recommended for forwarding to the University of Kerala

Dr. Sabu P. Thomas

Head, Department of Social Work

Loyola College of Social sciences

Thiruvananthapuram

Forwarded to the University of Kerala

Dr. Saji. P. Jacob

Principal

Loyola College of Social Sciences

Thiruvananthapuram

# DECLARATION

I, **Devika Rajan** do here by declare that the dissertation titled “ **Challenges faced by Women after Divorce in Thiruvananthapuram District**” is based on the original work carried out by me and submitted to the University of Kerala during the year 2021-2023 towards partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Master of Social Work** Degree Examination. It has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title of recognition before.

Candidate Name: Ms. Devika Rajan

Place : Sreekaryam

Date: 16/08/2023

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Above all, I extend profound thanks to Almighty God who has blessed me with the opportunities and intellectual ability to complete my research successfully.*

*I was lucky to have **Dr Sabu .P.Thomas** , Head of the Social Work Department, Loyola College of Social Sciences as my guide. He constantly supported me in this endeavour. Whenever faced with confusions, he made himself available to clear the doubts and help me move ahead with confidence. At this juncture, I am also grateful to him for his encouraging presence throughout the course of this work.*

*I extend my heartfelt gratitude to **Dr. Saji P Jacob**, Principal, Loyola College of Social Sciences and **Dr. Sonny Jose, Dr. Francina P.X, Mrs. Anjali U.S, Ms. Gayatri Nair, Mr. Kannan G.S**, faculty Members of the Department of Social Work for their help on various occasions during the course of this work.*

*I express my sincere thanks to **Dr. Sunil Kumar**, Librarian and **Mr. George Mathew** assistant librarian, Loyola College of Social Sciences for providing necessary reference materials, and their kind support for the successful completion of my work so far.*

*I express my sincere gratitude to all the **Respondents and their families** who have participated in the process of my data collection.*

*It would not have been possible for me to successfully complete this work without the constant encouragement and support of my **beloved community and family**.*

*I could never conclude this without mentioning my **dearest friends**, whose whole hearted support made me present this before you.*

**Devika Rajan**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATION FOR APPROVAL .....	I
DECLARATION .....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	IV
LIST OF TABLES .....	VII
ABSTRACT .....	VIII
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	3
1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY .....	4
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	8
1.4 CHAPTERIZATION .....	9
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	11
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	12
2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	12
2.2.1 Social Challenges: .....	12
2.2.2 Psychological Challenges: .....	13
2.2.3 Economic Challenges: .....	13
2.2.4 Legal Challenges: .....	14
2.3 STUDIES ON DIVORCE .....	14
2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	24
2.4.1 Family system theory .....	24
2.4.2 Social support theory .....	25

2.4.3 Intersectional theory .....	25
2.5 RESEARCH GAP ANALYSIS .....	25
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .....	27
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	28
3.2 TITLE OF THE STUDY .....	28
3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	28
3.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPT .....	29
3.5 RESEARCH APPROACH .....	29
3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN .....	30
3.7 PILOT STUDY .....	30
3.8 STUDY AREA AND THE UNIVERSE .....	30
3.9 SAMPLING .....	31
3.10 INCLUSION CRITERIA .....	31
3.11 EXCLUSION CRITERIA .....	31
3.12 SOURCES OF DATA .....	31
3.13 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION .....	32
3.14 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS .....	32
3.15 ASSUMPTIONS ,LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE .....	33
3.15 CONCLUSION .....	33
CHAPTER IV: CASE PRESENTATIONS .....	35
4.1 INTRODUCTION .....	36
4.2 Case A .....	36
4.3 Case B .....	38
4.4 Case C .....	40
4.5 Case D .....	42

4.6 Case E .....	43
<b>CHAPTER V: THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	46
5.2 PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS .....	46
5.3 DISCUSSIONS .....	47
<b>CHAPTER VI .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>57</b>
6.1 INTRODUCTION .....	58
6.2 MAJOR FINDINGS .....	58
6.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1 : SOCIAL CHALLENGES AND THEIR IMPACT .....	58
6.2.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND THEIR INFLUENCE .....	59
6.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND ITS AFFECT .....	59
6.3 SUGGESTIONS .....	60
6.4 CONCLUSION .....	61
<b>CHAPTER VII .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>ANNEXURES .....</b>	<b>67</b>

# LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1 : Personal profile of the participants .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Table 2 : Economic profile of the participants .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Table 3 : Pattern matching and rival explanations .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Table 4 : Thematic analysis .....</b>	<b>56</b>



## ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the multifaceted socio-economic and psychological challenges encountered by women after divorce. Divorce is a life-altering event that significantly impacts the lives of individuals involved, particularly women. Understanding the various challenges faced by women in the aftermath of divorce is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support systems to address their needs. The study employs a qualitative research design to explore the lived experiences of women who have gone through divorce. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the research examines the social, economic, and psychological dimensions of the challenges faced by these women, delving into the intricacies of their post-divorce adjustment. In terms of social challenges; the research investigates the changes in social support networks experienced by women after divorce. It explores the shifts in relationships with family, friends, and the broader community, as well as the impact of societal stigma and the associated isolation that often accompanies divorce. The study also explores the changes in social roles and the resulting challenges in redefining identity and navigating new social expectations. The economic difficulties faced by divorced women are another significant aspect of the research. The study explores the financial stability challenges, including the loss of shared resources, reduced household income, and potential implications for their children's well-being. Furthermore, it delves into employment opportunities, exploring the obstacles faced by divorced women in the job market and the extent to which economic independence affects their long-term financial security and overall well-being. The research also investigates the psychological obstacles experienced by women after divorce. It examines the emotional distress, self-esteem issues, and feelings of failure or guilt that can arise after divorce. The study explores the process of rebuilding identity and self-concept, shedding light on the psychological impact of divorce and its influence on mental health and emotional resilience. By integrating findings from the qualitative analysis of participants' narratives, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic and psychological challenges faced by women after divorce.

# **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

## CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

Divorce, the legal dissolution of a marriage, marks not only the end of a once-intimate partnership but also the beginning of a complex journey rife with challenges. While both men and women experience the profound impact of divorce, women often encounter a unique set of hurdles that can have far-reaching consequences for their well-being and societal roles.

The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology defines divorce as “the formal legal dissolution of a legally constituted marriage”. The word 'divorce' traces its origin back to the Latin derivative meaning 'splitting of a unit'. In other words, it is the ‘permanent physical separation of spouses’ (Michael, 2015). Divorce is a legal process that formally ends a marriage or marital union between two individuals. It involves the legal dissolution of the marital bond, allowing the spouses to be legally recognized as single and free to remarry if they choose to do so. Divorce typically involves the settlement of various issues, such as the division of assets and debts, child custody and visitation arrangements (if there are children involved), and spousal support. Divorce laws and procedures vary across different jurisdictions, and the legal requirements and processes involved can differ significantly based on the country, state, or province where the divorce is filed. In many cases, divorces can be categorized as either "no-fault" or "fault" divorces.

In a "no-fault" divorce, the couple seeks to end the marriage without proving any specific wrongdoing or blaming one another for the breakdown of the relationship. They typically cite "irreconcilable differences" or a similar reason as grounds for divorce. No-fault divorces are often more straightforward and require less evidence than fault-based divorces.

In a "fault" divorce, one spouse seeks to prove that the other spouse is responsible for the marital breakdown due to specific reasons such as adultery, cruelty, abandonment, or other marital misconduct. Fault divorces can be more contentious and may involve a lengthier legal process.

The primary purpose of divorce is to allow individuals to legally terminate a marriage that is no longer sustainable or functional, providing them with the opportunity to move

forward separately. It is essential to consult with legal professionals to understand the specific divorce laws and procedures applicable in a particular jurisdiction.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Divorce is a major life stressor that may cause at least short-term mental distress, in part due to the emotional and financial burdens associated with divorce (Amato, 2010; Hald et al., 2020). Ultimately, most divorced people adapt well, but about one-fifth experience ongoing psychological difficulties even years post-divorce (Perrig-Chiello et al., 2015). Divorce often entails emotional upheaval, grief, and loss. Women may experience a decline in self-esteem and struggle with redefining their identity as they navigate life as a single individual. Emotional healing and adjustment to the new circumstances can be a lengthy and complex process, which may require support and intervention. Divorce is a complex and life-altering event that affects individuals and families on various levels.

Divorce has an impact on people and families in many ways. Both men and women encounter difficulties following divorce, but for many women, these issues are particular and distinct, and they can have a big influence on their life. Divorce has become a serious problem; challenging the establishment of the family in a routine manner and causing severe impacts on the emotional and mental health of the individual especially women. Even if the divorced women get remarries, other Factors Such as fear of being rejected by new spouse and new in laws tend to influence new Marital life of women who have been previously divorced.(Zafar& Kausar, 2014).

#### **Divorce statistics in Kerala**

During 2005-2006, there were 8456 divorce cases filed in Kerala. The number of divorce cases in Kerala family courts increased to 44,236 in 2012.

Period – No of Divorce Cases

1. 2005-2006 – 8456
2. 2006-2007 – 9775
3. 2007-2008 – 9937

4. 2008-2009 – 11,194
5. 2009-2010 – 11,600
6. 2010-2011 – 38,231
7. 2011-2012 – 44,236

Out of 23.43 lakh divorced women in India, 1.96 lakhs are in Kerala. In Kerala, most divorces filed are in Thiruvananthapuram, followed by Thrissur, Pathanamthitta and Ernakulam. Most divorces are among couples working in IT sector and those divorces happen within three years of marriage. 15 March, 2015 (Consolace Counselling Services)

Thiruvananthapuram, the state capital is the capital of divorces too. According to the data provided by state government, The district saw an increase of 6000 divorce cases in 2 family courts at Trivandrum (Times of India,2016). It has been argued that women invest more in the family and take larger responsibility for marriage and therefore perceive divorce as a greater failure than men do. (kurdek,1990,hung,kung&chan,2004,cited in sharma,2011).

In order to provide insight on the emotional, social, economic, and psychological factors that influence women's post-divorce experiences, this study intends to analyze the unique difficulties faced by women after divorce.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

In earlier times divorce in some parts of India was considered as a sin. The existence of the patriarchal society gave women less right to speak for themselves thus they had no right to divorce. The situations were quite similar in the earlier years after independence. It was during the 1970s when women were given equal rights for everything, such as the right to succession, right to divorce, etc. In the year 1976 amendments were made in The Hindu Marriage Act 1955, and divorce by mutual consent and Judicial Separation were allowed. Recently the Supreme Court has made rules on the abolition of Triple-Talak by Muslim men.

With modernization, a lot of joint families broke down and they moved to the cities to settle. That's when people changed their attitude towards divorce. Changes in norms and

values attached to marriage have played a major role in the breakdown of marriages. The emergence of feminism played a major role in the increasing rates of divorce. Even though India's census says that it is women who are being divorced more than men, i.e. the ancient patriarchal system still has its influence in the modern world.( Concept of divorce and Indian society, Souvik Chattrejee,2019)

The journey after divorce is characterized by a series of adjustments, transformations, and reorientations. Women, in particular, confront a range of issues that have the potential to shape their emotional well-being, financial stability, and social connections. These challenges not only influence their immediate post-divorce period but can also have lasting implications for their future endeavors and relationships.

#### Social Outcomes of Divorce:

**Impact on Children:** Divorce can have significant effects on children's well-being and development. Studies have shown that children of divorced parents may experience emotional and behavioral challenges, lower academic performance, and an increased risk of psychological issues. (Amato, P. R., 2000). "

**Social Support:** Divorced individuals may experience changes in their social networks and support systems. The end of a marriage can lead to social isolation, as some friends or family members may take sides or withdraw support. (Umberson, D., & Williams, K., 1999.)

#### Economic Outcomes of Divorce:

**Wealth and Income:** Divorce often leads to a decrease in household income and assets, especially for women. Women, on average, tend to experience a larger decline in economic resources compared to men after divorce. (Smock, P. J., Manning, W. D., & Gupta, S., 1999. )

**Employment:** Divorced individuals may face challenges in maintaining stable employment due to emotional distress, child-rearing responsibilities, and changes in living arrangements. This can impact their long-term financial stability. (Brand, J. E., 2015. )

## Psychological Outcomes of Divorce:

**Mental Health:** Divorce can be emotionally taxing, leading to increased rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. However, the psychological effects may vary depending on individual coping mechanisms and support systems. (Amato, P. R., 2010.)

Divorce is often rated as one of the most stressful life events. Individuals may experience feelings of loss, grief, and uncertainty about the future. Coping strategies and the ability to adapt to change play a significant role in determining long-term psychological outcomes. (Thoits, P. A., 1995.)

The period within five years of divorce is a critical phase for women as they navigate the aftermath of the dissolution of their marriage. During this time, women face a range of challenges that can significantly impact their lives and well-being.

Understanding the challenges faced by women after divorce is crucial for developing effective support systems, interventions, and policies that address their specific needs. By gaining insight into these challenges, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners can work towards empowering women to navigate the post-divorce phase successfully and promote their overall well-being and empowerment.

The challenges faced by women after divorce are multifaceted and can vary depending on various factors such as cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and individual circumstances. Social challenges include stigmatization, social isolation, and difficulties in co-parenting, which can lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion (Kalmijn, 2018). Additionally, co-parenting with an ex-spouse can present significant challenges, including conflicts over decision-making, communication breakdowns, and difficulties in establishing effective co-parenting arrangements (Amato, 2010). Additionally, the loss of mutual friends and changes in social networks can leave women feeling disconnected and struggling to rebuild a support system. Reentering the dating scene and reestablishing social connections can also pose significant challenges.

Emotionally, divorced women may experience a wide range of psychological distress, including feelings of grief, sadness, anger, and anxiety. The emotional impact of divorce can be long-lasting and may require support and coping mechanisms for women to navigate successfully (Stack & Eshleman, 1998). Furthermore, divorced women commonly encounter challenges related to self-esteem and identity reconstruction. They may struggle with rebuilding their sense of self, overcoming feelings of failure or loss of self-worth, and defining their identity beyond their marital status (DeMaris, 2007).

Economically, divorced women often face financial instability, which can have long-term consequences for their well-being. Divorce can lead to a decline in women's financial status, as they may experience a loss of shared assets, decreased income, and challenges in securing stable employment (Mauldin & Kposowa, 2013). Economic disadvantages and the risk of poverty are higher among divorced women, particularly those who were economically dependent on their ex-partners during the marriage (Manning & Smock, 2000). The loss of a partner's income and potential difficulties in finding employment can result in financial instability and a decreased standard of living. One factor that may influence financial living standards following divorce where there are dependent children is in the payment of child support (child maintenance). Issues related to alimony, child support, and achieving financial independence further exacerbate the economic challenges faced by divorced women.

Legally, divorced women encounter various challenges, including custody and visitation disputes, as well as navigating the legal system itself. Custody battles and disagreements over parenting time can be emotionally taxing and may require legal guidance to ensure the best interests of the children are prioritized (Emery, 1999). Furthermore, divorced women may face obstacles in accessing legal assistance and representation, which can further exacerbate their legal and procedural challenges (Rhode, 2004).

Addressing these challenges faced by women after divorce is crucial for promoting their well-being, empowerment, and social integration. By understanding the specific needs and experiences of divorced women, policymakers, legal professionals, mental health practitioners, and support organizations can develop targeted interventions and support systems. This research aims to contribute to the existing literature on divorce and gender



studies by providing an in-depth exploration of the challenges faced by women after divorce.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Given that divorce rates appear to be rising, Indian society is currently undergoing a substantial shift that has been seen in the institution of the family. The way people view the word "divorce" is evolving. To account for more recent developments in society, patriarchy now operates differently. A change from a family with a single earner to one with two earners who make comparable incomes has occurred, reflecting both personal and economic motivations. Planning for this research project is based on the premise that divorces will continue to occur, for better or worse. It would be interesting to learn which aspects of post-divorce family life were linked to either excellent or bad adjustment for both parents and children. The study on the challenges faced by women after divorce holds significant importance due to its potential to shed light on the specific difficulties and vulnerabilities experienced by women during this critical life transition. Indian culture considers divorce as a failure of societal duties that results from a failure a personal flow or weakness, hence it is necessary to conduct the study on this social issue. Since the women faces various types of exploitation than men which affects their human dignity, it is one of a major social issue.

By examining the social , economic, and psychological challenges, as well as their impact on various aspects of women's lives, including mental health, self-esteem, social relationships, and economic stability, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of divorced women. The findings will not only contribute to theoretical knowledge but also inform the development of effective support systems, interventions, and policies that cater to the specific needs of divorced women.

The study confirms the mediating role in support in building well being after experiencing loss related to dissolution of marriage. From the existing literature, more studies were conducted in quantitative approach , the researcher aims an in-depth study of various challenges faced by the women after divorce .

The study focus mainly on Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala and the researcher aims an in-depth study of various challenges faced by women after divorce and aims to explore into the lived experiences of the women after divorce to understand their various challenges and how they deal with them.

The study also aims to find out the diverse needs of these women based on data collection and data analysis. This would help the social workers to plan and develop intervention plans for the holistic well-being of them.

#### **1.4 CHAPTERIZATION**

The research is divided into seven chapters. The chapterization of the research dissertation is as follows:

##### **Chapter I: Introduction**

An introduction to the study is provided in the first chapter. It includes the various concepts related to the study and states the problem addressed as a research paper, its intensity and later it explains the need and relevance of the study in the present scenario.

##### **Chapter II: Review of literature**

This chapter deals with a review of literature that analyses various studies conducted on this topic from different perspectives. This helps the researcher to identify the dimension in which the researcher needs to focus more.

##### **Chapter III: Research Methodology**

It discusses the methodology that the researcher uses in his study. It includes the details like title, research questions, research design, sampling techniques, details of the pilot study, Method of data collection, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

##### **Chapter IV: Case Description**

Details of cases used in the study are recorded in this chapter in an elaborated manner for a better understanding of each case. Cases of respondents are described through narrative and verbatim reporting.

## Chapter V: Thematic Analysis and Discussion

Thematic analysis, discussion of the case, analysis to link the findings back to existing literature, and discussion of the data collected for the study are discussed in this chapter in a detailed manner.

## Chapter VI: Findings, Suggestions and Conclusions

This chapter deals with major findings followed by discussions, suggestions, and conclusions. The last pages of the dissertation will include the bibliography, appendix, and tools used for data collection in this study.

## **CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## **CHAPTER TWO :REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study of the literature looks at the many difficulties that women encounter after divorce. Divorce is a major life event that can have a big social, emotional, and financial impact, especially on women. For efficient support systems and policies to address their needs, it is essential to comprehend the special difficulties they face. To identify and assess the main obstacles experienced by women after divorce, the review synthesizes available evidence from scholarly publications, books, and pertinent studies. The results emphasize the significance of social support, monetary security, emotional stability, co-parenting dynamics, and societal attitudes.

### **2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Studies related to challenges faced by women after divorce

#### **2.2.1 Social Challenges:**

- **Stigmatization and Social Isolation:**

Divorced women often face stigmatization and social judgment, leading to feelings of isolation and exclusion. They may experience negative attitudes and assumptions from friends, family, and society, which can exacerbate their sense of isolation and impact their social well-being (Kalmijn, 2018). Smart (2007) highlights strained relationships with family and friends who may take sides or distance themselves due to the divorce.

- **Co-parenting Difficulties:**

Co-parenting can be a significant challenge for divorced women. Issues may arise regarding decision-making, communication, and conflicts with their ex-partners. Establishing effective co-parenting arrangements can be demanding and require ongoing negotiation and cooperation (Amato, 2010). Balancing parenting responsibilities with work and personal life can be particularly challenging during this period (Brandth & Kvande, 2002).

### **2.2.2 Psychological Challenges:**

- **Psychological Distress:**

Divorce often triggers emotional distress for women, including feelings of grief, sadness, anger, and anxiety. Stack and Eshleman (1998) highlight that the emotional impact of divorce can be long-lasting, and women may require support and coping mechanisms to navigate this challenging period successfully. Emotional healing and adjustment to the new circumstances are vital for their overall well-being.

- **Self-Esteem and Identity Reconstruction:**

Divorced women commonly experience a decline in self-esteem following the end of a marriage. They may struggle with reconstructing their identity as individuals rather than being defined by their marital status. DeMaris (2007) emphasizes that divorced women may grapple with a sense of failure, loss of self-worth, and the need to rediscover and redefine their sense of self. Self-esteem and identity reconstruction are critical aspects of post-divorce adjustment.

### **2.2.3 Economic Challenges:**

- **Financial Instability:**

One of the significant challenges faced by divorced women is the potential for financial instability. Mauldin and Kposowa (2013) highlight that divorce can lead to a decline in women's financial status, as they may experience a loss of shared assets and decreased income. They may struggle with budgeting, securing stable employment, and providing for themselves and their children. Financial stability is crucial for their overall well-being and empowerment.

- **Poverty and Economic Disadvantage:**

The risk of poverty is higher among divorced women, particularly for those who were economically dependent on their ex-partners during the marriage. Manning and Smock (2000) note that divorced women often experience economic disadvantages, leading to

financial vulnerability and struggles to meet their basic needs. The economic challenges they face can have long-term consequences for their quality of life and the well-being of their children.

#### **2.2.4 Legal Challenges:**

- **Custody and Visitation Disputes:**

Legal challenges are common for divorced women, particularly regarding child custody and visitation. Women may face disputes over decision-making authority, parenting time, and visitation schedules. Emery (1999) emphasizes the emotional toll and the need for legal guidance to navigate these complex and contentious issues. Ensuring the best interests of the children and maintaining healthy parent-child relationships are key concerns.

- **Legal Procedures and Access to Justice:**

Navigating the legal system can be overwhelming for divorced women, especially for those with limited resources and knowledge. Rhode (2004) highlights the barriers and challenges women face in accessing legal assistance and representation, which can further exacerbate their legal and procedural challenges. Ensuring equal access to justice is essential to protect the rights and interests of divorced women.

The research published on 'Divorce under Personal Laws in India: A comparative Study' by Ranga (2014) reveals that 'divorce and remarriage are legal; however Indian society condemns a divorced woman more than a divorced man

### **2.3 STUDIES ON DIVORCE**

#### **A) Studies in Thiruvananthapuram district.**

Thiruvananthapuram, the State capital, is the capital of divorce cases too, according to the data provided by the State Government. The district saw 6,000 divorce cases in 2011 in its two family courts, at Thiruvananthapuram and Nedumangad.

From body odour to infidelity, anything can be a reason for separation, according to the data from various divorce cases filed last year.

“Majority of the cases sprout from the problems of adjustment between partners. There is an increasing trend in the marriages from 2002 for divorce,” says T Geena Kumari, a counsel who specialises in family cases.

According to the data provided by the State Government, southern Kerala has a high percentage of cases. Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts account for nearly one-third of the total cases. A total of 10,243 cases have been filed in the four family courts in the two districts.( Indian Express, 2012)

## **B) Studies in Kerala**

In Kerala, divorce becomes an accepted prescription of marital conflict among couples due to the awareness of the law and its implications. Divorce rates have surged up from 18,500 in 2014 to 19,028 in 2015. The total number of cases registered in the courts in relation to family disputes is 51,153 (Kerala High Court, 2015)

- Contemporary Kerala society is in the process of rapid socio-economic change, such as, huge migration of people to abroad, invasion of urban consumer culture, increasing rate of industrialization and stressors in occupation, specifically in the IT field have made an enormous impact on family organization and attitudes towards marriage and divorce. These life scenarios disturb the stability of marriage and family organization and have put serious stress and strain on marital adjustment (Raj, 2014).
- “Urbanization and blind imitation of a western lifestyle were said to be the main reasons for the high divorce rate in Kerala (Vasudevan, et al., 2015).” Financial stability of the couple especially of women and adjustment issues can contribute to the thought of divorce. Modern woman may be more aware of gender differences and the rights and obligations in the family as well as in the society. So, she may not



tolerate when faced with marriage which infringed on freedom, equality etc. She may opt for divorce rather than continuing in an unhappy marriage (Vasudevan, et al., 2015)

- Vasudevan, Devi, Bhaskar, Areekal, Lucas & Chintha, (2015) conducted a study “to find out the causes of divorce among the couples attending the family court, Kottayam, Kerala.” This descriptive study was conducted among 60 couples. “The study reveals that the divorce was happening during the initial period of marriage.” It is more for females in the age group of 21-30 years and for males in the age range of 31-40 years. Filing of divorce cases were seen mostly in the college educated couple and it was higher among middle and upper class families. “Majority of the couples who applied for divorce were staying with husband’s parents. 45% of divorces happened within four years of the marriage. But 60% of females and 67% of males were of the opinion that they had a happy married life for less than one year.” In Kerala, “because of social pressures and for their children, the couple trying to live together till the divorce.” The study also revealed that adjustment problems within the extended family, alcoholism and resulting physical abuse were the leading causes 20 of divorce among the couples in Kerala. More women were found to be initiating proceedings for divorce than males.”

### **C) Studies in India**

- Jacob and Chattopadhyay (2016) examined data on divorce in the 2001 and 2011 Census of India and estimated that about 1.36 million people in India are divorced, an equivalent of 0.24% of the married population, and 0.11% of the total population. More strikingly, the number of people separated is almost three times the number of people divorced, at 0.61% of the married population and 0.29% of the total population (Biswas, 2016)
- Professional rivalry between the partners can be another cause of divorce. There is greater societal acceptance of divorcees in the modern families today. Either the man files for a divorce due to ego issues when he sees his wife more successful than him

professionally (Ramachandrappa, Kumar & Kumar, 2016). “Or a professionally successful woman files for a divorce when she sees that her husband’s position is not at par with hers.” Also, there are chances of more outside marital relationships in such cases and the end result is a divorce. Incompatibility in thoughts, emotional expressions and sluggish sex life between the newly married couple are also major causes of divorce (Ngurthangpuii & Geetha, 2017).

- The research published on ‘Divorce under Personal Laws in India: A comparative Study’ by Ranga (2014) reveals that ‘divorce and remarriage are legal; however Indian society condemns a divorced woman more than a divorced man’. This study was aimed to analyse the historical background of theories of divorce from the ancient time to the present era and also to “investigate the effects of demographic variation such as, gender, age and qualification in determining the 12 perception of causes leading towards divorce.” Findings of the study reveals that divorced woman faces different problems like “finance, parental support, dowry, child support, security, social stigma and remarriage.”
- In the journal titled Divorce, Families and Adolescents in India:A Review of Research by Aneesh Thadathil and Sujatha Sriram in 2019 reviews research from India on the causes and effects of divorce and provides an overview of the psychosocial determinants of divorce and its impacts on families and adolescents. Fourteen research studies from 2000 to 2018 were identified for analysis.
- In India, the scenario of family, marriage, and divorce are interconnected with religious rituals. Most weddings include some religious rituals and customs (Ramanuja, 2010). These traditions are the essence of the marital institution, thereby strengthening the significance, integrity, and faith in the same. There is both traditional and religious depth and intensity in India about the institution of marriage (Srivastava, 2010).

#### **D) Foreign Studies**

- The study of domestic violence shows that violence is a significant determinant of divorce and that violence plays a significant role during asset negotiations after

marital separation using data collected from interviews in 1987–1988 of 129 women with children who were divorced in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, courts in 1986. According to the study, several of the women reported experiencing violence during their marriages, and 19% of them said it was a contributing factor in their decision to leave their spouses. After exceptionally severe violent occurrences or when they felt that their children were being harmed by seeing the violence, women often separated from their husbands. 4% of the women in our sample reported experiencing violence either during or after marriage despite not being asked about it. KURZ, D. (1996).

- The journal titled divorce and remarriage by Lara Augustine investigated the relationships between different types of post-separation families (physical custody arrangements x stepfamily status) and parents' and children's well-being. Using data from waves 3–12 of the German Family Panel, random- and fixed-effects regression models were estimated for two analytical samples of 1,199 resident parents and 1,129 children aged 7–17. No statistically significant relationships between physical custody arrangements and parents' depressiveness and life satisfaction were found, but living with a partner was shown to be positively related to parental life satisfaction. Neither physical custody arrangements nor stepfamily status were related to children's mental and physical health.
- A study conducted by fatma burcin hocaoglu determined the divorce causes of divorced women and the problems they experience during and after the divorce period and their coping methods with these problems. Twenty-eight divorced women participated in the study. The universe of the study consists of divorced women living in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). In this study, criteria-based sampling, which is a purposive sampling method, was used in the determination of the study group This research was conducted with qualitative data collection technique, and a semi-structured interview form which was developed by the researchers was used as a data collection tool. The interview form which was developed as a data collection tool was given its final version based on expert opinions. As a result of the analysis of the data, the most important causes for divorce mentioned by women appeared as differences of opinion, lack of interest and

financial irresponsibility, whereas the least mentioned causes are age differences and jealousy. The leading problems experienced during the divorce process are psychological breakdown, external interventions and sharing of the property, whereas the least emphasised problems are the failure of the family to give support and failure to divorce due to living in different countries. The most important problems after divorce were listed as the negative viewpoint of the society towards a divorced woman, financial problems and psychological breakdown, whereas the least experienced problems are future anxiety and loneliness. The leading coping with problems method appeared as a social support from family and friends, and the least mentioned method was gaining financial strength. In terms of improvement of responsibility and value perceptions, it is recommended that studies are conducted in the fields of guidance and psychological counselling services and family counseling

- In the study “Gender Differences in the Consequences of Divorce: A Study of Multiple Outcomes” by Thomas Leopold examined gender differences in the consequences of divorce by tracing annual change in 20 outcome measures covering four domains: economic, housing and domestic, health and well-being, and social. I used data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) and fixed-effects panel regression models on a sample of  $N = 18,030$  individuals initially observed in a marital union,  $N = 1,220$  of whom divorced across the observation period (1984–2015). Three main findings emerged from the analysis. First, men were more vulnerable to short-term consequences of divorce for subjective measures of well-being, but post divorce adaptation alleviated gender differences in these outcomes. Second, a medium-term view on multiple outcomes showed more similarity than differences between women and men. The medium-term consequences of divorce were similar in terms of subjective economic well-being; mental health, physical health, and psychological well-being; residential moves, homeownership, and satisfaction with housework; and chances of repartnering, social integration with friends and relatives, and feelings of loneliness. Third, the key domain in which large and persistent gender differences emerged were women’s disproportionate losses in household income and associated increases in their risk of poverty and single

parenting. Taken together, these findings suggest that men's disproportionate strain of divorce is transient, whereas women's is chronic

- The study Discussed is the connection between recent or impending separation and violence against female partners. Between 1985 and 1988, 87 divorced, separated, and domestic violence survivors were interviewed to learn more about the violence men committed against their female intimate partners. To support the claim that separation increases the probability of violence, various bodies of literature are evaluated. In relation to interpersonal violence against women, the conceptual contributions of the power and control theory and the social learning theory are discussed. To emphasize how violent separations can be, especially when women are the ones who start them, an enlarged version of the power-and-control model is employed. Numerous Canadian examples that are taken from interviews with divorced women, intimate assault survivors, and news reports are used to illustrate the extended model. Last but not least, several methods to break the cycle of violence are also summarized. SEV'ER, A. (1997).
- Due to the country's rapidly aging population, rising divorce rates, and women's longer life expectancies when compared to men, many elderly Chinese women are now living alone. Due to traditional Chinese cultural attitudes that devalue older people' demands for sex and intimacy, as well as the inferior status of women in society, this group of women's sexual health and intimacy requirements are disregarded. In this study, divorced and widowed older Chinese women's sexual health and intimacy demands were examined in two cities, Shanghai and Wuhan, using a quantitative survey method to look into bio-psycho-social aspects. Cognitive stress theory, attachment theory, gender theory, socioemotional selectivity theory, objectification theory, and activity theory all provided direction for the conceptual framework of this study. Face-to-face surveys were used to gather the data between October 2020 and March 2021. A convenience sample of 278 (N = 278) older Chinese women who had recently been divorced or widowed was gathered (166 in Shanghai and 112 in Wuhan). Relationship status, wealth, physical health, attachment style, neuroticism, mental health, social support, past marital strife, and

attitude toward gender norms were all linked to sexual health and intimacy requirements. Age, the number of children, financial situation, physical health, attachment style, neuroticism, previous marital conflict, attitude toward gender norms, sexual knowledge, sexual attitude, and intimate attitude were all connected with sexual behavior as predictors. After their divorce or widowhood, the majority of participants in this study appeared to have found new intimate partners with whom to continue engaging in sexual activity. *Int. J. Enviro. Res. Public Health* **2022**

- The economic consequences of divorce in six OECD countries. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 52(2), 180–199. The article estimates the short- and medium-term economic impacts of divorce in the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Korea, Germany, and Australia during the first decade of the twenty-first century using longitudinal data. Using information gathered in the 2000s from all of the nations examined,
- On average, divorce had a negative impact on women's equivalised household wages. The severity and length of the negative impacts of divorce, however, varied significantly across nations. In every nation, divorce had a lesser impact on men's equivalised household income than it did on women's. Though it is impossible to definitively explain the discrepancies between nations given the data at hand, The investigation in this article has shown that the social security system, labor market, family models, and family law systems of each nation have a significant impact on the average economic effects of divorce, particularly for women. While the social security system and institutional arrangements like child support and spousal maintenance do have an impact on women's post-divorce economic outcomes, women's labor market earnings and the degree of re-partnering are what matter most in explaining cross-country differences. de Vaus, David; Gray, Matthew; Qu, Lixia; Stanton, David (2017).
- For women, divorce is a life-altering event with financial repercussions. Large-scale studies have looked at the variables involved in functioning financially after divorce, but little focus has been placed on the lived experiences of women over time. In this study, from 1996 to 2016, we looked at divorced women's financial health using a

combination of methodologies. We examined women's judgments of their capacity to manage on available income and their narrative remarks about financial coping throughout eight waves, starting in midlife (ages 46–51), using data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health [ALSWH]. The ratings increased throughout time, especially as women neared retirement or reached their peak working years in their 50s or 60s. Despite this increased trend, about 40% of people experienced financial stress. Although financial stress frequently subsides with time, women's early assessments of their ability to cope with money predict their level of economic stability in later life. Bronwen Lichtenstein;Jayne Lucke;Deborah Loxton; (2021).

- Despite the issues that can develop for people and their families as well as in social life, divorce has not gotten much attention in Iran. The study sought to determine the divorce procedures of Iranian couples in which the woman initiated the split. 34 divorce-seeking Iranian men and women (divorcing women and their spouses) were interviewed using the grounded theory method to learn more about their divorce experiences. The findings showed that there were five stages to the divorce phenomena, including the onset of thinking about divorce, hesitation to stay, difficult decision-making, separation, and legal action. Despite stricter legal restrictions and In spite of stricter legislation and more challenging societal norms for women seeking divorce than for males, this practice is on the rise in Iran due to the country's shifting cultural landscape. the divorce procedure would aid in planning preventive measures and creating clinical interventions aimed at marriage and marital relationships for couples, families, and especially professionals. Somayeh Jaber;Ozra Etemadi;Maryam Fatehizade;Ali Rabbani Khorasgani; (2021).
- Individuals, couples, and families have all experienced significant stress as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. Couples who have been divorced or separated and have children are particularly stressed by the pandemic. The 296 divorced and separated parents in this mixed-methods study—204 women who had previously been in relationships with men, 34 men who had previously been in relationships with

women, and 58 women who had previously been in relationships with males—were polled in the summer and fall of 2020. Participants discussed coparenting, financial, and legal difficulties. Those who hadn't yet divorced talked about how difficult it was to file for or complete their divorce due to court closures and a lack of responsiveness from attorneys. Those who were previously divorced also had to deal with legal difficulties, like not being able to schedule a court date to change custody rules. Renegotiating financial assistance duties in the wake of a job loss was one of the difficulties with money. Through closed- and open-ended questions, the most important coparenting conflicts were examined, and they included communication problems, divergent opinions on virus risk mitigation techniques, financial problems (especially for those who haven't yet divorced), and problems relocating and managing remote education (especially for those who have shared physical custody). Participants discussed challenges specific to COVID-19, revealing that (a) a lack of communication or agreement regarding shared strategies for risk mitigation reflected and exacerbated challenging dynamics between coparents, (b) remote schooling was frequently the source of disagreement when one parent felt they were doing more than their fair share of coordination and oversight, and (c) a variety of viewpoints on science were anticipated to cause future conflict when Maki was introduced. The results have repercussions for family and legal specialists that work with separated, divorced, and divorcing parents Abbie E. Goldberg; Katherine R. Allen; Julianna Z. Smith; (2021).

- The study is to delineate life stories of motherhood among divorced women, and to answer the following research questions: (1) How does their motherhood develop? (2) How does divorce impact on motherhood? (3) How do mothers cope with divorce? (4) What does motherhood mean for these mothers? Through in-depth interviews, inter-subjective interaction and story writing, a total of six women's stories were collected. The following titles were found for stories of motherhood among these divorced women: (1) Walking in balanced steps. (2) Becoming a single mom is not a surprise. (3) Seeking reunion for the sake of the kids. (4) Grieving for the loss of an integrated family. (5) I found myself. (6) A diamond becomes a stone. It was



discovered that divorce has both beneficial and bad effects on motherhood. After ending their turbulent marriage, some families actually found life to be more enjoyable. Nevertheless, being a mother after a divorce was difficult for divorced women because of a physical double load and an invisible social stigma. Through the use of stigma, divorce was subjected to covert social persecution. The stigma surrounding divorce increased the moms' sense of guilt and helplessness. Therefore, it was discovered that caring for and grieving are interwoven with being a divorced mother. The study of life stories has been shown to be a useful tool for assisting, encouraging deeper thought, and empowering the storyteller. The process for using life stories in qualitative research was outlined by the researcher. Yang, Li-Ling (2008).

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework of a study provides the conceptual foundation for understanding and analyzing the research topic. study on the challenges faced by women after divorce, various theoretical frameworks can be applied to offer insights into different aspects of the topic

### **2.4.1 Family system theory**

Family systems theory posits that the family is a single emotional, interdependent unit (Bowen, 1966). The needs and abilities of one family member will affect all family members. The interactions of subsystems between parents, between parents and children, and between children affect each individual and influence the whole (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, & Soodak, 2006). This theory examines family dynamics as interconnected systems. It would explore how divorce disrupts the family system and affects individual family members. It could shed light on the challenges of co-parenting, shifting roles, and maintaining familial relationships post-divorce.

### **2.4.2 Social support theory**

Social support is considered a middle range theory that focuses on relationships and the interactions within those relationships. The importance of social relationships in contributing to health and well-being has been the focus of research by scientists and practitioners across a large number of social, behavioral, medical, and nursing disciplines. Social support is often used in a broad sense, usually referring to any process through which social relationships might enhance health and well-being.(Leahy-Warren, P. 2014).. It could examine how divorced women's access to social support from friends, family, and communities influences their ability to overcome challenges

### **2.4.3 Intersectional theory**

Intersectional theory views the categories of intersecting relations such as race, gender, social class, sexuality, ability, and age as interrelated and mutually shaping one another. Through taking these intersecting factors into consideration, it paves the way of understanding and explaining complexity in individuals, the world, and in human experience. Intersectionality is a perspective that investigates 'how intersecting power relations influence social relations across diverse societies as well as individual experiences in everyday life' (Collins & Bilge, 2020).

## **2.5 RESEARCH GAP ANALYSIS**

The review of literature points out that a number of studies have already conducted to identify the various challenges faced by women after divorce. While analyzing the existing literature available on the area of the topic, the researcher could identify certain gaps, which would be filled with the present study.

The studies undertaken are mostly from the Western backgrounds and most of the studies were conducted in quantitative approach a very few studies have attempted to

bring light into lived experiences of challenges faced by women after divorce .there was only less studies were conducted in Kerala context.

Since ,the number of divorce cases are increasing rapidly in Kerala, it has been noted that the prevalence and challenges are also increasing. It is necessary to conduct an in-depth study of the various challenges faced by women after divorce . In Kerala , Thiruvananthapuram district has the largest number of divorce cases .therefore , the researcher carried out the study majorly focusing on this area .

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

## **CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The goal of the study is to learn about the challenges faced by women after divorce. Divorce is dissolution of marriage through a legal process by filing a petition in a court of law. When a court passes a divorce decree, it brings an end to the matrimonial alliance of spouses and therefore terminates all the marriage. Out of 23.43 lakh divorced women in India, 1.96 lakhs are in Kerala. In Kerala, most divorces filed are in Thiruvananthapuram, Qualitative research is appropriate for exploring the subjective experiences, perceptions, and meanings attributed to these challenges.

### **3.2 TITLE OF THE STUDY**

“CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN AFTER DIVORCE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT.”

### **3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Central research question

What are the Social, Economic and Psychological challenges faced by women after divorce?

Specific research question

1. What are the specific social challenges faced by women after divorce and how these challenges impact their post - divorce adjustment?
2. What economic difficulties do women encounter after divorce and how do these challenges influence their financial well-being?
3. What psychological obstacles do women confront after divorce and how these challenges affect their overall mental health?

### **3.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPT DIVORCE**

**Theoretical Definition:** Divorce refers to the legal dissolution or termination of a marriage or marital union, resulting in the formal ending of the marital relationship between two individuals. (Amato, P. R., & Hohmann-Marriott, B. (2007)

**Operational Definition:** Divorce refers to those women who have ended their marital relationship between the age of 20 to 50 and the major challenges faced by them after divorce in Thiruvananthapuram district.

### **CHALLENGE**

**Theoretical Definition:** Challenge refers to a situation or task that demands effort, skill, or determination to overcome obstacles or achieve a particular goal. (Richard L Draft, Organization Theory and Design, 1983)

**Operational Definition:** Social, Economical and Psychological challenges faced by women after divorce in Thiruvananthapuram district.

### **3.5 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research conducted incorporates qualitative research methods to address the research questions. Qualitative research refers to a research approach that focuses on exploring, understanding, and interpreting phenomena through non-numerical data. It involves collecting and analysing rich, descriptive data such as interviews, observations, documents, and artifacts, to gain in-depth insights into the underlying meanings, perspectives, and experiences of participants (Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative research is appropriate for exploring the subjective experiences, perceptions, and meanings attributed to these challenges. The interviews will be guided by a set of open-ended questions, allowing participants to freely express their experiences, thoughts,

and emotions related to the socio-economic and psychological challenges faced after divorce.

### **3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design refers to the overall plan or structure that guides the collection and analysis of data to address a specific research question or objective. A research design provides a road map for conducting the study and ensures that the research is systematic, rigorous, and capable of generating meaningful and trustworthy findings.

The research design adopted in this study is multiple case study research design. The case study research design is an in-depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. Case study research is an in-depth and comprehensive investigation of a particular individual, group, event, or phenomenon within its real-life context. It involves a detailed examination of a specific case to gain a deep understanding of its unique characteristics, dynamics, and complexities (Męcfal, 2012).

### **3.7 PILOT STUDY**

The researcher conducted pilot study on two women who are divorced recently from Thiruvananthapuram district. From this the researcher understood the feasibility of the study. Appropriate modifications were made to enhance the instrumentality of data collection tools.

### **3.8 STUDY AREA AND THE UNIVERSE**

The study was conducted in Thiruvananthapuram district. The researcher selected women consist of women who have gone through divorce within the past five years between the age group of 20-50. To ensure diversity in the sample, efforts will be made to include participants from different socio-economic backgrounds, age groups, and cultural context.

### **3.9 SAMPLING**

To select the participants, a purposive sampling approach is used. This approach involves deliberately selecting individuals who have experienced divorce within the past five years and who can provide valuable insights into the research topic. Potential participants are identified through various means, including personal contacts, divorce support groups etc. By employing a purposive sampling strategy that considers diversity in socio-economic backgrounds and age groups. It involves intentionally selecting participants who possess specific characteristics or qualities that are relevant to the research study. In this research, 5 cases were collected from the population for the study.

### **3.10 INCLUSION CRITERIA**

- Divorced women who are of age group between 20 -50
- Divorced women who are residing in Thiruvananthapuram district
- Women who have been divorced for no more than five years

### **3.11 EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

- Divorced women who are not in the age group of 20-50
- Divorced women who are not residing in Thiruvananthapuram district.
- Women who have been divorced more than five years

### **3.12 SOURCES OF DATA**

#### Primary data

For the purposes of this study, primary data was collected using an interview guide from sample obtained through the sampling method. All interpretation and analysis will be based on the main data obtained, which will aid in achieving the study's objectives.

#### Secondary data

Secondary data is gathered to support the study from enormous reservoirs of current



literature as well as other sources such as books, journals, magazines, and relevant websites.

### **3.13 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION**

It is a qualitative study, and the Interview Guide is the data collecting tool utilized in this study. Data is acquired through interviews. The interview schedule was prepared to find out the socio-demographic profile of the women .This schedule consists of closed questions, dealing with the socio-demographic profile like “age, educational status, family income, religion etc.

The interview guide guarantees that the researcher gets the same basic areas of information from each respondent; this offers more concentration than the conversational method, while yet allowing for some flexibility and adaptation in gathering data. The interviews will be guided by a set of open-ended questions, allowing participants to freely express their experiences, thoughts, and emotions related to the socio-economic and psychological challenges faced after divorce.

The interview guide was structured into the following sections

- Demographic details of the respondent
- Socio- economic profile of the respondent
- Challenges of the respondent
- Coping strategies
- Support systems

### **3.14 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The data gathered through in-depth interviews is submitted to thematic analysis with the main goal of understanding the study problems from the viewpoint of the experience of the individuals. Face-to-face interaction with the respondents was important to the researcher. As a result, respondents can speak freely and in their own words, allowing the researcher to get a true feel of the respondent's comprehension of the issue. As a result,

the researcher opts for an unstructured interview. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to capture the participants' narratives accurately.

### **3.15 ASSUMPTIONS ,LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE**

#### **Assumptions**

The researcher assumes that empowered women can take control of their lives by making independent decisions and pursue personal goals after divorce .

#### **Limitations**

- Some participants declined to participate in the study because they aren't interested in sharing their own experiences towards the researcher.
- Since the study relies on the specific sample of participants, the study might not accurately represent the diverse experiences of all the divorced women.

#### **Scope of the study**

The challenges faced by women after divorce can encompass various areas such as emotional well being ,financial stability , co- parenting ,social support system etc.the scope of the study would examine these aspects in depth.

### **3.15 CONCLUSION**

The methodology plays a significant role in data analysis.The methodology provides an overview regarding the methods used in the study. The methodology guided the researcher to complete the study in a systematic and scientific manner.The above chapter provides a vivid picture of how the study is going to be carried out. It lays

down the objectives for the study, definition of the concepts involved, research approach, design, source of data, tools for data collection etc

## **CHAPTER IV: CASE PRESENTATIONS**

## **CHAPTER FOUR - CASE PRESENTATIONS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main aim of this research was to understand the lived experience of women after divorce. It also looks into the challenges and coping strategies also. The researcher selected 5 respondents. All from Thiruvananthapuram district. Multiple case study method is used data collection .for Multiple-case study means studying more than a single case (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p. 154). Within a multiple - case study each case is first individually analysed and those patterns which have been identified on an individual case basis are then compared and connected across all cases to reach overall conclusions (Yin, 2018, p. 196).

### **4.2 Case A**

The first participant 'A' is a 39 year old Christian woman belonging to a lower middle class family. She had completed her degree in B A literature. She is currently working as a day care staff and teaches tuition class for students near her home. She gets a daily salary of about 400 rupees. Her family consist of her father (70) who is a retired scientific assistant in Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Her mother (67) is a house wife and her two children; daughter aged 15 is currently studying in 10<sup>th</sup> std and a son aged 9 year old currently studying in 4<sup>th</sup> std. they are currently staying in a rented house with her family. Mrs. 'A' is recently divorced after 17 years of married life. It was an arranged marriage. Her husband was a 45 old man who is working as a mechanic. But due to alcoholism, he didn't go to work. He used to attack his wife. Since she lived with her husband since 17 years she faced domestic abuses from her husband as well as her husband 's family . Due to this her elder son has mental health problem and currently is in treatment . Handling the hospital finances are the major struggle she is facing now. She states that “

Her mother- in- law used to verbally as well as physically abuse her. She faced domestic violence also, initially she didn't share her concern with others. Even with her own family members because of the stigma that existed in her family. While interacting with her she expressed that her husband continued his alcoholic behavior without spending any money to the home. He used to spend all his salary into buying alcoholic drinks. This affected the entire well being of the children as well . Her younger child witnessed these

abuses and this affected his childhood also. He became isolated from others, he also have various psychological problems such as fear , anxiety , he was unable to express his own feelings towards others. He is also physically unfit and have allergic problems too. Recently he was hospitalized because of thyroid problem. he was in Intensive care unit for some weeks . handling the finances of his son was the major challenge that the respondent is currently facing but with the help of church , she was able to handle the expenses .she stated that “ *with the help of church, I got money from sponsors and was able to complete the hospital payments . church always helped me in handling the difficulties .*”

Currently she is facing psychological distress. she explained that “*I have no one to express my feelings and to hug*”. Her children also didn’t tell anybody about their parent’s divorce. They used to tell others that their father is working abroad. They also avoids social situations like marriage, celebrations etc because of the stigma . she states that “ *I never go to any marriage functions after my divorce because as a divorcee , the relatives have a sympathetic approach towards me,so I avoid those social situations.* ”

During initial years of separation they used to face psychological challenges such as deep loneliness , express crying in front of bathroom . She doesn’t depend on anyone to receive emotional support. She stated that “*who will take care of us after my parent’s death . I don’t know how I handle the situation. I am only living my life with the support of my parents and also church*” . She learned to do things alone and also she received family support for divorce. She also explained about the alimony problem that she is currently facing. She stated “*it was decided by the court to provide 10,000/- for the children each month by their father . Initially he used to send money but currently we are not getting the money because of his alcoholism he didn’t even have much money for his daily living*” . so she is not getting alimony currently . she didn’t have any complaints regarding that. She is currently able to handle the educational expenses of her children by working.

She expressed her fear about remarriage also , she explained that “ *from my past experiences , I learned that how difficult is to handle a marriage life . I couldn’t able to think about a re marriage. Now I am focusing on how to live alone .my mental health is*

*much important for me. We don't know about how the next relationship will be... I am not willing to take a risk"*

*She said "initially I have difficulties related to the separation but now I have a peaceful mind, Now I am a working women so I can handle the finances of my family . Handling the rent of the house and educational expenses , health expenses were the major struggle. With the salary of her and also from the retirement benefits of her father and support from the church is the only way".*

### **4.3 Case B**

The second participant 'B' is a 45 year old Christian woman belonging to a middle class family. She had completed her degree in BA English from All Saints' College, Trivandrum. He is currently working as an office assistant. She get a monthly salary of about 70,000/- . She is currently living in a rented house near her office along with her two daughters. One daughter is of age 21 who is currently doing her degree in sociology. The second daughter is 17 year old currently doing her 12<sup>th</sup> grade. She has been separated from her husband since 17 years of marriage and got divorce recently. Her husband wanted divorce because of his doubt about whether his wife is having an extra marital affair. Her own family believed it was true and nobody supported her part. During separation time itself her husband starting living with his girlfriend in the opposite of her home. Even her relatives or family members supported her in taking the decision of getting the divorce. She along with children moved away from her family and decided to live near to her office. The major challenge she faced was securing an affordable house and maintaining a stable living atmosphere because her husband continuously followed her and brought a house opposite to her and started living with another girl without even marrying. Ms. B stated that *"my husband followed me and brought a home opposite my home and started living with her girlfriend and spread fake news about me that I am having other relations. He also spread this news in my office and the office staffs are seeing me as bad women. His major purpose was to degrade me in front of others. Because of this, the neighbors consider me as a bad women. This also affected my daughters' life. My only support was a very few office staffs and also nuns from my college"*.

This impacted her personal as well as her work life also. The major challenge was that she didn't her own family or relatives support in becoming independent. Due to this she didn't attend any social functions like marriage parties, receptions etc. Ms .B stated “ *I am afraid of the society , I never go to any marriage function because of this . They always judge me based on the fake news that has been spread from my husband. No one was able to listen or support me ..*”

Since she have her own job. She is able to handle her own finances. She also has concern about the division of marital assets. She is still not getting the amount that has been given to the husband during marriage. Rather than financial struggles, the major challenges were social and psychological .

The participant never expected her family should leave her in this crisis situation.this affected her mental health also . Ms. B stated that “ *even my family didn't supported me in taking the decision . They believed the fake news and I never expected this from them . As a women , leading an independent life without the support of family is the biggest struggle . because the society never support women who doesn't depend on anyone . Even my neighbors' believed all the lies and they considered me as a prostitute. The nuns from my college frequently visited my home to provide support for me and made me stronger and helped me to deal with the society.*” Ms. B also got major difficulties such as loss of hope ,guilt and sleeplessness . Ms. B said “*I have spend many nights without any sleep. As a women ,living independently in a home with two daughters is a major task because my neighbors as well as others considers me as a bad women , I am always afraid about how secure is this home& I always have fear about what my daughters future life would be..*” . Initially Ms. B was hopeless about her future and had insecure feeling about safety & what society will perceive etc. All these affected her mental health.

Ms . B also faced single parenting struggle during the initial years of divorce . she explained that “*during initial years of separation , I couldn't able to deal with being the sole provider and caregiver for my children ,Balancing work, household responsibilities etc since I didn't have support from my own family , handling my daughters' well being & finances was very difficult for me , because at that time my daughters were little kids.. now I learned to handle them*”



Ms. B's opinion about remarriage was *"I don't believe in the concept of remarriage because from my past experiences I have struggled a lot ... I don't think that getting a new husband will change me and I don't think that he consider my daughter's as his daughter . I can't take a risk with my daughter's life. Now I am living for my daughters. They should get a better life than me."*

Currently, Ms. B has a bold attitude towards the society. Ms. B said *"there is no benefit for women to behave as poor . Women should take bold decision and should be able to say no"*.

#### **4.4 Case C**

The third participant C is a Hindu woman of age 47 belonging to a middle class family. She had completed her education till 10<sup>th</sup> standard and is currently working as an office assistant .she get a monthly salary of about 60,000/- she is currently living with her two daughters . One daughter is of age 24, working in Techno Park and also studying evening B tech course. The second daughter is of age 19 is currently pursuing her degree in sociology.

Ms. C has been separated from her husband for about 5 years and is divorced 3 years ago. The major reason behind the divorce was the husband's doubtful approach towards her she explained that *"My husband always had doubt towards me that I have extra marital relationship with other men , he wanted divorce from me so that he can marry another women . He also has a problem of drinking alcohol and used to abuse me and my children"*. During the initial years of separation Ms. C faced major social challenges such as various misconceptions of divorce from her relatives. She stated *"the society always considers divorced women as bad , there are still some people who believed what my husband says about me that I have extramarital relationships"* all these stigmas affected her as well as her daughter's life . She also has insecure feeling in attending social functions she stated *" I am not interested in attending any social functions, as a divorcee , I am facing too many questions about the divorce , so I usually avoid those situations . initially her family didn't supported her in taking that decision. She stated that " my*

*family always advice me to adjust to him . they never understood what I am going through .. but after the divorce , they was with me” She also states that “currently my husband lives with another women but the society never induced any bad words about him”.*

*According to Ms. C , “ As a single mother , I have learned to deal with every situation by taking up the roles of a father and mother to my daughter. I never made any difficulties for my daughters in providing appropriate guidance .I became more strong &bold in handling situations.”*

*The participant concept of remarriage was like this “I got many proposals for remarriage, but I am living for my two daughters, I couldn’t believe in any new relationship because I don’t know whether the relationship becomes successful or it affects my daughter’s life “*

*The participant as well as her daughter is maintaining the finances of the family but division of property after divorce has been a major challenge. she stated that “ my father have given his property as a part of dowry in the name of my husband and me, All the loans are closed by me but after the divorce my husband is not willing to share the property into my name “. She is currently seeking support from a lawyer to deal with this issue.*

*The major psychological challenges faced by her are the loneliness after the divorce. Because her two daughters are doing their higher studies sometimes she felt lonely she said “sometimes I feel that I have no one to share my feelings. In future my two daughters will be married and get settled ... I might live in this house alone ,I also have felt I have no one to talk to while my daughters went for 1 month camp from college”. Ms. C also had suicidal ideation related to this. she expressed her feelings “ I once decided to end my life but when I think about what my daughters do after my death I withdrawn from that decision “She also explained that “now I have a peace of mind that I have taken appropriate decision in my life. I am living my life for my two daughters “*

She receives emotional support from her daughters. whenever she felt lonely , she share her thoughts and feelings to her daughters. She wasn't aware about the social support network that may help her in dealing with the issues.

#### **4.5 Case D**

The participant D is a 33 year old woman belonging to middle class family .she had completed till 10<sup>th</sup> standard. She is currently self employed and started a tailoring unit near her home. She gets a monthly salary of about 20,000/- as her own .she is currently living in her own house with her father and mother. She got divorced after one month of her marriage. Her marriage was an intercaste -arranged marriage. Her husband was a Hindu and she was a Christian women. The marriage happened with the support of both the family members. Her husband went abroad after one month of marriage after that the quarrel between them happened. Later, she attempted suicide by ingesting pills. She was in intensive care unit for several months . She wasn't going to work or continued studies for 1 year.. Since the husband was paranoid, he didn't allow her to go for any works and Ms. D said *“whatever I do , he has a doubt towards me , I wasn't even allowed to go to my own home or talk to any neighbors’ , go outside without his permission , he was highly torturing towards me , I couldn't adjust to this character of him...”* during this time , Ms. D decided to went for a counseling but her husband didn't even attended the counseling session .This also impacted her and her relatives didn't supported her in taking the decision of divorce because it was only one month of married life and the relatives and friends compelled her to adjust to the situation . But her own family understands her situation because they were not allowing talking to her daughter. When she decided to apply for the divorce, her husband didn't agree for that. He used the method of sympathy to convince her in changing her decision. But she decided to go for the divorce with the support of her own family. Ms. D said *“my family supported me in taking the decision only because I don't have any kids”*. She also said that *“if I had any kids I would have never taken this decision. I may adjust my life. But I had a problem on how I will face my family because of the early divorce”* she was guilty that her decision was wrong .

The one year after the divorce was the most critical years of her life. Because she used to spend time alone in her home. Since she was only studied up to 10<sup>th</sup> std and was unemployed, she faced challenges in taking life decisions. She stated “ *since I came to my home after these struggles , I used to spend time alone in my room, I didn’t talked to anyone . I spend my time crying in my room. I didn’t go outside . since I don’t have any job or studies . I felt helpless..*” Her relatives also blamed her. She stated “*I was totally disturbed emotionally . So decided to end my life my taking excessive amount of pills . My family members got me to the hospital and saved my life “ .she was in intensive care unit for few months.*

After that she decided to start a tailoring unit as her own in front of her home so that she can spend time in doing her job and get money for her financial needs. She said “*when I started walking in my own feet, my relatives supported me*”. The stigma existed outside her home. While she was attending for some marriage function, she always tells others that she wasn’t married. She said “*during that time I always have a thought of why everyone is seeing me as enemy, why nobody understands what I am going through ,only I know about my situation . Everyone advice me to adjust to my life*”

Currently she didn’t have any financial difficulties. Because she is self employed and also her father is s daily wage worker. Now Ms. D’s family decided for a remarriage and found a partner. Currently her family has taken a loan for her remarriage.

#### **4.6 Case E**

The participant E is a 34 year old Muslim women belonging to lower class family. She is currently doing her master’s degree. She is currently living with her father mother and her two children, one son of age 15 and another son of the 18. She is currently doing part time works also for their living. Ms. E has been divorced recently after getting separated for 10 years. Ms E was married at the age of 15. Ms E stated “*I was married at the age of 15, I couldn’t able to complete my studies during this period. I was given birth to my first child at the age of 17, parenting was also very difficult for me. My husband had extra marital relationship with other women. This affected our life .we have been separated for*

*10 years. During this time , I continued my studies and also taken care for my children. Now I am pursuing my masters and also doing part time job in the weekends”*

Ms.E’s own family didn’t supported her in taking the decision because divorce is a taboo in their concept . she states that “ *whenever I came back to my own home , my parents used to advice me to adjust with him because it may affect the future of my children .*” but after sacrificing a lot she came up to the decision for herself . now she is living with her family in a rented home.

The major challenge faced by her was economic. Because the only way of income for the family is from her. After the divorce, the family is completely dependent on Ms. E. Since she is recently divorced social stigma are not much influenced her. Ms. E stated “ *currently I am living with my family in a rented house. Handling the finances of the family as well as children’s education is the major difficulty. My father is a coolie worker and I am also a part time worker , it is a hard time for me in handling the finances . I have taken an educational loan for the children , paying back the amount is also a big task for me”*

Currently she is also in a psychological distress. The major difficulty is emotional imbalance and unable to make appropriate decision by herself. Even the decision of getting divorce was taken too lately. She had confusions whether the decision was right or wrong. Since she is coming from a patriarchal culture. Her family wasn’t supportive for getting the divorce , they asked her to adjust with their husband even if they know that her husband has extra marital relationship.

Ms. E stated “*I never explained my situation to others because I don’t think anyone will understand my situation . Since I came from Muslim religion, the relatives wouldn’t allow me separate from my marital life. Since I am divorced recently. Everyone is not aware about my situation. I was in a separation for about 10 years. During these times, I was in a confusion to take appropriate decision for myself”*.

Ms. E also have issues regarding single parenthood. she has difficulty in handling children , balancing studies , work and household responsibilities altogether .

## **CHAPTER V: THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

## CHAPTER FIVE : THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Qualitative data analysis is the process in which we move from the raw data that have been collected as part of the research study and use it to provide explanations, understanding and interpretation of the phenomena, people and situation which we are studying. Thematic analysis emphasizes on pinpointing, examining and recording patterns or themes within the data available (Valcheva, 2020). Qualitative Data Analysis is outlined as the method of consistently looking and composing the interview records, observation notes, or completely different non-textual materials that the investigator accumulates to increase the understanding of an event. The process of analyzing qualitative data preponderantly involves writing or categorizing the information. Primarily it involves making sense of massive amounts of data by reducing the amount of raw information, followed by distinctive important patterns, and eventually drawing meaningful knowledge and later building a logical pattern (Pedemkar, 2020).

### 5.2 PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Cases	age	education	Family status	Religion	Community	Occupation	Years after divorce
A	39	BA Literature	Lower	Christian	Rural	Day care worker	Recently divorced
B	45	BA English	Middle	Christian	Urban	Office Assistant	1 year
C	46	10th std	Middle	Hindu	Urban	Office Assistant	2 years
D	33	10 <sup>th</sup> std	Middle	Christian	Urban	Tailoring	3 years
E	35	MA history	lower	Muslim	urban	Part time worker	Recently divorced

Table 1: Personal profile of the participants

The profile of the participants gives a basic idea about their socio-economic background. The researcher conducted five case studies among them, three participants belong to middle class economic background while two from lower class economic background. Two participants completed graduation, one participant is pursuing masters degree, two participants completed schooling. All the participants are earning salary or wages

## **5.3 DISCUSSIONS**

### **RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

**What are the specific social challenges faced by women after divorce and how these challenges impact their post-divorce adjustment?**

#### **THEME 1**

##### Social challenges

All the participants stated that they have faced various social challenges such as social stigma and judgement, single parenting issues, loss of social support, lack of family support. All these problems can be seen as interconnected and significantly impacted in their life. The following sub-themes can be analysed.

##### **Major sub themes.**

###### ➤ Stigma & judgment

All the five cases experienced social stigma from society as well as their family members.

According to Ms. A: “*I never go to any marriage functions after my divorce because as a divorcee, the relatives have a sympathetic approach towards me, so I avoid those social situations.*”

Ms. B stated that “*my husband followed me and brought a home opposite my home and started living with her girlfriend and spread fake news about me that I am having other relations. He also spread this news in my office and the office staffs are seeing me as bad women. His major purpose was to degrade me in front of others.*”



Ms.B also stated :*“ I am afraid of the society , I never go to any marriage function because of this . They always judge me based on the fake news that has been spread from my husband. No one was able to listen or support me ..”*

Ms . C : *the society always considers divorced women as bad , there are still some people who believed what my husband says about me that I have extramarital relationships”*

Ms . D : *“during that time I always have a thought of why everyone is seeing me as enemy, why nobody understands what I am going through ,only I know about my situation . Everyone advice me to adjust to my life”*

Ms. E also have issues related to religion , since she was married at the age of 15 and couldn't completed her studies at that time . her own family and relatives compelled her in marriage

## **Sub-theme 2**

### ➤ Single parenting issues

According to Ms. C , *“ As a single mother , I have learned to deal with every situation by taking up the roles of a father and mother to my daughter. I never made any difficulties for my daughters in providing appropriate guidance .I became more strong &bold in handling situations..”*

Ms . B also faced single parenting struggle during the initial years of divorce . she explained that *“during initial years of separation , I couldn't able to deal with being the sole provider and caregiver for my children ,Balancing work, household responsibilities etc since I didn't have support from my own family , handling my daughters' well being & finances was very difficult for me , because at that time my daughters were little kids.. now I learned to handle them*

Ms. E also have issues regarding single parenthood . she has difficulty in handling children , balancing studies , work and household responsibilities altogether .

Ms D don't have single parenting issues because of not having a child .

All these struggles affected their life in the initial stages of divorce .with proper management of time and with strong commitment towards the children , they learned to handle the issues of single parenthood.All the participants explained that , before getting divorce , they had struggles of handling the work and household jobs. Because they have to face the abuses from their partner as well as from family. After divorce , initially they had difficulty but now they learned to handle the situation and leading a better life.

### **Sub-theme 3**

#### ➤ Lack of family support

Lack of family 's support in dealing with divorce was a challenging experience for the participants .the major reason behind it was the misconceptions of the family members , social stigma , taboo etc

Ms. B stated that “ *even my family didn't supported me in taking the decision . They believed the fake news and I never expected this from them . As a women , leading an independent life without the support of family is the biggest struggle . Because the society never support women who doesn't depend on anyone*

According to Ms C “*my family always advice me to adjust to him . they never understood what I am going through .. but after the divorce , they was with me*”

Ms E explained that : “ *whenever I came back to my own home , my parents used to advice me to adjust with him because it may affect the future of my children .*”

Participant D got the family support because they witnessed her daughter's struggles and the changes that happened to her during this difficult time.

#### • **RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

**What economic difficulties do women encounter after divorce and how do these challenges influence their financial well-being?**

All the participants are currently employed .it was observed that 2 participants belonging to lower class family background are facing various economic challenges like financial

difficulties , Alimony and asset division problems ,managing loans etc these financial concerns also gave rise to psychological distress

The economic challenge faced by the participants also had a relation to factors such as nature of occupation and family background. Those from lower economic background and those working in the informal sector faced more economic challenges as compared to the participants from higher economic background and having a job in the formal sector.

**(table 2 : economic profile of the participants)**

<b>case</b>	<b>Economic background</b>	<b>occupation</b>	<b>Monthly salary</b>	<b>Economic challenges</b>
A	Lower	Day care worker	10,000/-	Payment of rent, educational expenses of children ,hospital expenses of elder son , pending loans .
B	Middle	Office assistant	70,000/-	Able to handle finances, stated no economic problem.
C	Middle	Office assistant	60,000/-	Asset division problems , Ailment issues due to divorce
D	Middle	Tailoring	20,000/-	Pending loans , financial difficulties
E	Lower	Part time worker	10,000/-	Low family income, financially well off, worried about children's education as well as family's expenses.

Table 2: Economic profile of the participants

## **Sub-theme 1**

### ➤ Financial difficulties

Participant A belongs to lower class family and have major financial difficulties like handling the rent of the house , managing children's education, and also daily living . currently she is facing major struggle in handling the hospital expenses of her son . She requested support from the church to repay the hospital bills. she stated that “ *with the help of church, I got money from sponsors and was able to complete the hospital payments . church always helped me in handling the difficulties .*”

With the support of religious organizations, the participant is currently able to handle the expenses.

Ms. E also have financial problems . She is currently pursuing her masters and also doing part time work to handle the finances of the family. She states that “*My father is a coolie worker and I am also a part time worker , it is a hard time for me in handling the finances . I have taken an educational loan for the children , paying back the amount is also a big task for mebut somehow I am able to handle those expenses.*”

Participant D have taken loan for her remarriage, repaying the loans is the major difficulty.

The participants B&D are able to handle the finances since they have a high income job.

## **Sub-theme 2**

### ➤ Alimony and Asset division problems

Participants A and C have issues regarding alimony support and asset division problems.

Ms. A She stated “*it was decided by the court to provide 10,000/- for the children each month by their father . Initially he used to send money but currently we are not getting the money because of his alcoholism he didn't even have much money for his daily living*”. Currently she is able to manage the expenses of the children 's education with the support of church . so she isn't given any complaint against this.

Ms.C stated“ *my father have given his property as a part of dowry in the name of my husband and me, All the loans are closed by me but after the divorce my husband is not willing to share the property into my name* “. She is currently seeking support from a lawyer to deal with this issue.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

#### **What psychological obstracles do women confront after divorce and how these challenges affect their overall mental health?**

Divorce is a major life transition that can trigger a range of emotions and feelings of loss, uncertainty, and vulnerability. All the participants faced various psychological challenges such as emotional distress, loneliness & social isolation, suicidal tendency, fear of future relationships , guilt and sleeplessness.

#### **Sub-theme 1**

##### ➤ Emotional distress:

All the participants have faced emotional distress which affected their overall wellbeing and productivity of life.

Ms.A explained that “*I have no one to express my feelings and to hug*”.she felt that no one is there to support her during this difficult time.

Ms. B said “*I have spent many nights without any sleep*. Due to emotional distress she couldn’t even sleep properly.

Ms.C said “*sometimes I feel that I have no one to share my feelings. In future my two daughters will be married and get settled ... I might live in this house alone ,I also have felt I have no one to talk to while my daughters went for 1 month camp from college*”

Ms. D explained that “*during that time I always have a thought of why everyone is seeing me as enemy, why nobody understands what I am going through ,only I know about my situation . Everyone is advising me to adjust to my life*”.

Participant E also had emotional instability and lack of decision making capacity . she easily get distracted from one decision to another . Extreme mood swings is also the result of this.

Avoiding social situations and loneliness were major results of this emotional distress. Providing a support group or counseling support will be necessary.

## **Sub-theme 2**

### ➤ Loneliness and social isolation

Due to the stigma and lack of meaningful relationship, all the participants have gone through social isolation and loneliness after divorce.

participant A during her initial years of divorce . She used to be alone and avoid social events . She express her feelings by crying in the bathroom. She never expressed herself to others because she knows that nobody will understand her situation.

Ms .B stated “ *I am afraid of the society , I never go to any marriage function because of this . They always judge me based on the fake news that has been spread from my husband. No one was able to listen or support me ..*”

Ms. D stated “ *since I came to my home after these struggles , I used to spend time alone in my room, I didn't talked to anyone . I spend my time crying in my room. I didn't go outside . since I don't have any job or studies . I felt helpless..*”

## **Sub- theme 3**

### ➤ Suicidal tendency

➤ Suicidal tendency is caused due to various conditions such as helplessness , isolation ,loneliness and unable to cope with stresses of daily life. Suicidal tendency could be seen in participant C and D , Participant C had suicidal thoughts and D attempted suicide by ingesting tablets and was in a critical stage.

Ms.C explained :“ *I once decided to end my life but when I think about what my daughters do after my death I withdrawn from that decision.*

Ms. D expressed : *“I was totally disturbed emotionally. So decided to end my life by taking excessive amount of pills . My family members got me to the hospital and saved my life”*

Since the participants have gone through various stresses in life . it affected their mental health also. Seeking mental health support from professionals is necessary.

#### **Sub- theme 4**

##### ➤ Fear of future relationships

All the participants except participant D expressed that they have fear about future relationship as well as remarriage.

Ms.A stated *“ from my past experiences , I have learned that how difficult is to handle a marriage life . I couldn't able to think about a re- marriage . Now I am focusing on how to live alone .my mental health is much important for me. We don't know about how the next relationship will be... I am not willing to take a risk”*

Ms. B's opinion about remarriage was *“I don't believe in the concept of remarriage because from my past experiences I have struggled a lot ... I don't think that getting a new husband will change me and I don't think that he consider my daughter's as his daughter . I can't take a risk with my daughter's life. Now I am living for my daughters. They should get a better life than me.”*

Participant C and D is also fearful about starting a new relationship as well as marriage . leading a better life for their children is the major goal of their life. The past experiences and traumas have made them to be independent

## PATTERN MATCHING AND RIVAL EXPLANATIONS

Table 3: Pattern matching and rival explanations

CASE	Common challenges	Other challenges	Rival explanations
A		Financial problems Alimony issues	Major financial struggle is for the treatment of her son. Since , the participant belongs to lower economic status .
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stigma &amp; judgement</li> <li>➤ Emotional distress</li> <li>➤ Loneliness&amp; social isolation</li> </ul>	Lack of family support	The participant didn't get any support from her own family. her own family members spread hatred towards her in the society which affected her mental health
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fear of future relationships.</li> <li>➤ Guilt</li> </ul>	Suicidal tendency , asset division problem	The participant had fear about what her daughter's marriage and future . she was hopeless about the future of her daughters.
D		Attempted suicide (one time )	Lack of employment and early divorce affected her mental health .the participant felt worthless and unable to face her family.
E		Emotional imbalance Unable to take decision Financial problems	Since ,the participant face economic difficulties , handling her family and children becomes a major challenge .



## THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Sl. No	Themes	Sub-themes
1	Social challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stigma and judgement</li> <li>• Single parenting</li> <li>• Loss of social support</li> <li>• Lack of family support</li> </ul>
2	Economic challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial difficulties</li> <li>• Managing children 's education</li> <li>• Asset division problems, managing loans</li> <li>• Hospital expenses</li> </ul>
3	Psychological challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional distress</li> <li>• Loneliness &amp; social isolation.</li> <li>• Suicidal tendency</li> <li>• Fear of future relationships, guilt and sleeplessness.</li> </ul>

Table 4: Thematic analysis

**CHAPTER VI**  
**FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND**  
**CONCLUSION**

## **CHAPTER SIX : FINDINGS,SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The findings part of the research paper is where the researcher reports on the study's conclusions based on the data obtained as a consequence of the technique she used. Researcher aims to discover answers to the questions raised during the research's initial phase in the findings. This part simply summarizes the findings, without any prejudice or interpretation, and is organized in a logical manner.

### **6.2 MAJOR FINDINGS**

#### **6.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1 : SOCIAL CHALLENGES AND THEIR IMPACT**

- The major findings of the study were the impact of social stigma which affected the entire well being of the women. It can be seen that women experience intense stigma and judgments even from their own family members as well as relatives. The fear of judgment can deter women from seeking social support or participating in social activities, contributing to feelings of isolation and withdrawal from social circles. Since the divorce is seen as taboo in the society. They have a pessimistic view about the society.
- Single parenthood is also a major struggle faced by them , they face difficulty in handling children , balancing studies , work and household responsibilities altogether .but this challenge made them stronger and independent. They learned to cope up with the situations also. Since all the participant is employed , they are handling the family as well as work -life.
- Lack of family support impacted the life of the women in a very bigger way. This also contributed to emotional distress, social isolation etc. the major reason behind this was the existing stigma, taboo and misconceptions of the society. This impacted their daily life also. Own family member's support is necessary to deal with the divorce .

## **6.2.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AND THEIR INFLUENCE**

- The major economic challenges faced by women after divorce significantly impact their financial stability and overall well-being. The major findings were women belonging to lower economic background and those working in the informal sector faced more economic challenges as compared to the participants from higher economic background and having a job in the formal sector.
- The major challenges were handling the financial expenses of children's education, repaying of loans, handling the hospital expenses etc. The financial support from the church has helped them in many ways. Religious institutions have a bigger role in helping the women facing the difficulties.
- Alimony and asset division problems could also be seen in the study which results in unequal distribution of marital assets. While alimony and child support are intended to provide financial support, disagreements or difficulties in obtaining these payments also created financial strain for women and their children.

## **6.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND ITS AFFECT.**

- The major findings of the study were there are certain psychological factors which contributed to various challenges such as emotional distress as a state of intense and overwhelming emotional pain or suffering that significantly impacted on women's mental and physical well-being. This encompasses a range of emotional experiences, including feelings of sadness, anxiety, fear, anger, hopelessness, or despair. This resulted in emotional instability and lack of decision making capacity. Extreme mood

swings were also the result of this. Due to this they Avoids social situations which leads to social isolation and loneliness.

- Due to the stigma and lack of meaningful relationship, all the participants have gone through social isolation and loneliness after divorce. They used to spend time alone and avoid social events. Due to this, suicidal thoughts were also formed. These thoughts affect their mental health and also lead to distress.
- The past experiences and traumas impacted their concepts about future relationship and remarriage. The experience of divorce created apprehension and fear about entering into new romantic relationships. They become guarded or hesitant in pursuing new partnerships, fearing potential future heartbreak.

### **6.3 SUGGESTIONS**

- Efforts to alleviate social isolation and loneliness should involve community engagement programs, social events, and initiatives that encourage women to participate in social activities. It is also important to raise awareness about challenges faced by women after divorce through community outreach campaigns to address the stigma .
- Support systems such as support groups, community engagement programs, and initiatives that promote social connections and reduce stigma can be implemented.
- To empower them, interventions like financial literacy programs, career counseling, and access to microloans can help women achieve financial security and independence.
- Legal assistance can also be provided by collaborating with legal experts to provide information about legal rights and options .
- Policies that ensure fair and equitable asset division and provide affordable childcare support can ease economic burdens.
- Counseling and therapy services can provide emotional support and aid in healing.

- Parenting workshops that focuses on effective communication, co -parenting skills and self-esteem-building programs can enhance coping skills and promote positive parenting after divorce.
- Teaching self care techniques to help women managing stress , promote mental health. Practicing self care is also important to improve self esteem and to deal with daily life stressors.
- Assisting women in creating long term plans for their education , career and financial stability.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

Social workers can play a major role in providing support, knowledge and interventions to address the challenges faced by women after divorce

- Social workers can provide individual counseling and support groups to help women cope with their emotions. They can teach coping strategies and offer a safe space for women to express their feelings.
- Social workers can help women create budgeting plans, provide information about financial assistance programs, and offer job placement services or career counseling to help them become financially independent.
- Social workers can help women understand their legal rights, provide mediation services to improve co-parenting communication, and offer parenting education to ensure the well-being of the children involved.
- Social workers can Advocate for policies that support divorced women's rights, access to resources, and protection against discrimination.
- Organize social events or workshops to help women build new social connections and combat feelings of isolation.

### **6.4 CONCLUSION**

The study highlights the difficulties experienced by women after divorce. Women face numerous challenges after divorce that can significantly impact their lives. These challenges are often a result of the emotional, financial, and social changes that accompany

the end of a marriage. , For the study ,qualitative research and case study analysis were employed. All the 5 respondents described about the major challenges that they faced during this phase of life.The researcher was able to empathetically understand and learn about the challenges .This dissertation has delved into the multifaceted challenges faced by women after divorce and has offered valuable insights into their experiences from a social work perspective. Through an in-depth exploration of various dimensions encompassing social, economic and psychological aspects, this study has shed light on the complexities that women encounter during this transitional phase of their lives.

It is important for society to recognize and address these challenges faced by women after divorce. Providing support systems, resources, and legal protections can help women rebuild their lives, regain their confidence, and create a positive future after divorce. Additionally, fostering a culture of empathy, understanding, and non-judgment can go a long way in alleviating the social stigma and creating a more supportive environment for women who have gone through a divorce. Social workers can collaborate with community organizations, government agencies , legal experts and mental health professionals to provide a comprehensive network of support for women facing challenges after divorce .The outcomes of this study confirm the critical role that social workers and researchers may play in promoting positive transformation and enabling women to effectively deal with the challenging journey of post-divorce living. Let this dissertation act as an idea for significant improvements in the lives of divorced women and others as we strive for a society with greater equity and kindness.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDIX**



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbie E. Goldberg; Katherine R. Allen; Julianna Z. Smith; (2021). *Divorced and separated parents during the COVID-19 pandemic*
- Amato, P. R., 2000. "The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 1269-1287.)
- Amato, P. R. (2010). Research on divorce: Continuing trends and new developments. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 650-666.
- Brandth, B., & Kvande, E. (2002). Social construction of work-family conflict among Norwegian women and men in managerial positions. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 9(1), 63-86.
- Brand, J. E., 2015. "The Far-Reaching Impact of Divorce." *Demography*, 52(6), 895-928.)
- Bronwen Lichtenstein; Jayne Lucke; Deborah Loxton; (2021). *Women and divorce: financial coping from midlife to older age . Journal of Women & Aging*
- Concept of divorce and Indian society, Souvik Chatterjee, 2019)
- DeMaris, A. (2007). *Alone together: How marriage in America is changing*. Harvard University Press.
- Emery, R. E. (1999). *Marriage, divorce, and children's adjustment*. Sage Publications.
- Hoits, P. A., 1995. "Stress, Coping, and Social Support Processes: Where Are We? What Next?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 35, 53-79.)
- Jacob, S., & Chattopadhyay, S. (2016). Marriage Dissolution in India; Evidence from Census 2011. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1(33), 25-27.
- Kalmijn, M. (2018). Stigma and divorce: The influence of enacted and anticipated stigma on divorce decisions. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(4), 796-813.
- Leahy-Warren, P. (2014). Social support theory. In J. J. Fitzpatrick & G. McCarthy (Eds.), *Theories guiding nursing research and practice: Making nursing knowledge development explicit* (pp. 85–101). Springer Publishing Company.

- Mauldin, T. A., & Kposowa, A. J. (2013). Divorce and poverty rates across time: An examination of temporal variation in the socioeconomic consequences of divorce for women. *Social Forces*, 92(2), 731-758.
- Manning, W. D., & Smock, P. J. (2000). "Swapping" families: Serial parenting and economic support for children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(1), 111-122.
- Mato, P. R., 2010. "Research on Divorce: Continuing Trends and New Developments." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 650-666.)
- Mock, P. J., Manning, W. D., & Gupta, S., 1999. "The Effect of Marriage and Divorce on Women's Economic Well-Being." *American Sociological Review*, 64(6), 794-812.)
- Ngurthangpuii, & Geetha, V. J. (2017). Divorce Among Men and Women in Lawngtlai District, Mizoram: A Sociological Investigation into The Causes. *International Journal of Engineering Development and Research*, 5 (3), 1080-1086.
- Raj, M. (2014). Counselling Practice in Family Courts: Conflicting Interests among Key Persons. Paper presented at the National Convention on 'Changing Scenario of Marriage and Family in India: Perspectives from Family Court Marriage Counselors', TISS, Mumbai.
- Ramachandrappa. S. (2012). Causes and Consequences of Divorce in Bangalore City - A Sociological Approach. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4 (4), 6-9.
- Ranga, P. D. (2014). Divorce under Personal Laws in India: A Comparative Study. A thesis submitted to Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak
- Recent or Imminent Separation and Intimate Violence Against Women: A Conceptual Overview and Some Canadian Examples. *Violence Against Women*, 3(6), 566–589.
- Rhode, D. L. (2004). *Access to justice*. Oxford University Press.
- SEVER, A. (1997). Recent or Imminent Separation and Intimate Violence Against Women: A Conceptual Overview and Some Canadian Examples. *Violence Against Women*, 3(6), 566–589.

- Smart, C. (2007). *Personal life: New directions in sociological thinking*. Polity Press.
- Somayeh Jaberi; Ozra Etemadi; Maryam Fatehizade; Ali Rabbani Khorasgani; (2021). *Iranian Women's Divorce Style: A Qualitative Study*
- Stack, S., & Eshleman, J. R. (1998). Marital status and happiness: A 17-nation study. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 60(2), 527-536.
- Thadathil, Aneesh; Sriram, Sujata (2019). Divorce, Families and Adolescents in India: A Review of Research. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*.
- Umberson, D., & Williams, K., 1999. "Family Status and Social Support Networks." In *Social Support and Health*, pp. 374-391. Academic Press.)
- Vasudevan, A. (2015). Shocking divorces in Malayalam Film Industry. *Times of India*, Mumbai, August-18.
- Vasudevan, B., Devi, G. M., Bhaskar, A., Areekal, B., Lucas, A., & Chintha, (2015). Causes of divorce: A descriptive study from central Kerala. *Journal of Evolution of Medical and Dental Sciences*, 4(20), 3418-3426.
- Yang, Li-Ling (2008). The Life Stories of Motherhood Among Divorced Women in Taiwan. *Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(3), 220–230

# ANNEXURES

## TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

### CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN AFTER DIVORCE IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT .

#### **Central research question**

What are the Social, Economic and Psychological challenges faced by women after divorce?

#### **Specific research question**

1. What are the specific social challenges faced by women after divorce and how these challenges impact their post - divorce adjustment?
2. What economic difficulties do women encounter after divorce and how do these challenges influence their financial wellbeing?
3. What psychological obstacles do women confront after divorce and how these challenges affect their overall mental health?

#### **Socio – demographic details**

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Level of education
- ▶ Employment status
- ▶ Community
- ▶ Family income

- ▶ Years of being divorced.

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **Social challenges**

1. How did you deal with the divorce and what are the major social challenges faced?
2. With whom are you living currently?
3. Did your family support you in taking the decision?
4. Do you face any difficulty in attending social events because of the stigma?
5. What are the coping strategies used to deal with the issue?
6. What are the challenges faced by you as a single mother?
7. Have you faced any discrimination from workplace because of the divorce?
8. What are the common societal stereotypes and stigmas that you encounter?
9. What are some of the difficulties you face in co-parenting arrangements after divorce?
10. What are some of the cultural and social expectations that you struggle with?
11. How does the post-divorce social support network differ for women compared to men?
12. How does the division of household responsibilities change for women after divorce?
13. What are the social implications regarding remarriage and dating after divorce?

### **Economic challenges**

1. What are the economic challenges that you face?
2. Are you currently employed?
3. Do you have any other source of income? What are they?
4. Do your family support you financially?
5. Are you taken any loans? What are they?
6. Do you have ration cards?
7. How do you manage your finances?
8. From whom do you get financial assistance and how?
9. How do you handle your child's educational expenses?

10. What are some of the barriers that divorced women encounter when reentering the workforce or seeking employment opportunities?
11. How does the division of marital assets and property during divorce affect financial situations?
12. What are the challenges divorced women face in terms of securing affordable housing and maintaining a stable living situation?
13. How does the financial responsibility of child support or alimony impact women's economic circumstances after divorce?

### **Psychological challenges**

1. What are the common psychological challenges experienced by you following a divorce?
2. What are the emotional conflicts that you face during this time?
3. How does the emotional toll of divorce affect your self-esteem and self-confidence?
4. Do you have a feeling of loneliness in your life? what are some of the factors that contribute to feelings of loneliness and isolation?
5. How do you deal with stressful situations in your life?
6. What are some coping mechanisms or strategies that can help to manage the emotional challenges of post-divorce life?
7. Do you have a feeling of insecurity in handling social situations?
8. How does your children deal with divorce?
9. What type of feeling do you have mostly?
10. Do you have any insecure feeling from your family members ?how do you manage them?
11. From whom do you receive emotional support ?