

Divorce Phenomenon Among Young Couples (Analysis of Family Motives and Meanings on Divorce Women in Bandung)

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Abstract. Family is the smallest unit in the society. Many families are less able to carry out their roles and functions, resulting disharmony in developing their families until the occurrence of divorce. Nowadays divorce in the family which once considered taboo is often happened. As reported by Kompas.com at the last five years divorce has been increasing up to 52%, and mostly the majority (70%) being filed by the wives. Furthermore Kompas.com reported that according to Research and Development Department of the Ministry of Religion Affairs that of the approximately two millions married couples, 15% of them are divorced. This research focuses on the young couples' divorce in Bandung. The method used in this research is qualitative method that intends to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects. The approach used is phenomenology within the concept of symbolic interaction theory. The main task of phenomenology, according to Husserl, is to connect humans with reality. Those who are used as informants in this research are the women who have experienced divorce and are in the area of Jatinangor. Referring to the data and the results of data analysis, the meaning of family is to pour out love and share each others with sincerity and mutual understanding. In addition, in the family there are mutual common goals. Family is the most comfortable place to share good and bad stories. This is understandable. The divorce suit made by these women is of course made for the meanings what other people have done to them. The women ask for divorce, if seen from this motive, can be said that it is based on their feelings and judgements during their roles as wives. This means that the actions of their husbands make them understand and interpret these actions.

Keywords: Family Motives, Family Meanings, Phenomenology, Symbolic Interaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Family is the smallest unit in the society. There are many problems in the family giving negative impacts and

resulting disharmony. The definition of family based on the origin words put forward by Ki Hajar Dewantara[1], that family originally is from Javanese language which is formed by two

words, namely *kawula* and *warga*. Many families are less capable in carry out their roles and functions, resulting in disharmony in building their families properly; therefore, divorce in the family occurs.

Divorce in the family once was considered taboo, but nowadays it has frequently occurred. Kompas.Com reported that at the last five years divorce in the family has been increasing up to 52%, and mostly the majority (70%) being filed by the wives. Moreover, Kompas.com also reported that according to Research and Development Department of the Ministry of Religion Affairs that of two millions of married couples, 15% of them are divorced.

This divorce problem considered as not only religion problem, but also social problem. Dariyo[2] said that even though religious teachings prohibit divorce, the reality often cannot be denied that divorce always occurs in couples who are legally married. It doesn't matter whether they were in a relationship for a long time or not, romantic or not, and married grandly or not, divorce is considered the best way for certain couples who are unable to deal with problems of marital conflict or marital conflict. Throughout the history of human life, divorce cannot be stopped and continues to occur, so that many people feel traumatized, hurt, disappointed, depressed and may experience mental disorders due to the divorce.

Republika reported that the divorce cases in Bandung have placed on the first rank in Indonesia. Referring to the record of the High Court in 2010, it has encredibly increased 100% more than the previous year. This phenomenon of divorce has even occurred on the young married couples that based on the Islamic Guidance of the Ministry of Religion Affairs the young marriages are prone to divorce.

From the news found in *Pikiran Rakyat* the number of divorce recorded by the High Court Bandung region has been increasing. In 2014 the number of divorce is 7.000 cases. It was increasing from the previous year 5000 cases. This amount is the same as the cases in Cimahi, meanwhile in the city of Bandung taken from *Beda.Com* it was found that in the High Court first class in Bandung during five months (January – May 2012) at least there is 1.219 cases have been decided from the court.

The increasing number of divorces of young couples every year needs serious attention because of the fragility of family integrity. This is what attracted the researchers to conduct the research with the title of *Divorce Phenomenon among Young Couples in Bandung*.

The phenomenon of divorce among young couples in Bandung can be studied from a communication perspective. There are several theoretical frameworks that are used as references to study this phenomenon. Some researchers use a phenomenological perspective which seeks to understand how humans construct

important meanings and concepts in an inter subjectivity framework (our understanding of the world is formed by our relationships with other people)[3]. In addition to the phenomenological point of view, the next theoretical reference used is Symbolic Interaction. This Symbolic Interaction Theory can see how young couples, especially women, interpret the concept of family and post-divorce motives. Due to the Symbolic Interaction Theory, it can reveal the meaning that comes from interactions.

A brief definition of the three basic ideas of the symbolic interaction, including: (1) Mind is the ability to use symbols that have the same social meaning, where each individual must develop their mind through interactions with other individuals, (2) Self is the ability to reflect on each individual's self from an assessment of the viewpoint or opinion of others, and (3) Society is a network of social relationships that are created, built, and constructed by each individual in the community, and each individual is involved in the behavior that they choose actively and voluntarily, which in turn leads people to take roles in their society. Three concepts are raised in symbolic interaction theory, which are (1) the importance of meaning for human behavior, (2) the importance of the concept of self, and (3) the relationship between individuals and society.

2. METHOD

Research method : The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach to raise and understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject being researched. The subject of this research are young divorce couples in Bandung.

Data of the Research : The data collection in this research carried out by various techniques, namely:

1. In-depth interview. This technique is used to obtain adequate data in the field. Therefore, the research team conducted in-depth interviews with the respondents.
2. Documentation Study. Examining the collection of documentation related to divorce issues that occur during the research.

Research Resources: Researchers conducted the research on young divorce women in Bandung. As for those who are used as respondents in this research are as many as 6 women who have experienced divorce. The six respondents live in Jatiningor area. Selection of the sources is based on the status of the respondents who are divorced or widowed. The respondents' identities are as follows:

Table 1. Identities of the Respondents

No.	Name	Gender	Age	Address
1	Devi Novi	Female	33 y.o	Cecalengka
2	Dewi Aira	Female	28 y.o	Cisekaloa DU
3	Alya	Female	33 y.o	Rancaeke
4	Nisa	Female	28 y.o	Ciberu
5	Lita	Female	35 y.o	Ciseke jatinangor
6	Yulianti	Female	27 y.o	Sayang jatinangor

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Family Meanings

Family has a significant meaning for each individual; moreover, it is built based on marriage. The decision to get married definitely started from knowing relationship.

As one of our resources, Devi Novi (33 years old) mentioned :

“ For me, family has an important meaning where I can express my full love and attention to all the members of my family; therefore, they are truly important. In the family there is a sincerity and understanding relationship. This was my feeling towards marriage life when I hadn’t got married.”
(Interview on Wednesday, May 11th, 2019).

The similar meaning of family also expressed by Dewi Aira (28 years old) as follows:

She thought that family has a very significant and valuable meaning for her to share the feeling of love within all the family members. It is a place to

share, understand and give support and motivation among them. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11th, 2019).

From above description of the meanings of family for the respondents, it could be concluded that family has important and valuable meanings for the divorced women. They previously had their own perceptions, hopes and meanings of family when they firstly stepped on their marriage lives.

3.2. Family Interaction

To come to the marriage life, young couples have their own phases towards the process of getting to know each other. A fact shows that the length of dating relationship whether short or long is not a warranty for the length of the family relationship. The length of the dating relationship of each couples is different.

A factual statement is said by Devi Novi, 33 years old :
“I had known my spouse for two years before we got married. When we were dating, I knew him

as a caring person. My family also accepted him well. I could see this when he came to my house and met my parents. After dating for a couple of years, we decided to get married, and at that time I was 19 years old.”

Another statement related to the dating time, before getting married, mentioned by Dewi Aira, 28 years old woman said :

“I had known my spouse for one year before we got married. My first impression was that my spouse was a good man, and he was full attention to me. After he met my parents, we decided to get married. It was when I was 20 years old.” (Interview on Wednesday 11th, 2019)

The other statement about the dating relationship of the young couples before marriage said by Alya, 32 years old:

“My husband and I had known each other for a year before we decided to get married. We dated and tried to know our characteristics. It was such a wonderful moment for me to know him.” (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

Referring to the facts mentioned above, the dating relationships of those young couples are approximately between one to two years. This period of dating is considered enough to know and understand each others. Unfortunately, the reality was different, the length of the dating time of each young couples can not guarantee that those couples can understand well the behavior and characteristics of their spouses.

The family meaning also built based on the preparation before entering marriage life. Those were well- prepared by the respondent, the orientation was more to materials rather than immaterials.

The following statement was expressed by Nisa, 33 years old:

“For preparation... well, I thought that he had worked, and therefore, I believed that he could fulfill our needs as a family. So, I didn’t have a lot of preparation, because we had known each other as well, I assumed this was my preparation.” (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

Dewi Aira, a 28 years old woman, told that she and her spouse got married without some preparation. Her spouse hadn’t got any job. She just believed him because they had known each other. She said that :

”I was brave enough to enter marriage life although I knew our parents didn’t give us fully support.” (Interview on May 11th, 2019).

Material preparation before marriage was explained by Alya, 32 years old.

She said that she had prepared well her materials by saving her money to support her marriage life. She also worked as an employee in a manufacture company. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11th, 2019).

Meanwhile, Nisa, 28 years old, also shared her understanding of material preparation before her marriage :

“My preparation before marriage, first, I consulted with my parents, then I asked my friends’ opinions. Finally, of course, I prepared materially.” (Interview on Wednesday, May 11th, 2019).

In marriage life, then there were various marriage life problems occurred. When the dating relationship, the interaction seemed running in good ways, but as the time goes and the quality time of family interaction is decreasing significantly, divorce becomes a choice. Related to this, Devi Novi, 33 years old, said that :

At the beginning of our marriage life, our interaction went smoothly. My husband gave his fully attention for me, and we built a good communication. He always was honest every time we had problems although he was a quite person. But, it was changed after we had a child. Our relationship was no longer open, and he got emotional easily when I tried to ask something to him. I had tried to ask him nicely in our relax time, but it didn’t change anything. I became so confused at that time. This happened for more or less two years. When our child was three years old, he divorced me because we were no longer compatible for each other.” (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

A similar statement about her marriage relationship said by Dewi Aira, 28 years old :

At the beginning our marriage was running well, he was nice, but at the end he was easily angry. Sometimes he hit me. Honestly I only felt happy in our couple months of marriage. After that, our interaction was running bad, most of the time we argued, and he often locked me in the room. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11th, 2019).

In the beginning of the marriage life usually the process of interaction was running well and smooth, but as the time of marriage took place the process of interaction had some problems. It was mentioned by Alya, 32 years old :

After marriage, our relationship was wonderful, but after we moved to Bali, our relationship became cold. As a wife, I tried to be patient, but my husband's behavior in making relationship with me was very cold. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

As known that the relationship or interaction in the family is not always good, sometimes there is a problem arise. One of the negative factor and becomes the worst case in the family interaction is dishonesty. This case was mentioned by Nisa, 28 years old :

After getting married, our interaction run normal, and my husband was always at home. After he worked, he always directly went home. Our interaction was normal and smooth. But, after five years of marriage, there were some problems arise. Usually when it was pay day, he always gave his full salary to me, but at that time it was less. I asked him and he said his friends borrowed the money and some other reasons. I didn't dare to ask him more because I respected him as my husband. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

There is spouse interaction that runs normally after marriage, as told by Lita, 35 years old :

My interaction with my spouse after marriage started normal, and I thought it was similar with the other couples. Of course everything was fine. We had two children, boy and girl, I felt my life was perfect. (Interview on Thursday, May 12, 2019).

Some family interaction after marriage also get violence action from their spouse as explained by Yulianti, 27 years old :

My relationship with my spouse after marriage was not good. There were a lot of conflict occurred. My husband often went home late at night. When I asked him, he was angry. He got emotional, and he often hit me. At the end I couldn't stand on this condition longer. (Interview on Thursday, May 12, 2019).

There are some statements which mentioned that their relationship or interaction after marriage is colored by dishonesty. Their spouses had making affairs with

another women. From the interview result, there were two respondents who had this kind of interactions. They are Alya, 32 years old, and Lita, 35 years old. These are their interview results.

Alya said that there was dishonesty in her marriage relationship. My husband and I relationship after our child born had changed. My husband seemed different. I found that he had another woman. I felt sad and hurt, sir. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

The same case told by Lita :

Lita said that of course there was dishonesty in her marriage. Before marriage her spouse was kind and caring, for example he always took her to her place of work because she was a shop assistant. After marriage and having two children, our interaction and my husband's attention became lesser and lesser although he was still giving his attention to the children. Exactly in year 2014 he finally said that he had got his second married. I felt shock, and I lost my spirit of life. I didn't accept his second marriage, and I didn't want to have sister-in-marriage. (Interview on Thursday, May 12, 2019).

Besides physical violence and dishonesty, there is another case occurred between young married couples. The case is related to parents' involvement towards the relationship of the married couples.

Nisa, 28 years old, said as follows:

Yes, there is. Before marriage, my relationship with my husband was limited. My parents are conservative people who always took carefully care their children twenty-four hours. After marriage we surely communicated with them intensively. Unfortunately, at the end our relationship was broken because my husband family's involvement in our marriage life. My parents-in-law always involved in our internal family problem, and I couldn't accept it because my husband always put the blame in me. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

3.3. Motives and Meanings of Divorce

The phenomenon of divorce for many married couples is not their intention, though this is the best way for them to be chosen. From six respondents, they variously have their own perception in understanding the meaning of divorce.

As told by Devi Nove, 33 years old :

For me, when I got married, I wanted to be happy, and I believed everyone had the same intention when they decided to get married, having a comfortable life, Sharing with the love one in good and bad time, and having someone to take care of me. I never thought about divorce. This divorce, for myself, was the form of failure, my failure in life, although it happened also to another couples. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

Devi also told the incident and reason of choosing to divorce :

The decision to divorce was our final choice because there were always conflicts between us, and my husband said that he felt uncomfortable with me. He finally decided to divorce. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

The major reason to divorce are as follows :

The reason to divorce was because there was not compatibility among us, and I felt neglected by my husband. Divorce was the final choice for us. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

Be different with Devi Novi, Dewi Aira understands divorce as her best choice. It was explained as follows:

I was very happy when I got married. I dreamed of a simple happy life with a loving husband. Although in reality I differently faced and felt the marriage life. So, I thought divorce was my best choice. I am young, and I still have a lot of hopes to get better person in my life. (Interview on Wednesday, May 11, 2019).

The meaning of divorce understood by the respondents was as the way out or solution from the problem of family dysfunctional. Divorce always brings consequences for the children. From six respondents in this research, they had their divorces when their children were still young children under five years old, so the children upbringing rights are on their mothers.

3.4. Analysis of Family Meanings

From the statements of the respondents regarding the family meanings, most of them believe that to build a family is to pour loves and share good and bad things with sincerity and understanding. There are also mutual goals in the family to be achieved together. Family is the most comfortable place to go to and to share every moments in life, good and bad. This is understandable for the family

meanings built by the respondents based on the concept shared by Schut in Olanrewajo[4] that put humans in subjective experiences in doing their actions and taking their decisions in their daily lives. Humans have the ability to do and to be doing. The choice of marriage is one of the humans' conscious willingness done to achieve their goals in life.

The family meaning for the divorce women analyzed using the symbolic interaction theory in the concept of self is that they understand the family meaning as the comfortable place to pour the goodness things in themselves for their love ones, to pour the loves and to share every things whether good or bad with sincerity, honesty and understanding. In the family they can hold each other, make mutual goals to be achieved together and share stories and laughter. This shows that the divorce women as individual create their own way and perception about family, and this concept of family they build from their series of individual interactions with the other individuals.

3.5. Family Interaction

All the divorced women from the six respondents show that their interactions with their spouse had occurred since they were dating (before marriage). The process of interaction in this dating period happened between one to two years, and it means that each of the couples had known each other and understood the individual behavior and characters of their spouse.

It is factually shown that the interactions of the divorce women before and after marriage have differences. Before marriage, their interactions run smooth and normal; but after marriage the interactions has changed, the frequent occurrence of conflict, dishonesty of the spouse, parents' involvement and also physical brutality.

Referring to those facts above that the interactions built by the divorced women, before and after their marriage with their spouse, was related to the family meanings that they have understood. They can distinguish their interactions before and after marriage. It is correspondent with the assumption of LaRossa in West and Turner[5] that humans act to the other humans based on the meaning of relationship they carried and showed. This strengthened by the concept of self that all individuals develop their self-concept through their interactions with other individuals. Therefore, the divorced women have their own self-concept, and it means that they have effort to understand who they are and how they should behave or how they should make their own decision in this situation and condition. The interaction of the divorced women during their marriage life influenced by the value of socio-culture. This is an evidence that in the case of their divorce the women are more in the position of being hurt.

3.6. Motives and Meaning of Divorce

The motives and meanings of divorce from each respondents are different. For the motives of the woman ask for divorce to her husband, based on the information given, each of the respondents mentions her motives as follows :

1. There is no compatibility and feeling neglected
2. There is no happiness
3. There is a betrayal from her husband
4. There is a strong pressure from the husband's family
5. There is a polygamy issue in the marriage.
6. There is high emotional attitude and violence from her husband.

The motives of divorce analyzed by the approach of phenomenology from show two meanings in the concept of motive, which are *in order to* motive that means this motive becomes someone's foothold in doing something; and *because* motive that means a backward motive based on experience. The divorce motive for woman, if connected with symbolic interaction theory particularly related to self-concept assumption, gives an important motive to behave. This important motive to behave is related to the thought that based on the beliefs, values, feelings, and self-assessment that gives impact to the behavior. Regarding to these six motives, the women who ask for divorce are taking their efforts to express their feelings and values during their roles as wives.

There are five meanings of divorce clearly described by the respondents in this research. They are :

1. Divorce is a failure in the family
2. Divorce is the best choice, the woman is still young and wants to be happy
3. The woman wants to be free from the feeling of hurt
4. Divorce is not your goal, something you want to avoid
5. Divorce hurts.

Those divorced women have their meanings of their divorce. According to Symbolic Interaction Theory, George Herbert Mead, reveals that every meaning is important for understanding human behavior. Self-concept and the relationship between individuals and society are important. The divorce suits filed by the respondents definitely made from the meanings done by

other people to them. This can be said that the husbands' actions make their wives understand and interpret those actions.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Referring to the data and the result of analysis, it can be concluded that the meaning of family is to spour loves and share each other in good and bad times with sincerity and understanding. Moreover, there are always family goals to be achieved together for tightening the bonding of the family. Family is the most comfortable place you can go to and share every thing with each member of the family. It should be understood and applied. The interactions among the family members for the divorced women before and after marriage have differences. Before marriage, the divorce women feel that their interactions with their spouse run smooth and normal, but after their marriage, the interactions are changed. Conflict becomes daily consumption. Dishonesty occurred. Communication is not good. There are also brutality in family and involvement of the parents (parents-in-law) in their relationship. Furthermore, the motives and meanings of divorce of the women are seen from the motives, themselves, based on the women's feeling and their values of their spouses and the marriage lives during the roles as wives. The accusation of divorce filed by the women actually done due to the meanings of family interaction showed by another person. It means their spouses' (husbands) actions in understanding the motives and the meanings of family make the women (the wives) understand those actions.

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