



Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam
Volume 6 No. 1. January-June 2022
ISSN: 2549 – 3132; E-ISSN: 2549 – 3167
DOI: 10.22373/sjhk.v6i1.12467

Community Support For Divorced Women: A Study in Riau Province

Jumni Nelli

Fakultas Syari'ah dan Hukum, Pascasarjana UIN Suska Riau

Sobhan Lubis

Fakultas Syari'ah UIN Imam Bonjol Padang

Email: jumni.nelli@uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract: This paper aims to demonstrate how the Malay community's perspective on divorce once stigmatized for women and now supported by the community has changed. This study is essential in answering why Riau Malay women file for divorce, how the Riau Malay community feels about the occurrence of female divorce, and how public perceptions of female divorce affect them. The exchange theory, which emphasizes the analysis of costs and rewards in executing rights and obligations as husband and wife, was used to perform this field study on the Malay community in Riau province. According to the study's findings, women choose to file for divorce for several reasons. Because their husbands abandoned them for an extended period, 60 percent of women do not have husbands. The community does not support divorce, according to preliminary field data. However, the perception that society accepts divorce proposals from women has changed in light of what actually occurred. According to exchange theory analysis, husband-wife interactions will be harmonious if each person receives a reward for the cost incurred. In this case, the rights exchanged and duties assumed are equal. If there is an imbalance, it will impact the community's perception that women equally have the right to divorce. As a result, the Riau Malay community's perspective on women filing for divorce, which was previously frowned upon, has changed to one of support.

Keywords: Women, divorced, views, society, Riau

|| Submitted: February 05, 2022 || Accepted: June 15, 2022 || Published: June 27, 2022

<http://jurnal.arraniry.ac.id/index.php/samarah>

Abstrak: Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk membuktikan terjadi perubahan pandangan masyarakat melayu terhadap perceraian, yang dulunya dianggap tabu dilakukan perempuan, bergeser menjadi mendapat dukungan masyarakat. Penelitian ini penting untuk menjawab rumusan masalah tentang alasan yang mengitari perempuan Melayu Riau mengajukan perceraian, sikap masyarakat Melayu Riau tentang maraknya cerai gugat yang diajukan oleh perempuan serta dampak pandangan masyarakat tentang perceraian yang diajukan oleh perempuan. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan yang dilakukan pada masyarakat Melayu di Provinsi Riau, dengan menggunakan teori pertukaran yang menekankan analisisnya pada cost dan reward dalam pelaksanaan hak dan kewajiban sebagai suami isteri. Hasil penelitian menjelaskan bahwa terdapat beberapa alasan perempuan mengambil keputusan mengajukan perceraian. Ternyata 60 % perempuan pada realitasnya sudah tidak mempunyai suami atau karena sudah ditinggalkan suami selama beberapa tahun. Data awal lapangan menunjukkan kurang setujuan masyarakat terhadap perceraian, namun melihat realitas yang terjadi pada perempuan, terjadi pergeseran pandangan bahwa masyarakat mendukung perceraian yang diajukan oleh perempuan. Analisis teori pertukaran menyatakan interaksi suami isteri akan berjalan harmonis bila masing-masing individu mendapatkan reward dari cost yang sudah diberikannya. Dalam hal ini bentuk pertukaran hak yang seimbang dengan kewajiban yang diberikan. Bila terjadi ketidak-seimbangan, berdampak pada keyakinan masyarakat bahwa perceraian bukan hanya hak laki-laki, tetapi juga menjadi milik perempuan. Sehingga pandangan masyarakat melayu Riau bahwa dulu tabu perceraian dilakukan oleh perempuan menjadi dukungan terhadap perempuan.

Kata kunci: Perempuan, bercerai, pandangan, masyarakat, Riau

Introduction

The Riau Malay community is identical to the Islamic religious community. In the past, divorce was taboo for Malay women, especially those who preceded to file a divorce suit. However, if we observe the phenomena developing at this time, there is a tendency in the divorce process. It is the wife who first sues for divorce from the husband. Specifically, at the Pekanbaru Religious Court, research data in 2016 showed that 60% of divorces were judicial divorces (divorce filed by women), and the remaining 40% were cases of *talāq* divorce (repudiation divorce/divorce filed by men).¹ It even increases every year, as seen from the initial data carried out as follows:

¹ Yuni, Pekanbaru Religious Court Information Officer. Interview, October 3, 2019

Divorce Data from 2018 to 2020:

Year	Repudiation Divorce	Judicial Divorce
2018	424 cases	1236 cases
2019	461 cases	1412 cases
2020	457 cases	1323 cases

Pekanbaru Religious Court Documents from 2018 to 2020

According to the data for 2018, there were 1236 judicial divorce cases and 424 repudiation divorce cases. Then, 461 repudiation divorce cases were filed in 2019, compared to 1412 judicial divorce cases. In addition, repudiation divorces accounted for 457 cases in 2020, whereas judicial divorces accounted for 1323 cases, or even more than 70% of all divorces.² There are more than twice as many judicial divorce cases yearly than repudiation divorce cases.

It is an undeniable fact that women/wives are the ones who suffer the effects of divorce, both financially and socially, if divorce can no longer be avoided.³ Additionally, it appears that the community, particularly the Riau Malay community, has accepted the divorce that women undergo as normal based on the development of modern life. Even women who file for divorce receive assistance from various parties, including family, friends, coworkers, local authorities, and legal aid agencies.

Is this a typical phenomenon brought on by globalization-influenced cultural changes? When there is no agreement between the husband and wife, will it eventually revert to old customs, or will it give rise to a new society that views divorce as the best course of action? Could it be that Malay women now have a new awareness of women's liberation movements that have evolved since the 20th century? These wives no longer value being completely involved in family affairs. They demand greater welfare and education, as well as equality with males regarding human rights.⁴

The topic of “The Support of the Riau Malay Community in the Province of Divorced Women” is intriguing and deserves to be investigated. This study is necessary to respond to why Riau Malay women file for divorce, how the Riau Malay community feels about the increase in female divorce lawsuits and the effect of public opinion on female divorce filings.

Three studies can be found in the body of prior research on divorced women in general. First, a study describes the causes of divorce in women. Studies by

² *Ibid.*

³ Khoiril Abror, “Cerai Gugat dan Dampaknya bagi Keluarga,” *Asas* 11, no. 01 (2019): 24–37, <https://doi.org/10.24042/asas.v11i01.4640>.

⁴ T.O Ihromi, *Bunga Rampai Sosiologi Keluarga* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2014), p. 34.

Muthayyib Amal⁵, Muhammad Suhaimi⁶, Nibras Syafriani⁷, and Hafsa et al.⁸ are included in this category. This study concludes that women file for divorce because of marital discord brought on by domestic violence, the economy, and other causes.

The second is divorce performed by female migrant workers from Indonesia, who are represented by Agus Toni⁹ and Sulthon Miladiyanto¹⁰. According to this study, poor communication is to blame for the high divorce rate among migrant female employees. The separation between a husband and wife results in misunderstandings, which create mistrust and infidelity. They ultimately decided to get a divorce.

The third is how divorce affects the family. Khoirul Abror¹¹ and Nurmala Fithriyanti¹² are the authors of this paper. According to the study's findings, wives and children are affected by divorces that are filed by spouses. Children whose mothers separate or divorce will experience marriage trauma, despise their father, feel excluded from friends, and other issues. Meanwhile, divorced wives experience stress and a negative influence on their finances. As a result, they are hesitant to get remarried, but on the plus side, they feel liberated. However, divorced women frequently find that their social lives suffer due to their freedom. The three issues raised in the problem formulation above are what this study tries to address.

To gather preliminary information on the public's perceptions of divorce, a survey was carried out in three areas with relatively high divorce rates: Pekanbaru City, Kampar Regency, and Siak Regency. The informants in this study were restricted to community leaders such as religious scholars, intellectuals, and leaders, as well as government officials and other components representing the public, in order to focus the analysis and avoid ambiguity. Then, in-depth interviews with

⁵ Muthayyib Amal dan Andi Intan Cahyani, "Di Pengadilan Agama Makassar Kelas Ia Tahun 2018," 2018, p. 41–52.

⁶ Muhammad Suhaimi, "Faktor Ekonomi Penyebab Cerai Gugat (Studi Kasus di Pengadilan Agama Purwodadi Tahun 2018)," no. 9 (2020): p. 29–44.

⁷ Nibras Syafriani Manna, Shinta Doriza, dan Maya Oktaviani, "Cerai Gugat: Telaah Penyebab Perceraian Pada Keluarga di Indonesia," *Jurnal Al-Azhar Indonesia Seri Humaniora* 6, no. 1 (2021), p.11

⁸ Hafsa, Ramadhan Syahmedi, dan Juhari Muslim, "Penanganan Perceraian Akibat Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga (KDRT) Melalui Penerapan UU No. 23 Tahun 2004 di Kabupaten Rokan Hilir," *At-Tafahum: Journal of Islamic Law* 3, no. 1 (2019), p. 90–115.

⁹ Agus Toni, "Perspektif Pengadilan Agama di Indonesia (Rekonstruksi Pemahaman Tujuan Perkawinan Sebagai Paradigma Kritis terhadap Fenomena Maraknya Gugat Cerai yang Dilakukan TKW di Pengadilan Agama)," *El- Wasathiya: Jurnal Studi Agama* 7, no. 1 (2019): p. 1–18.

¹⁰ Sulthon Miladiyanto, "Pengaruh Profesi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (TKI) terhadap Tingginya Perceraian di Kabupaten Malang," *Jurnal Moral Kemasyarakatan* Volume 1, no. No 1 (2016), p. 15–36.

¹¹ Abror, *Loc. Cit.*

¹² Nurmala Fahriyanti, "Gugat Cerai: Membebaskan Perempuan dari Penderitaan," *Qawwam* 13, no. 2 (2019), p. 101–22.

several chosen informants (10 divorced women) were done to understand their ideas, attitudes, and meaning of divorce for them in order to explain other aspects of divorce that were not revealed by the survey. This study aims to gather opinions on many elements of marriage and family life from both the perspective of women themselves and society. Exchange theory, which emphasizes cost and rewards analysis, is used to analyze this study. Philosophically, utilitarianism influences this idea, which holds that people act to minimize pain and increase pleasure.¹³

Divorce According to the Marriage Law

When looking at the dissolution of marriage, the Religious Courts define divorce as occurring because of death, divorce, or the court's termination. There is no precise definition of divorce in Law Number 1 of 1974 Concerning Marriage. The Marriage Law's Article 39, paragraph (2) explains divorce by stating that it is permissible if carried out for predefined reasons.¹⁴ There are 16 grounds for divorce, according to the Marriage Law.

In light of the Religious Courts, specifically the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), the primary reason for divorce is the violation of rights and obligations, such as when one party acts in a way that is against Sharia law. Alternatively, the law states that one of the parties commits adultery, is alcoholic, gambles, and separates from the spouse for two years. One more justification is added by The Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), which is if one party becomes an atheist or apostate. The marriage is not instantly dissolved if one of the partners apostatizes. The marriage can continue if one party does not mind if the other partner is an apostate because divorce is a serious offence. Only if one of the parties submits an application or a divorce lawsuit can the Religious Courts process a divorce.

Because in Islamic law, the right to divorce lies with the husband, then in the Religious Courts or the District Courts, there is the term *Talaq* Divorce (repudiation divorce), but there is also what is called a *Qadi* divorce (judicial divorce). In general, people only know the terms divorce one, divorce two, and divorce three. The divorce handed down by the husband is referred to as *talaq* divorce, and the divorce filed by the wife is called sued divorce. In dealing with divorce cases, the court provides formal legality by providing a valid letter on the application for divorce from the husband. The divorce letter is given concerning the reasons as stipulated in article 39 paragraph 2, where one of the parties is declared to have violated the rights and obligations.

Accordingly, the marriage and divorce law that runs in Indonesia adheres to two legal systems: Law no. 1/1974 following KHI and *fiqh* books (traditional Islamic jurisprudence). Some people refer to the former as state or secular law,

¹³ Doyle Paul Johnson, Terj. Robert M.Z Lawang, ed. *Teori Sosiologi Klasik dan Modern* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1981), p. 52.

¹⁴ Bakri A. Rahman dan Ahmad Sukojo, *Hukum Perkawinan Menurut Islam Undang-Undang Perkawinan dan Hukum Perdata/BW* (Jakarta, n.d.), p. 27.

while the latter is religious law. This distinction has psychological consequences, each of which is first considered profane while the second is sacred. This fact also shows that the marriage law has not been recognized as religious law.

Divorce in Social Exchange Theory

As unique and social organisms, humans will exhibit particular behaviours, and there will be instances in which one person influences another. Certain social behaviours emerge because of these mutually reinforcing experiences, and these behaviours will have an impact on how each person interacts with others. Hence, exchanging at least two persons in a cost-benefit manner is social behaviour.¹⁵ This is what social exchange theory means. This is in line with Skinner's definition of social exchange, which emphasizes how people interact with one another and form real-world social connections whether they intend to or not. Rewards and expenses that are "earned or sacrificed" by the individuals involved in the interaction process have effects from these social interactions.

The principles of this exchange theory are:

1. The analysis unit is observed in research and plays a vital role in explaining the social order and the individual.
2. The exchange motive is assumed that everyone has their own desires. Everyone will need something, but it is not a common goal. This means that people exchange because they are motivated by a combination of unique goals and desires.
3. Advantages or Benefits in the form of costs incurred by someone will get a "gift" (reward) which sometimes does not consider the costs incurred. Cost is the effort needed to get satisfaction plus a reward for doing something. Satisfaction or reward obtained by someone can be assessed as an advantage.
4. Social approval is a gratifying and common motivator in exchange systems. The reward amount is not limited because it is individual and emotional. Rewards are retribution that has the power of social approval.¹⁶

Homans in Syafar explains three concepts to explain small groups in exchange theory: activities, interactions, and feelings. Activities are actual behaviours that are described at a very concrete level. Interaction is any activity that stimulates or is stimulated by the activities of others. Meanwhile, the feeling

¹⁵ Shokhibul Mighfar, "Social Exchange Theory: Telaah Konsep George C. Homans Tentang Teori Pertukaran Sosial," *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan* 9, no. 2 (2015), p. 259–82.

¹⁶ Wirawan, *Teori-Teori Sosial dalam Tiga Paradigma (Fakta Sosial, Defenisi Sosial dan Perilaku Sosial)* (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2014), p. 174–76.

is a condition that is not only subjective but also a sign that is external or behavioural, which indicates an internal state.¹⁷

The exchange theory can be interpreted as a theory relating to social behaviours where individuals offer or exchange things with value based on a specific social order. The objects exchanged are not actual physical items but rather artificial things. As a result, according to sociological exchange theory, marriage is defined as an exchange between a husband and wife's rights and obligations as well as rewards and losses.¹⁸

In order to promote the exchange process, marriage requires mutual agreements. If there is an imbalance in the exchange process, it indicates that one party benefits and the other is harmed and that there is eventually no satisfactory resolution for both parties. The dissolution of the marriage between a husband and woman is known as divorce, and in this case, the failure of either spouse to fulfil their respective responsibilities is what led to the divorce. When a husband and wife file for divorce, their unstable marriage comes to an end, and they are then allowed to live separately and receive legal recognition under the relevant laws.

Divorce rate variations and the causes of divorce are indicators of broader social shifts. Industrialization and the marital family system in some form are trends that the social system will eventually follow. The family structure evolves to meet the demands of industrialization. The nuclear family (coupled family) meets the needs of industrialization,¹⁹ while the traditional family (extended or combined family structure) is disintegrating as a result of it.

Since divorce is no longer viewed as a taboo topic by society nowadays, it is no longer something to be ashamed of and should be avoided. In this aspect, Goode contends that judgments or viewpoints that perceive divorce as a declaration of failure are biased.²⁰ The marital system is a result of disparities in sociocultural backgrounds, as well as in interests, needs, and passions. Every marriage experiences conflicts and unhappy times. Finally, society can tolerate divorce in general and recognize that it is one of the necessary steps for the ultimate resolution of husband-and-wife disputes at a certain level.

Riau Malay Woman Divorce

Based on the results of research conducted on informants (60 divorce cases), it can be explained as follows:

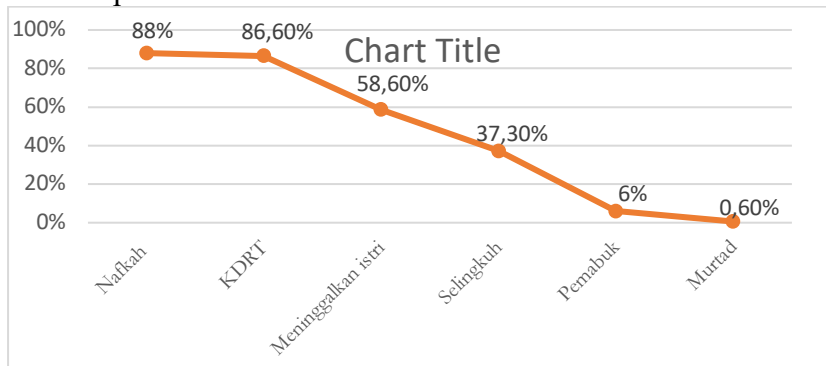
¹⁷ Muhammad Syafar, "Memahami Penerapan dan Manfaat Teori Sistem, Life-Span, Interaksi Simbolis, Pertukaran Sosial pada Masalah Sosial," *Lembaran Masyarakat* II, no. 1 (2016): 1–28, <http://jurnal.uinbanten.ac.id/index.php/lembaran/article/view/479/415>.

¹⁸ Erna Karim, *Pendekatan Perceraian dari Perspektif Sosiologi* "dalam *Ihromi, Bunga Rampai Sosiologi Keluarga* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2004), p. 136.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

The Graph of a Wife's Divorce Reason



Source : Primary Data 2019

According to the facts mentioned above, women choose to file for divorce for a variety of reasons. The following is a description of the research's results after processing:

1. 88% is because of sustenance or family income. According to data and women's admission, some people receive no food at all, which means that women are responsible for paying the household bills. Some people support themselves, but not enough.
2. Domestic violence is at blame for 86% of this. Physical domestic abuse, including slapping, hitting, and even strangulation treated by husbands were revealed in this study as experienced by the women. Furthermore, it was shown that domestic psychological violence predominates in harsh and cruel remarks and that 20% of victims reported experiencing both domestic and sexual abuse.
3. 60% is because of abandonment. The study included husbands who separated from their wives for 2 to 12 years. This indicates that the woman who requested a divorce is actually no longer married. According to the data search, most of them left since their husbands had other wives waiting for them.
4. 37 % is as a result of the husband's adultery.
5. 25% is others. Apostasy, not having children, drug use, and breaking the *taklik talaq* are additional causes.

It can be said that women who petition for divorce before the Religious Courts do so for various legal reasons. It is also well recognized that filing for divorce is not the result of a single reason but rather a combination of several factors.

People's Views About Divorce

The results of this study regarding the opinion of respondents on divorce identified that more than half of the informants, namely 60% expressed their disapproval of divorce, and only 40% agreed. The disapproval of these informants can be seen from their views on divorce in the following table:

The informant's views about divorce

No	Views	Frequency	%
1	Taboo, or should not be done for any reason	1	1,6
2	Avoid as much as possible because it is not good	36	60
3	It can be done if the wife/husband wants as the best solution	10	16
4	An ordinary thing happens in life	12	20
5	Have no idea	0	0
6	Others	1	1,6
	Total	60	100

Source: Primary Data 2019

As noted in the table above, nearly all of the informants, or 60%, stated that divorce was avoided as much as possible because it was undesirable. Even a small percentage of informants (1.6%) said that divorce was taboo or that it was not something that should be done. This response appears to align with research informants' opinions regarding their disapproval of divorce in general. However, only 20% of respondents think that divorce has grown more widespread in society, and only 16% of respondents thought that divorce might be the best option for the pair. It also seems important to the attitude displayed by the informants stating that if the couples have children, then their relatives who want a divorce, as indicated in the following table:

Informants' attitude if their children and siblings want a divorce

No	Attitude	Frequency	%
1	Keep quiet	5	8,3
2	Disappointed and disagree	6	10
3	Disagree/reject	19	31,6
4	Trying to advise	18	30
5	Agree with reason	7	11,6

6	Agree without reason	5	8,3
	Total	60	100

Source: Primary Data 2019

Based on the table above, it can be seen that 10% are disappointed/disagree, 31.6% disagree, and 30% advise to think about and avoid divorce, meaning that 72% of the Malay community tries to avoid/reject divorce. The remaining 19% agreed whether there was a reason or no reason, and 8% did not comment or remain silent because they considered that it is the household of a husband and wife business, so they did not want to interfere with their decisions.

The Meaning of Divorce for Women

The following is what divorce means to women, according to the findings of in-depth interviews with informants from 10 divorced women:

1. 50% of the informants mentioned it as a solution to the issue. Their former marriage was not exempt from several issues that frequently led to fights and conflicts. The informants believe that divorce is a possible option to the solution.
2. When asked what freedom meant, 40% of the informants responded. Exchange of rights and obligations, marriage was originally the consequence of multiple agreements between two parties. The failure of their separate roles can occur when the exchange process runs into roadblocks during the implementation of marital life. At this point, the failure of this role can no longer be accepted, and divorce becomes an option.
3. 60% see it as a status clarification. Prior to opting to file for divorce, women were frequently thrown out of the house, divorced multiple times, left on their own for years, and in some cases, departed without having had any intimate intercourse with their spouses. It denotes that they were actually already married but at the same time had no husbands and were hung without ropes.

They can determine their legal standing by filing a lawsuit. Neglecting any commitments, such as those related to maintenance, protection, security, and so forth, would result from leaving a partner without a good reason. In turn, husbands who desert their wives without good cause are allowing their wives to suffer violence, oppression, and an unclear marital status. The woman's future and her children's future will be better if she makes a stand to leave a precarious situation.

The Changes of Society and Women's Perspectives on Marriage

This study indicates that the Malay society still views divorce as something that is not beneficial for their own family, leading them to avoid it as much as

possible. However, most people have the attitude that they will accept divorce in their surroundings if it is unavoidable or must happen. As a result, society acknowledges that divorce has increased in frequency.

Divorce is just as important to society as marriage since it affects many families and just the two people getting married. Divorce is a complex process involving various emotional, financial, and societal issues in addition to severing the husband and wife's marital relationship. If a divorce results in difficulties, not only must both couples deal with the issues, but also the children, families, and neighbours in the area where the divorce takes place.

The community must formally recognize divorce through the relevant legislation or non-formal public acceptance. The significance of divorce is taken into account by society. In this regard, Murdock concluded that every community has institutions that handle the divorce process and prepare people for marriage in his comparative research on divorce in developing countries.²¹

The informant claimed that women may and even ought to get a divorce in order to get away from issues that hurt them. Multiple illnesses result from allowing oneself to experience difficulty and unhappiness. Loved husbands or partners will never intentionally cause their spouses to suffer. It is irresponsible to put the partner through suffering and to allow it. It is imperative to avoid getting into trouble for being willfully harmed by domestic abuse, infidelity, or neglect.

In general, society disapproves of irresponsible husbands or fathers who fail to uphold their parental responsibilities by failing to safeguard their families, give them comfort, maintain their peace, and support them enough. Women who desire to end their marriages are encouraged by society. This demonstrates how modern society has considered and responded to divorced women's attitudes in a realistic manner.

The community's support indicates that they are aware of and sympathetic toward women who are aggressive in their lives. According to local authorities:

*"This can no longer be accepted if the husband is reckless, abandons his wife, goes out every night, skips prayer, neglects the children, spends money carelessly, and even keeps having an affair. Why then should the wife continue to treat her marriage that way? It only caused her and the kids suffering. For the sake of herself and the children, I believe the woman should take action to dissolve the marriage."*²²

In line with the opinion above, a community leaders stated that:

"I never thought that women could survive years of neglect, domestic violence, and even years of being cheated on. I advised my residents who were treated like this, that when their husbands came home they had to be taken to the village head office and community leaders. They should not be accepted immediately. The husbands have to take responsibility for their

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

²² Interview with Akbar, 18 July 2019

mistakes first if they still want to come back and cannot help but make an agreement in front of the hamlet and community leaders. Later, we will also bring the extended family of both parties. Because this is unjust to the wife and children. We feel we have to take responsibility to defend them."²³

The research participants are aware of the contemporary shifts in values and norms. Women are granted the freedom to participate in public life and are afforded the same position and possibilities for obtaining education and employment as males. Men should, of course, follow any changes that take place. If males continue to believe that solely women are responsible for household duties, there will undoubtedly be conflicts inside the marriage.

Currently, laws like the PUG Law (Gender Mainstreaming), Domestic Violence Law, and others that control gender equality and balance provide support for women from the government. In turn, society is aware that everyone has the chance to have a happy life. They receive safety and the chance to be offered a path out of this agony, which is essentially a human right. The husband and wife have the option to divorce, just like in a marriage.

It may be claimed that people's opinions on divorce and how it has evolved have changed over time, just as society's standards and values have. One of the 51-year-old Ulema informants said:

*"Indeed, divorce used to be viewed as a disgrace to the family in the community. Therefore, regardless of what occurs, we ask our loved ones to avoid getting divorced. It appears that divorce is necessary because males do not act as good husbands by abusing their wives, not providing for their basic needs, cheating, and even leaving the house for extended periods. Women are thus not only living in suffering, but it is also unclear what their status is. As a result, our society favours women's proposals for divorce."*²⁴

Divorce, which is the end of the instability of the marriage fostered and then living separately, is an action taken by a certain couple. This is not merely a decision at a moment's notice but a long process that requires the contribution of thoughts from various parties, especially from family and close relatives. Moreover, if, in the process, the wife has the first initiative and wants to file for divorce, the decision to divorce is a long thought that requires much deliberation.

The informant, who is the uncle of a woman who recently got divorced, has encountered what is outlined below when his relative gets divorced;

"We usually sit together. We did not only discuss the decision to pursue a divorce, but we also talked about any issues they were having as a couple. Of course, those are not trivial issues like their conflicts or the child's stubbornness. We are constantly searching for solutions to core problems because, if left uncontrolled, they can endanger marriage. I feel bad for

²³ Interview with Sardalis, 20 July 2019

²⁴ Interview with Amin, 28 August 2019

*them if there is a divorce since they will not be the only ones affected. We feel helpless to care for and educate our relatives as extended family members. We are powerless to intervene if the couple decides to divorce because it is inevitable. All we can do is offer advice and examples. We cannot yet impose our will as family or relatives."*²⁵

As a result, although the choice to divorce depends entirely on the divorcing spouse, they are still discussing it with their family. In this case, families and friends who speak for the broader public appear accepting of a couple's decision to dissolve their marriage. Why should the family or society be ashamed of a divorce if the divorcing couple is not ashamed in the sense that they can accept it? According to Karim in Ihromi²⁶, there has been a change in societal norms and attitudes about divorce.

According to the exchange theory, social interaction will function smoothly if each person is compensated for the cost or service he has provided. A "Social Exchange Theory" hypothesis is based on the benefits received and the expenses spent when engaging in an activity. Therefore, before engaging in any activity, everyone should consider the benefits and expenses involved. The interaction will not be successful or even continue if it is not mutually beneficial. Thus, fulfilling obligations and obtaining rights in the household is the cost and benefit. A good husband is someone who develops into a figurehead who is concerned about the happiness of his family by caring for his partner's physical and spiritual needs, being devoted to her, and providing her with a sense of security. As a result, the wife who has fulfilled her duties to her husband will continue to be a part of the family. In practice, many men fail to fulfil their responsibilities. Nearly 60% of husbands have left their families without giving any explanation, practically abandoning them.

According to the social exchange theory, the exchange in marriage occurs when each partner receives rights and fulfils obligations. In order to promote the exchange process, marriage requires mutual agreements. If the exchange process is unbalanced, one side will benefit, and another will be harmed. Moreover, there will not be a satisfactory resolution for both parties.

In turn, divorce is the dissolution of the marriage between a husband and wife. It results from one of the parties failing to fulfil the responsibilities of their respective roles. In essence, divorce is the dissolution of an unstable marriage between a husband and wife, after which they are allowed to live apart and are recognized by the law. The better and more responsible the husband as the head of the household, the more harmonious the family.

The preliminary information on how the community believes about women filing for divorce shows that they are not supported by the community. In-depth interviews, however, reveal that the community actually encourages women to

²⁵ Interview with Suheri, 15 September 2019

²⁶ Ihromi, *loc.cit.*

file for divorce. This has changed since the husband abandoned his responsibilities including domestic violence, insufficient income, cheating, and even neglect can be rectified by divorcing him.

We can examine the issues with the exchange theory, which holds that husband and wife interactions will be harmonious if each person receives a response or return for the expense or service he has incurred. In the family, the exchange takes the form of receiving privileges that are weighed against obligations. Divorce is inevitable when there is a gap. People's perceptions of divorce are affected by this condition, which makes them believe that women have the same legal right to divorce as males.

The social consensus is that when men and women are granted equal access to the public domain, they must also be willing to understand each other in domestic settings. Both the husband and the wife have a combined responsibility and right to keep the family together or choose to divorce. In order to build a happy family, the husband or wife maintains harmony and balance. However, if there is an imbalance or even injustice in the marriage, the husband and the wife have the same right to leave. In the end, it was determined that the Riau Malay community's perspective in which divorce by a woman was frowned upon—became support for women in their fight against inequality, injustice, and even oppression.

Conclusion

There are several reasons why women decide to file for divorce. Issues of livelihood, domestic violence, abandonment, and infidelity. This study explains that 60% of women, in reality, do not have husbands because their husbands have left them for several years. This fact refutes that women file for divorce because of women's emancipation or establishment. After in-depth interviews, the initial statistics published on the public's perception of women filing for divorce had changed, and it now favours women divorcing. Changes that occur due to the proposed divorce are a way out of the husband's neglect of his obligations; the husband commits domestic violence, does not provide sufficient income, cheats, and even neglects.

Examining the issues with the exchange theory holds that husband and wife relations will be harmonious if each person receives a response or reward in exchange for the expense or service he has rendered. The form of exchange in the household is in the form of getting rights balanced with the obligations given. When there is inequality in the household, divorce is inevitable. People's perceptions of divorce are affected by this condition, which makes them believe that women have the same legal right to divorce as males. The community has become more accepting of the shifting values resulting from which women are now receiving help.

References

- Abror, Khoirul. "Cerai Gugat dan Dampaknya Bagi Keluarga." *Asas* 11, no. 01 (2019): 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.24042/asas.v11i01.4640>.
- Amal, Muthayyib, dan Andi Intan Cahyani. "Di Pengadilan Agama Makassar Kelas I A Tahun 2018," 2018.
- Bakri A. Rahman dan Ahmad Sukojo. *Hukum Perkawinan Menurut Islam Undang-Undang Perkawainan dan Hukum Perdata/BW*. Jakarta, n.d.
- Editor. *Ensiklopedi Islam*. Jakarta, 1993.
- Fahriyanti, Nurmala. "Gugat Cerai: Membebaskan Perempuan Dari Penderitaan." *Qawwam* 13, no. 2, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.20414/qawwam.v13i2.1468>.
- Hafsah, Ramadhan Syahmedi, dan Juhari Muslim. "Penanganan Perceraian Akibat Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga (KDRT) Melalui Penerapan Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2004 di Kabupaten Rokan Hilir." *AT-TAFAHUM: Journal of Islamic Law* 3, No. 1, 2019.
- Ihromi, T.O. *Bunga Rampai Sosiologi Keluarga*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2014.
- Johnson, Doyle Paul. *Teori Sosiologi Klasik dan Modern*. Diedit oleh Terj. Robert M.Z. Lawang. Jakarta: Gramedia, 1981.
- Karim, Erna. *Pendekatan Perceraian dari Perspektif Sosiologi*. dalam Ihromi, *Bunga Rampai Sosiologi Keluarga*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2004.
- Manna, Nibras Syafriani, Shinta Doriza, dan Maya Oktaviani. "Cerai Gugat: Telaah Penyebab Perceraian Pada Keluarga di Indonesia." *Jurnal Al-Azhar Indonesia Seri Humaniora* 6, no. 1 (2021): 11. <https://doi.org/10.36722/sh.v6i1.443>.
- Mighfar, Shokhibul. "Social Exchange Theory: Telaah Konsep George C. Homans Tentang Teori Pertukaran Sosial." *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran dan Kebudayaan* 9, no. 2 (2015): 259–82. <https://doi.org/10.35316/lisanalhal.v9i2.98>.
- Miladiyanto, Sulthon. "Pengaruh Profesi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia (TKI) terhadap Tingginya Perceraian di Kabupaten Malang." *Jurnal Moral Kemasyarakatan* Volume 1, no. 1 (2016).
- Suhaimi, Muhammad. "Faktor Ekonomi Penyebab Cerai Gugat (Studi Kasus di Pengadilan Agama Purwodadi Tahun 2018)," no. 9 (2020): 29–44.
- Syafar, Muhammad. "Memahami Penerapan dan Manfaat Teori Sistem, Life-

Span, Interaksi Simbolis, Pertukaran Sosial pada Masalah Sosial.” *Lembaran Masyarakat* II, No. 1, 2016.
<http://jurnal.uinbanten.ac.id/index.php/lembaran/article/view/479/415>.

Toni, Agus. “Perspektif Pengadilan Agama di Indonesia (Rekonstruksi Pemahaman Tujuan Perkawinan Sebagai Paradigma Kritis terhadap Fenomena Maraknya Gugat Cerai yang Dilakukan TKW di Pengadilan Agama).” *El- Wasathiya: Jurnal Studi Agama* 7, No. 1, 2019.

Wirawan. *Teori-Teori Sosial dalam Tiga Paradigma (Fakta Sosial, Defenisi Sosial dan Perilaku Sosial)*. Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2014.

Interviews:

Interview with Akbar, 18 July 2019

Interview with Sardalis, 20 July 2019

Interview with Amin, 28 August 2019

Interview with Suheri, 15 September 2019