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Cultural and Psychological Factors Affecting Relationships among Divorcees' Children in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the cultural and psychological factors affecting the relationship of divorcees' children in Saudi Arabia. The study used the qualitative case study method. Purposive and snowball sampling was used to identify 12 informants. Data were collected face-to-face based on semi-structured interviews. The obtained data were analyzed based on thematic approach and method triangulation was used to validate the data. The study found that children may struggle with their sense of stability and security as well as feelings of humiliation, isolation and grief. Children may also struggle with feelings of guilt or responsibility for their parent's separation and may face challenges in developing healthy relationships. However, the impact of divorce on children in Saudi Arabia can vary depending on the individual circumstances of the family and the level of support available. With appropriate support and intervention, children can learn to cope with the challenges of divorce and move forward in a positive way. Hence, there are no qualitative studies aimed at exploring cultural and psychological factors affecting divorcee children's relationships in Saudi communities. Hence, the study can be important to the practical aspect as it will aid the policymakers and the body of knowledge in understanding the experiences of divorcee children in communities. Therefore, the novelty of this study contributes to the practice of solving problems of cultural and psychological factors affecting the relations of divorcee children in Saudi Arabia, one of the largest Arab countries.

Keywords: divorce, divorcee, culture, psychological factors, children.

影响沙特阿拉伯离婚子女关系的文化和心理因素

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摘要:

本研究旨在探讨影响沙特阿拉伯离婚者子女关系的文化和心理因素。该研究采用了定性案例研究方法。采用有目的的滚雪球抽样方法确定了 12 名线人。数据是根据半结构化访谈面对面收集的。根据主题方法对获得的数据进行分析，并使用方法三角测量来验证数据。研究发现，孩子们可能会在稳定感和安全感以及羞辱感、孤立感和悲伤感中挣扎。孩子们还可能因父母的分离而感到内疚或责任感，并且可能在发展健康的关系方面面临挑战。然而，离婚对沙特阿拉伯儿童的影响可能会有所不同，具体取决于家庭的个人情况和可获得的支持水平。通过适当的支持和干预，孩子们可以学会应对离婚的挑战并以积极的方式前进。因此，没有旨在探索影响沙特社区离婚儿童关系的文化和心理因素的定性研究。因此，这项研究对于实践方面很重要，因为它将帮助政策制定者和知识体系了解社区中离婚儿童的经历。因此，这项研究的新颖性有助于解决影响阿拉伯最大国家之一的沙特阿拉伯离婚儿童关系的文化和心理因素问题的实践。

关键词: 离婚、离婚者、文化、心理因素、孩子。

1. Introduction

This study submits that divorce can have significant cultural and psychological impacts on children in Saudi Arabia. The family unit is highly valued in Saudi culture (Islamic value), and divorce is often stigmatized, leading to feelings of shame and isolation for children. Recently, the number of divorces has increased, which significantly affects the divorcee children in the country. Islamic law sets boundaries for what is allowed; within this framework, several relational arrangements that are both distinctly personal and culturally specific can exist. Saudi Arabia's continued existence depends on adherence to Islamic law. Divorce practices and divorces initiated by women are hotly debated subjects among Muslim scholars generally and Saudi Arabia specifically. Saudi Arabia's cultural, social and political traits have been profoundly influenced by the Wahab idea, which takes a literal interpretive stance when addressing issues connected to marital problems. The social and cultural environment in which Saudi judges were born and reared may occasionally overtly or covertly affect the judges' perceptions. As a result, the Saudi system's legalization of divorce has a close connection to sociocultural currents that permeate Saudi culture (Yakar, 2019).

Divorce is a significant social issue that has an impact on a large portion of Saudi Arabia's population. Due to this, despite the influence of Islamic law and culture, divorce has emerged as one of the social issues affecting customs, culture, and children in most Saudi Arabian communities. The Saudi Ministry of Justice estimates that in 2015, there were 27.84% divorces (Alzahrani et al, 2018). Recently, local media reported that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had an extraordinary rise in divorce rates in 2022, reaching 168 instances every day, 7 divorce cases per hour, and more than one case every 10 minutes. In the last months of 2020, 57,595 divorce papers were filed, up 12.7% over the same period in 2019, according to statistics from the Saudi General Authority for Statistics.

Al Dakhil attributed the rising number of divorce cases involving spouses in Saudi society to the complexity of modern life, the high cost of living, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which

started in 2019 and caused a noticeable increase in prices, as well as social media, which increases communication between people play a significant role (Fatima, 2022). While women are still at a significant disadvantage regarding family law—men are allowed four wives, the right to divorce at will, and custody of children — yet-to-be-implemented court reforms call for specialized family courts staffed by judges educated in family welfare as well as in family law, and by women with law degrees who can act as advocates for women litigants. Due to an enforced separation between men and women, opportunities for children to develop a social relationship remain limited (Doumato, 2010).

Therefore, divorce is the termination of a marriage before the death of one spouse. Children get traumatized by this act because it strangely affects their social life. Toddlers or very young children may not comprehend what is happening in the family, but they can notice the absence of one of their parents. To some children, the absence of one parent causes them pain and suffering that impairs their proper social growth. Çakar (2020) argues that lack of love from the missing parent hampers the child's social development. Boys may grow having a negative attitude toward women, while girls may develop a negative attitude toward men (Çakar, 2020). The life of children changes completely after divorce. They feel scared about how they will cope up without their father or mother. Others start wondering how their life would be if the parent they live with abandons them as well. In fact, many rhetoric questions crop up in their minds. For instance, they wonder where they will begin schooling, whether they will be able to meet with their friends, whether they will live with their brothers and sisters in the future, or whether they will be living with the other parent. All this makes them insecure and negatively affects their social life (Raley & Bianchi, 2006).

There is still a gap on studies on the cultural and psychological factors affecting children in Saudi Arabia, thus, this research aimed to explore the cultural and psychological factors affecting the relationship of divorce children in Saudi Arabia, especially in the Al Ahsa region.

2. Feminist Theory

Feminist theory falls under the argument of critical theory, often topples oppressive and repressive structures of power. Egbert and Sanden (2019) state that while there is also an emphasis on oppression and lived experience rooted in subjectivist epistemology, other academics regard critical paradigms as extensions of interpretivists. The goal of utilizing a feminist lens is to make it possible to learn how individuals interact with institutions and perhaps provide ways to challenge and destroy oppressive systems and structures. In addition to focusing on oppression, feminist theory considers the lived experiences of any individual or group, not simply women. Disrupting oppression is a fundamental tenet of feminist theory, even if there may not be agreement on where feminist theory belongs as a theory or paradigm (Arinder, 2022).

Therefore, feminist perspectives on divorce, according to Carbone (1994), stem from the ways in which women's positions on divorce consistently diverge from men's positions. Mothers' engagement in the job market has increased significantly, but dads' domestic efforts have not kept pace, and women continue to shoulder most burden of raising children. Divorcing women typically face worse financial prospects and have deeper emotional links to their children than their former spouses, in large part due to this distribution of work within the family. With its focus on ensuring that each partner can sustain themselves, limited provisions for child support, and gender-neutral custody guidelines, current divorce law does not adequately acknowledge or address these distinctions. The solutions that feminists suggest to these problems vary. "Liberal feminists" support measures that encourage males to take on a proportionate share of family obligations because they feel that women's home responsibilities will eventually put them at a disadvantage. "Cultural feminists," often known as "feminists of difference," hold that the issue is not that women care for children but rather that child raising is underappreciated. "Radical feminists" concentrate on the ways that marriage and employment laws support male domination because they hold that it is difficult to predict how women's role in childrearing will differ from men's in a different society. All agree, however, that existing law contributes to the relative impoverishment of many women and children and that even when the rules purport to be gender-neutral, they are administered in systematically biased ways (Carbone, 1994). From the above viewpoint of feminist theory, it can be subsumed that the theory fits the current research because of its ability to explain the position of women and children in society as vulnerable people.

3. Methodology

Through the use of case studies, the study adopted a

qualitative methodology. The method was chosen because it allowed complete analysis of the data collecting processes. The study adhered to three case study guidelines. The case is divorce. The border is the Saudi Arabian Al-Ahsa Region, and the period is 2021–2023. A criterion-based purposive sampling approach was used to identify key informants, and the study sample size was enhanced using the snowballing technique. Therefore, 15 informants were interviewed for the study. The criteria the researcher used to choose the informants were experience, position, and willingness to participate (Creswell, 2014). Table 1 shows the lists of the participants among the informants.

Table 1. Informant categories and codes

S/N	Categories	Number	Identification codes
1	Children from a divorced family	4	CDF 1,2,3, & 4
2	Community leaders	3	CL 1,2, & 3
3	Parents	3	PRT 1,2, & 3
4	Academicians	2	AC 1 & 2

The categories of informants, the number of informants from each group who took part in the research, and their identification codes are shown in Table 1. The information was gathered through an in-depth interview. One-on-one interviews were conducted by the researcher and informants (face-to-face). Before the interview began, the supervisory committees handed the researcher a letter that contained fundamental details regarding the study, which was shown to each informant. The chosen informants were then invited through WhatsApp and SMS, with some of them also receiving regular phone calls from the researcher. The invitation was denied, and those who took the effort to answer were thanked. In contrast, individuals who accepted the invitation reached out to arrange an interview time and date. Typically, the interview sessions lasted 30 to 60 minutes. Arabic was used to conduct the interview. All 12 interviews were transcribed and the Arabic language was translated into English by a professional.

The interview data were analyzed using a typical thematic technique. The six steps of theme analysis proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) were used to analyze the interview data. The researcher employed the triangulation approach, contacting a second (the supervisory committee) and third party (professionals) to cross-check the data in order to ascertain its legitimacy, dependability, and trustworthiness. Also, the study complies with all ethical criteria, which include the confidentiality of informants, their voluntary involvement in the study, their right to quit at any moment, and their signature of consent forms. The main steps of the research process are summarized in Figure 1.

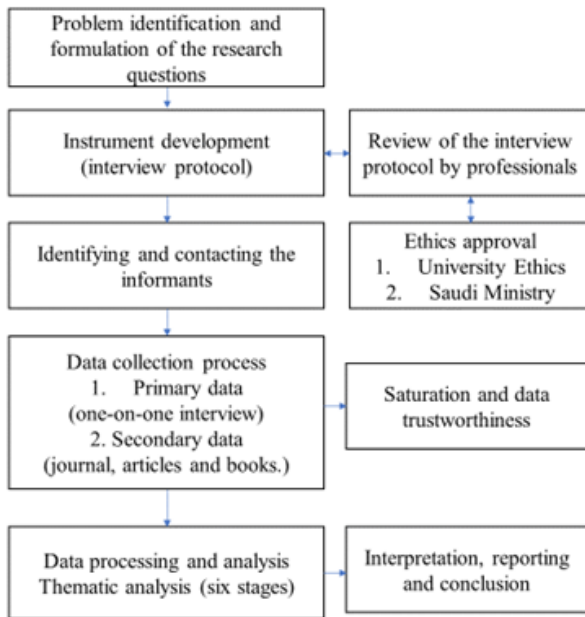


Figure 1. The flowchart of the research methodology

4. Findings and Discussion

The research findings and discussions are presented in this section. The information is analyzed, interpreted, discussed, and presented based on the themes that emerged from the informant's interview transcripts. These themes are cultural factors (context of upbringing patterns) and psychological factors (family bonding, family relationship, and mother and father relationship).

4.1. Cultural Factors

Cultural factors refer to the various aspects of a society's value system that can influence people's beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions. These aspects may include, among others, political systems, economic conditions, historical occurrences, language, religion, conventions, and social standards. Individuals' identities, perspectives, and worldviews, and their social and interpersonal interactions, can be influenced by cultural variables. Cultural variables can significantly affect how children in Saudi Arabia experience and deal with their parent's divorce, including their emotional health, access to social support, and educational prospects. Scholarly definition of cultural factors is provided by Cohen (2009), who sees it as various elements of a society's culture, such as norms, values, beliefs, customs, language, and history that shape individual and collective behavior, attitudes, and beliefs. Cultural factors are often deeply ingrained and can influence people's perceptions, decision-making, and social interactions. They can also vary widely across different cultural contexts and impact the experiences and outcomes of individuals and groups in complex ways (Sue, 2001).

4.1.1. Context of Upbringing Patterns

In this study, the context of upbringing refers to the environmental, cultural, social, and historical factors that influence a child's development and upbringing. It includes various aspects of a child's environment, such as family, community, school, and society, which shape their experiences, beliefs, values, and behaviors. The context of upbringing can have a significant impact on a child's development and well-being. For example, children who grow up in supportive and nurturing environments with access to resources and opportunities may have better outcomes in terms of academic achievement, social relationships, and emotional well-being. Conversely, children who grow up in environments with poverty, violence, or discrimination may be at higher risk for negative outcomes, such as poor mental health, academic struggles, and behavioral problems.

This study shows that the environmental factor of a child plays a crucial role in building the relationship of children. The home, parents, and upbringing given to the children play a key role in shaping the relationship of children. Participants in the interview also highlighted that culture and basic upbringing affect the relationship of children. A participant (CL1), particularly claimed that the age and context of upbringing patterns of the children play a key role in determining the interdependence and influence that is exhibited among the children.

"This results from the children's culture and their basic upbringing is essential. If the children are of an older age and divorce takes place while they are at puberty, there may be interdependence between the children and there is no strong influence relating to cultural interdependence. While if they are young as they grow, there are factors that can affect their relationship" (CL1).

When further probed about the kind of factors that can affect their relationship, the participant observed, *"There are certain cultural behaviors and attitudes which children learn as they grow within a family unit which helps in guiding them in life, this can be the cultural value of interacting with extended family, emmm, we can call it kinship ties. When couples divorce, younger children have difficulty fitting into and learning cultural manners as the divorce come to affect the children, so you see the mother and the father not communicating and so the children will not become used to the family of each other"* (CL1).

The influence of divorce on children of divorcees is exhibited educationally, a close look at the qualitative data from the perspective of PRT1 observed, *"If you have many children in class and among them you have those who are from what we call "broken homes" or as you call them children of divorcees, you will notice their values and manners of conduct is a bit different from the rest of the children. The way they behave and act does not look similar to how other children behave.*

The way they greet is even different, and I feel they do not have the opportunity to have certain cultural values in their behavior (PRT1).

Further analysis of the data also showed a contextual factor that has impacted the cultural relationship children have because of their parents' divorce. AC1 observed, *"When couples are divorced, you find out that certain factors which may vary from one place or case to the other will influence the overall cultural value of the child, for example if you look at demographic characteristics like financial status or family income, even level of education or birthplace of the parent are very important. Usually when divorce occur, families break and there is likelihood of a change of residence of mothers to their birthplace so if it is far from when the marriage ended that movement affects the behavioral pattern because the child will have to adopt to a different culture as opposed to the one they grew up"* (AC1).

From the analysis, when divorce occurs between couples, the children are affected with upbringing in terms of acquiring education and good behavior (manners) which affects the Saudi culture. It further highlighted the role of cultural factors in shaping children's experiences, including the social stigma associated with divorce and the pressure to conform to traditional gender roles and family expectations, and these findings are similar to Adeson's (2014) findings. Another study by Al-Krenawi (2005) explored the impact of divorce on Arab Muslim children and highlighted the importance of cultural sensitivity and understanding in providing appropriate support and interventions. In this study, the experience of children of divorced parents in Saudi Arabia was found to have significant negative psychological effects on the children. The study found that traditional Arab Muslim values and beliefs, such as the importance of family and social harmony, can both help and hinder children's adjustment to divorce, depending on the individual circumstances of the family. These findings agree with Anderson (2014), which shows that children who live with their married biological parents have greater physical, academic, and emotional well-being.

Overall, scholars emphasize the need to consider cultural factors and the unique cultural context of Saudi Arabia when developing interventions and support services for children of divorced parents. Such interventions should be culturally sensitive and respectful while also addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by children and families in the context of divorce.

4.2. Psychological Factor

Another aspect of parental divorce that influences the type of relationships that children end up having with one another and with themselves is psychological in nature. Family ties and the relationship between the mother and father comprise several of the variables that

affect children's relationships. Psychological factors refer to the mental processes, emotions, behaviours, and beliefs that influence an individual's thoughts and actions. These variables may encompass a variety of psychological features, cognitive functions, emotional states, and social interactions of an individual. People's perceptions of and reactions to various situations, as well as their general well-being and mental health, can be influenced by psychological factors.

Golombok (2014) observed that children who experience parental divorce may experience psychological impacts that affect the kinds of interactions they have with others and with themselves. According to research, children of divorced parents may struggle with a variety of emotional and behavioral problems, including anxiety, despair, and low self-esteem, which can have an impact on their social and interpersonal interactions. It is significant to highlight that several elements, including the child's age, gender, personality, and the circumstances of the divorce, can affect the psychological impact of divorce on children in different ways. The resources and assistance that the child can access also are quite important in minimizing the negative impacts of divorce. Under this theme, family bonding and father/mother relationship were found to be most prominent in this study.

4.2.1. Family Bonding

The data from the conducted interviews provided responses that provided an emerging theme: "factors that affect the relationship of children". Ghaboush et al. (2020) submit that children of divorce are known to experience severe negative effects. These effects are damaging to children's development and quality of life. Family bonding in this study refers to the process of building and strengthening emotional connections and relationships within a family. It involves the cultivation of positive interactions, communication, and shared experiences that promote a sense of cohesion, trust, and mutual support among family members.

Scholars have argued that family bonding is essential for the healthy development and well-being of children, as it provides a secure and nurturing environment for them to grow and teach (Rose et al., 2015). Swick (2008) further noted that it can also enhance their social and emotional skills, such as empathy, communication, and problem-solving, which are crucial for building positive relationships with others.

The following responses from respondents mirror the above submissions: *"Family bonding, mother & father relationship, and family relationships are the strongest factors"* (PRT2). The informant added: *"Psychologically, the effect was difficult at first, especially for my eldest daughter. Suddenly after the divorce, we moved into one house and the father was in another house. But the step was initially for a period of one year after moving to Al-Ahsa, praise be to God, we*

have overcome the crisis" (PRT2).

Expert interviews also highlighted the importance of family bonding in Saudi society within the context of Islam: *"The culture of the people of Saudi Arabia is closely linked with Islamic culture and family unit is very important. Children who grow with the family structure find it easy to learn from extended family members not just their own father and mother, so divorce usually takes the child off this family structure, which is not good"* (AC3).

Moreover, other informants stated that: *"Yes, if the mother is stressed and she is the one who raises the children and behaves, this is reflected on the children, because it is emptying all the negative things that focus on the children, because it is emptying all the negative things that focus on the children from screaming and pressure. Some may see it as normal, but it has an impact on the children"* (PRT3).

It was added that: *"I see that their relationship has increased, thank God, despite the difference between the age of the older child and the younger child, there is age difference of over 7 years, the older one is 13 years old and the younger one is 7 years old. My husband is not married yet and has no children. They appear to support each other psychologically since they miss their father. So you see the psychological impact on adults transfer to children"* (AC2).

Another participant pointed out the obvious psychological impact divorce has on children in two ways; self-esteem, and confidence. *"Children do have many challenges when their parents separate, but I noticed that they usually have challenges of self-esteem and confidence. This is most obvious when they are among their peers you see they behave in a way that does not allow them to freely show what they can do, you will see they are trying not to be noticed by other to be asked to say something, like they will know their parents are divorced. Children give examples of my mom and dad saying 'soo soo' or took us to places, and they cannot say that so they keep quiet"* (CL2).

The children interviewed have observed their experiences in situations of divorce among their parents; *"I don't like it when my daddy is not always around with me like he used to be. It makes me feel sad when he doesn't come and pick me up from school and especially if I see my friends and their father, I feel sad"* (CDF1).

Another child explained how he avoids his friends so that they will not ask him about his father: *"I sometimes don't want to sit with my friends because they ask me about my dad, and if they tell me the fun things they do with their dad it also makes me feel not good so I just avoid them during break in school"* (CDF3).

According to this study, the psychological toll of divorce is not lessened by the children's gender and has a significant psychological trauma on children who are

very close to their parents. To be separated from one of their parents after divorce hurt both boys and girls equally. A participant in this study described how her daughter experienced difficult emotional conditions because of her little contact with her father: *"My daughter used to ask me about her father very often, she sometimes cry, and call his name often, she wants to see him, but it is not possible, he lives in another town... [silence] he comes only at the month end to see her"* (PRT2).

The participant further noted that: *"At the moment, am worried as her mother, because even if I think of getting married again, I wonder how my daughter will feel about it, she will have to develop another relationship with her stepfather. It is hard really. Since the separation now, my daughter has been living with me"* (PRT2).

Based on the analysis, it is revealed that divorce affect children psychology in relation to self-esteem and confidence. These findings are similar to the study which found that teenagers' self-esteem and emotional self-determination are adversely affected by negative feelings about their parents' relationship (Salehi Amiri et al., 2015). However, the results of this study lend credibility to numerous studies on the effects of divorce on children that are being undertaken around the globe such as Fagan & Churchill (2012), Cherlin et al., (1991), Hughes (2005), Moon (2011), Al-Zamil et al., (2016) & Bhuiya, & Chowdhury (1997). Although the studies did not capture how self-esteem and confidence is affected rather it shows children's lives and development are clearly severely harmed by divorce. Children's standard of living, living situation, education, and psychosocial feelings and connections are only a few of the effects of divorce. The severe effects show the magnitude of the relationship and emotional and psychological harm that divorce produces. It makes sense that divorce has such adverse effects on the persons, particularly the children. When there is friction, division, and perhaps even intrigue, a married connection is forced and unwelcomely terminated by divorce. The process of divorce is accompanied by tremendous emotional and emotional immersion.

In addition, divorce marks the end of human union that was supposed to be based on love, desire, motivation, and passion in general. The significant emotional and societal costs of divorce reveal the depth of emotional and societal commitment to the union. After the divorce process, these potential energies resurfaced and had detrimental effects on the entire complicated human interaction landscape.

4.2.2. Mother and Father Relationship

The general health and development of a child can be significantly impacted by the mother-father relationship. Children can feel safe and stable thanks to supportive and loving parent-child relationships, which

can help their emotional and social growth. On the other hand, tense or strained interactions between parents can make kids anxious and stressed out, which can have unfavorable effects.

After the divorce of their parents, who are also their main up-keepers, a common pattern emerged from the data analysis of the interview replies. This study found that children who experience divorce are cut off from their main up-keeper, who is typically their mother. This interferes with children's social growth, which typically results in persistent socially unpleasant issues. In addition to the harassment or bullying they experience from other children, preschoolers may experience anxiety that causes them to become antisocial. The fact that children are impacted by their parents' divorce was commonly acknowledged by participants in this study.

The notion that children are at the center of the impact of their parents' divorce is resonant in the responses of the interview participants so far. Many children of divorced parents may be forced to live apart from either both or just one of them. The children's psychological, social and emotional development may be impacted by this circumstance. When divorce occurs in a family, the children suffer the most. Several participants opines that children from separated homes are most likely to be vulnerable to vices such as: crime, drug abuse, and other waywardness. "Divorce is a loss for the children. The father cannot take good care of and follow up on the children because the mother is usually closer to the children and can follow up even if she is working. There is a spiritual connection between the mother and the children more than the father's connection with the children. Children become fluctuating between mother and father, and instability". (PRT1).

An informant stated that children who divorce their parents can easily find themselves in drugs and other negative acts. The statement was noted when the informant stated: "...*God forbid, they may deviate or fall into drugs, terrorism and it has an impact on their psyche, especially if the husband or wife is uneducated, uncultured, or their financial income is weak. The son needs money and may resort to illegal methods that are in line with the current time. And the instability of children and fluctuation between mother and father*" (PRT3).

Additionally, an informant confirms that when parents fight in front of their child, the child can easily emulate such behavior: "*When one of the parents distorts the image of the other party in front of the children, we can say that this son or that daughter entered trouble*" (AC2). In another view, it is shown: "*The separation of the husband from his wife causes the loss of children. The wife married another man, and it is possible that he refuses the wife's children to live with him, and the husband marries another woman, and it is possible that she refuses the children of the*

divorced first wife" (AC1). An informant concluded that: "*My daughters live with me after the separation because their father refused to take them back, he wanted to marry, he chose his own life and my daughters lived with me, God be praised*" (PRT3).

Professionals usually do not encourage situations where a child will not have both parents at the same time as they grow; "*When a couple have marital problems and I am opportune to advise them I always tell them to stay together no matter what to avoid divorce for the sake of their children because if they separate then that is the end of their peace and productive growth for the child. I don't like it*" (AC3). The impact of divorce on children has been emotionally captured by a child interviewed as it related to the relationship between their fathers and mothers: "*When my parents argue I hear them at night and it makes me unable to sleep, I love them and I don't like hearing them fight but I cannot stop them I am small, then they don't talk to each other and one day my mummy asked to follow her that we will come back but we never did (Silence, Sad face), even when I ask mummy to call dad sometimes she doesn't call him and I miss him so much*" (CDF2).

According to the evidence presented above, children in Saudi Arabia, particularly those whose parents are divorced, may be drawn into drug addiction and engage in other harmful social behaviors including theft and robbery. Because of the divorce, many children are growing up without receiving adequate care from either the mother or the father. Saudi Arabian culture is evolving as a result of this situation. This agrees with Edwards et al. (2018), who showed that levels of drug abuse are higher among divorced people than those who are married. It was further reported by Hayatbakhsh (2006) that parental divorces affect youth risky behaviors such as drug abuse.

Other studies did not capture how divorce leads to social problems such as robbery and theft. For example, according to the literature, divorce has an impact on the family system in general and on children in particular because they are more likely to experience some negative outcomes such as emotional disturbance and difficulty forming social bonds (Hashemi & Homayuni, 2017; Pan, 2014). When children live in an unhealthy environment because of parental divorce, they suffer from emotional and mental anguish, which can manifest in their behavior, academic performance, or physiological trouble (Gladding, 2014). In another study, Spigelman et al. (2017) concluded that children of divorced parents showed elevated levels of hostility, aggression, and anxiety than other children. Hashemi and Homayuni (2017) also found that children of divorced parents scored higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems than other children from legally divorced parents. They further claimed that children from divorced parents reported more depression, anxiety, and aggression.

5. Conclusion

Following the foregoing analysis and discussion, the result of the study revealed that children from broken homes can face issues related to culture and psychology in relation to others in communities. Based on these findings, it is concluded that in Saudi Arabia, divorce can have a profound impact on children, especially in the areas of culture such as self-esteem and confidence, and psychological aspects such as depression and anxiety, which can lead to drug addiction because of a lack of support and care from the separated parents. Therefore, children may struggle with their sense of stability and security as well as feelings of humiliation, isolation, and grief. It is crucial to understand that the effects of divorce might change based on the specifics of the family and the quantity of support offered. Children can learn to deal with the difficulties of divorce and go forward in a positive way with the right support and assistance. It is essential to give kids the tools and support they need to get through the difficult emotional terrain of divorce and be able to form healthy connections and have a strong self-image.

Previous studies have focused mainly on a quantitative approach to understand the effect of divorce on children, and this has limited the suggestions to practical aspects such as policy formulation. Therefore, this study adopted a qualitative approach based on the case study method to identify the cultural and psychological factors affecting divorcee children's relationships in a community directly from people's opinions and experiences. Therefore, the findings of this study are anticipated to advance the field of sociology and act as a guide for subsequent research, particularly that that uses a qualitative approach to study divorce. The results can be helpful to parties looking for information about the research results and can serve as a benchmark for future research. The research can provide additional information to the government and policymakers to enhance family support and social welfare, which can help with decision making and policy formulation. By promoting and enhancing social welfare, this research can therefore improve the current policies on marriage and divorce and help lower the divorce rate in a nation.

Based on the cultural and psychological impacts of divorce on children in Saudi Arabia, the following recommendations could be made:

1. Increase public awareness and education about the impact of divorce on children in Saudi Arabia. This could be done through public campaigns, workshops, and training programs for parents, teachers, and other caregivers.
2. Increase access to counselling and mental health services for children and families going through divorce. This would provide children with a safe space to express their emotions and work through their

feelings, and it would give families the support and resources they need to navigate the challenges of divorce.

3. Implement policies that promote family-friendly workplaces, including flexible schedules and paid leave for family emergencies. This would help parents balance work and family responsibilities and reduce the stress on children during the divorce process.

4. Encourage family and community support networks for children of divorced parents. This could be done through community centres, religious organizations, and other community-based programs that provide emotional support, social connections, and mentorship for children.

By implementing these recommendations, it is possible to mitigate the negative impact of divorce on children in Saudi Arabia and help them develop healthy coping strategies, positive relationships, and a strong sense of self.

5.1. Limitations and Further Study

The study attempted to provide information based on people views, opinions, and perceptions regarding the consequences of divorce on divorcee children relationship in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, the study was conducted in one of the regions of the country (Al-Ahsa region); therefore, the results may not overall reflect the experiences or consequences of divorcee children in the order regions. Moreover, the study mainly focused on the cultural and psychological impact of divorce on children. However, the study relies on a qualitative case study method with 12 sample size, future studies can expand the sample by involving others.

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Authors' Contributions

The first author helps in conducting collecting the face-to-face data and analysis and discussion. While the second author provided the ideas, he checked the work diligently and helped in expanding the discussions of the study.

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