



**An-Najah National University**  
**Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**RESILIENCE, ECONOMIC HARDSHIP AND  
SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ARAB DIVORCED  
WOMEN IN THE AISTRIC OF NAZARETH**

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## Dedication

أود أن أشيد بجهود المشرف الدكتور محمد مرعي على صبره الكبير وتعاونيه وتوجيهه المستمر على الرغم من بعد المكان. لقد كان متعاونًا للغاية ومتوافقًا مع الأفكار الجديدة وكان كريمًا جدًا بالمعلومات والمشورة. كما أعرب عن تقديري العميق للمطلقات العربيات اللواتي وافقن على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة والمساهمة في البحث الحالي والمشاركة في مساعدة المطلقات الأخريات. لم تكن هذه الدراسة لتظهر للنور دون الحصول على المساعدة من عدد من الأشخاص ، بما في ذلك عائلتي وأصدقائي والمطلقات وغيرهم. الشكر موصول للجميع.

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**Nasreen Shalabi**

## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

### **RESILIENCE, ECONOMIC HARDSHIP AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ARAB DIVORCED WOMEN IN THE AISTRIC OF NAZARETH**

I declare that the work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

Student's Name:

Hasreen Shalabi

Signature:

[Signature]

Date:

10.2.22

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# **RESILIENCE, ECONOMIC HARDSHIP AND LOW SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ARAB DIVORCED WOMEN IN THE DISTRICT OF NAZARETH**

**By**  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Divorce is described as stressful situation, which is a disturbance of the individual's emotional and physical balance, stemming from the person's inability to cope with life demands due to a lack of resources.

**Objectives of the study:** discussing the economic hardship and low self-esteem aspects that a divorce can cause among women; presenting ways of overcoming economic hardship and rebuilding low self-esteem among Arab divorce women and considering the role of resilience in empowering divorced women.

**Research questions:** how do divorced women rebuild their self-esteem after divorced? How do divorced women overcome their economic hardship? Why does divorce cause economic hardship and low self-esteem? And How does resilience empower divorced women during and after marriage?

**Method:** the research includes fifteen Arab divorced women from the district of Nazareth between 25 and 60 years old, with and without children who agreed to participate in the research. The participants have been through a semi-closed interview.

**Findings:** divorced women rebuild their self-esteem after divorced using their family, work, courses, religion and so on; divorced women overcome their economic hardship using their families, social services, getting a job, etc.; divorce cause economic hardship and low self-esteem and resilience empower divorced women during and after marriage.

**Conclusions:** Despite the consequences and difficulties of divorce concerning self-esteem and economic hardship, women can overcome this challenging experience using resilience.

**Keywords:** divorce, resilience, economic hardship, self-esteem.

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction and Literature Review**

Marriage is a socially necessary close relationship between two persons for reaching a stable and lasting life (Jojo & Sathiyaseelan, 2019), yet not all marriages succeed and satisfy the involved individuals' emotional needs. A number of married couples may reach troubles, get abused and feel trauma which results in destroying their normal daily functioning or well-being. Such marriages may end with divorce. Over the last decades, the number of divorces has increased considerably (Schaan & Vögele, 2016).

Divorce is considered the legal end of any failing marriage which can be caused by several reasons, infidelity, abuse, abandonment, lack of communication and so on (Prem Singh & Philip, 2014). Divorce, which is considered one of the most stressful events experienced in adulthood, is considered a personalized experience that everyone experiences from his or her own perception (Klobučar & Simonič, 2017). Changes in the marital status are considered the most significant transitions in the social life of adults. The loss of a spouse can lead to reduced mental health as well as greater financial and economic problems. Divorce may lead to similar outcomes, such as impairment of psychological health, loss of social and emotional ties, and economic hardship. Based on the aforementioned, divorce leads to a great loss of resources (Ben Zur, 2012). Divorce is a common phenomenon among Arab women in Israel and this paper comes to discuss this issue.

Arab citizens of Israel, or Arab Israelis, are Israeli citizens who are Arab. Many Arab citizens of Israel self-identify as Palestinian and commonly self-designate themselves as Palestinian citizens of Israel or Israeli Palestinians. According to a 2017 survey by University of Haifa, professor Sammy Smooha, 16% of the Arab population prefers the term "Israeli Arab", while the largest and fastest growing proportion prefers "Palestinian in Israel", and 17% prefer "Palestinian Arab", rejecting entirely the identity of "Israeli". In Arabic various terms are used, including 48-Palestinian or 48-Arab. After the Nakba, the Palestinians that remained within Israel's 1948 borders are colloquially known as "48 Arabs" (Berger, 2020).

Based on Israel's Centria Bureau of Statistics, the Arab constituted nearly 20.95% (1,890,000) of the country's population in 2019. The majority of these prefer to be identified as Arab or Palestinian by nationality and Israeli by citizenship. Arab citizens of Israel commonly live in Arab-majority towns and cities, some of which are among the poorest in the country. A lot of Arabs have family links to Palestinians in the West Bank, and Gaza Strip in addition to to Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics).

Nazareth is the largest city in the Northern District of Israel. Nazareth is known as "the Arab capital of Israel". It is one of the most important Palestinian cities in the occupied territories in 1948, and is characterized by the diversity of its ethnic and religious population. It participated in the protests against British colonialism, and was occupied by the Jews in 1948. It is considered the main administrative and cultural center for the 1948 Palestinians. In 2019 its population was 77,445. The inhabitants are predominantly Arab citizens of Israel, of whom 69% are Muslim and 30.9% Christian (Aljazeera).

### **1.1 Rationale behind choosing the topic**

The first reason behind choosing the topic of women's divorce is social. The phenomenon of divorce is increasing among Arab women in Israel. As a divorced woman and a future psychologist, I want to help as many women as possible to cope with being divorced women and learn how to start a post-divorced life, using the results of the research. The other reason for choosing the topic is raising the society awareness towards the negative implications and consequences of divorce and try to make people resolve their conflicts before resorting to divorce. In other words, divorce must be the last solution to be taken to solve the marital conflicts

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The current research has three main goals:

- Exploring the economic hardship and low self-esteem the divorce can cause among women.
- Exploring ways of overcoming economic hardship and rebuilding low self-esteem among Arab divorce women.

- Exploring the role of resilience in empowering divorced women during and after marriage.

The objectives of the research aim at answering the following research questions:

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. How do divorced women rebuild their self-esteem after getting divorced?
2. How do divorced women overcome their economic hardship?
3. Why does divorce cause economic hardship and low self-esteem?
4. How does resilience empower divorced women during and after marriage?

### **1.4 Target Population**

I decided to choose 15 Arab divorced women from the district of Nazareth between 25 and 57 years old, with and without children who agreed to participate in the research because the rate of divorce is rising in this area. I chose some with professions and some without to see the difference in perceptions.

### **1.5 Problem Statement**

Divorce among Arab women in Israel is increasing. It becomes a phenomenon in the Arab society that needs attention and research. Giving the full treatment for dealing with divorce and its future implications will improve the situations of the women and help them start a new life. On the other hand, the society should work in order to lessen this phenomenon by raising people awareness towards its negative implications.

To sum up, the introduction presents the topic of this paper, the Arab population in Israel, Nazareth, marriage and divorce. It also presents the rationale of the research, the objectives of the research as well as the questions. The present study focuses on three aspects, two of them result from getting divorce: economic hardship and low self-esteem and the third stresses the role of resilience in improving the divorcees' lives. The study is presented from the females' perspective, based on their experiences and the meanings they experience during such a life shift. It will also show how can a divorce woman overcomes those obstacles. This research is considered significant because it can provide answers to divorced women and also help them overcome the consequences of divorce and start a new life.

## 1.6 Definitions of Relevant Terms

- **Divorce:** is the termination of a marital union, the cancelling and/or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between a married couple under the rule of law of the particular country and/or state" (Kapila & Kumar, 2015: 2).
- **Resilience:** resilience as recovery from initial dysfunction, in contrast to resistance, a trajectory that does not include initial interruption to functioning
- **Economic hardship:** The financial condition of a person
- **Self-esteem:** It is also the general value that individuals give to themselves, which can be either negative or positive (Farid & Akhtar, 2013).

## 1.7 Literature Review

This section provides the theoretical framework for the study. It talks about the concept of divorce and its reasons, the three concepts that are related to divorce: resilience, economic hardship and self-esteem and finally, the divorced women in Nazareth.

### 1.7.1 Divorce

#### 1.7.1.1 History of the concept of divorce

The word for divorce literally means “cast out wife” (Coontz, 2007). Until the last year of the nineteenth century, divorce was mostly prohibited by law and rejected much by people as still occurs today in many places including a number of European countries such as Italy and Ireland. Most marital disorders did not happen as a result of divorce but from abandonment or informal separation. Because population reviews were not obtainable earlier to the middle part of the twentieth century, it is problematic to know how often actual divorce happened in the world. However, it seems possible that a small number of marriages survived until the death of one of the partners, an event that characteristically occurred much earlier than it does nowadays (Furstenberg, 1994).

In the middle of 1880 and 1890, the USA showed an increase of 70% in divorce cases. In 1891, a professor at Cornell University made the outrageous estimate that if styles in the second half of the 19th century sustained, by 1980, more marriages will end by

divorce than by death of one of the partners. As it appears, he was off by only 10 years. As early as 1957, divorce began increasing once more in the USA and other countries. Actually, almost 1 out of 3 American couples who married in the 1950s finally got divorced. This rushing of divorce rates initiated well before no-fault divorce was permitted in the 1970s. By the end of the 1950s, grounds for “fault” divorce had become as careless as to be unnatural to their planners (Coontz, 2007).

#### **1.7.1.2 The consequences of divorce**

Divorce have abrupt and long-term costs for the divorcees, extended family, and the children involved. It is the one of the most distressing condition, having the uttermost reaching effect on all the life events (Amato, 2000). More recent analyses of the divorce literature revealed negative consequences of divorcees (Amato, 2010). Divorcee often experiences worsened physical and psychological situations for years after the end of their marriage including guiltiness, despair, suffering, and affection issues (Afifi & Hamrick, 2006; Waite, Luo & Lewin, 2009). Leary, Koch and Hechenbleikner (2001) found out that those who experienced the loss of an intimate relationship, such a marital relationship, could deteriorate into more severe issues, including substance abuse, suicidal beliefs, or suicide challenges. The well-documented harmful influence of divorce speaks to the significance of understanding ways to lessen the harmful psychological, emotional, and physiological consequences that divorcees been through. While these impacts seem serious, some individuals undergo positive outcomes of the divorce experience.

Simultaneously, divorce might have a positive effect on divorcees, which is releasing of hopeless or limiting relationships and thus empowering the individual to form a new life, either by him/herself or with a partner. Whatever the agony is experienced felt by one partner, it is suitable to express easily and escape from harassment, using one of the expressions of pain: anger, crying etc. An imperfect expression of personal pain can postpone therapy and may create complications in relations underlying it (Domnica. 2005).

Concerning both partners, the costs of divorce depend on a number of factors: the existence of children, investment in marriage, by whom and why the divorce was filed, the importance of the partners on sensual and marital market, system solidity of

relatives and friends of both partners. Generally, divorce urge the children to stay with the mother, so the material costs increase for the woman, whereas the psychological costs are higher for the father (those who have a great ethical sense) (Domnica. 2005). She states that mothers are left alone with children after divorce economic deterioration, for the resulting reasons:

- Less capability to make money (during marriage she worked less), and now they have to deal with children which makes it harder to get engaged in two jobs;
- Lack of support from her ex-husband (many ex-partners fail to pay the duties on the growing and childcare);
- Insufficient assistance from the state and the society.

Mothers get many responsibilities, because their society decides that their social role is to educate their children and ensure that their children behave well. Remarkably, in the same record of the collective mentality, the fathers seem to have less responsibilities, as long as it is recognized that financial support is adequate to pay off for damages (Domnica. 2005). Researchers have found a typical conduct of parents: the mother sacrificing herself and life while the father go to start another family life; mothers have no choice; father almost always choose to be free.

#### **1.7.1.3 The reasons for divorce**

Divorce is a multifaceted phenomenon under investigation by various disciplines and attitudes from several standpoints, and it is still manifested by diversity even when the study focuses on the issue of why marital relationships break. Understanding the reasons for divorce includes studying a personal awareness of reasons from the individual's standpoint, his/her personal factors (interpersonal couple and family variables), and life cycle variables (Ganc, 2015).

Over history, the reasons for divorce were relatively diverse than nowadays, particularly in multifaceted, stratified societies, and the right to use it was often inadequate. In a number of of the male-controlled societies of the earliest world, divorce was principally a male perquisite. In ancient Rome, unlike modern America, divorce was most common among the wealthy classes, in which many people swapped their partners as emotionlessly as we change Internet providers, to acquire more advantageous in-laws.

In early medieval Europe, an upper-class male would often search to divorce his wife if she had not list him in a male heir. In China, a man's parents could coerce him to kick his wife away from her house if she stands against his parents or if they thought that his love for her hindered with his family duties (Coontz, 2007).

The life narratives of divorced couples point to their own anxieties concerning the effect of demographic conditions. Marrying in adolescence, the individual's low economic social status, employment, and education level, are all significant factors disturbing the establishing and carefulness of relationship steadiness. The reasons for divorce among economically well-situated marriages generally include hostility, lack of affection, unsuitable communication, and transformation of interests. Motives for divorce among those with low socioeconomic status are frequently violence, alcohol addiction, and economic problems. Reasons for divorce that are gaining in motion consist of lack of communication, change of benefits and ethics, and partner's selfish conduct (Amato, 2010). Couples who are extremely educated and economically well positioned possibly have diverse desires and burdens on their relationships than those who struggle to survive economically in their marriages. The less-educated couples belong to the higher threatened group possibly also because they have lower levels of knowledge and expertise regarding how to mature relationships, or even how to search for help (Klobučar & Simonič, 2017).

In Meler's study (2013), based on data collected in semi-structured and in-depth interviews conducted among Israeli-Palestinian women, the interviewees cited five main reasons for divorce: violence, husband betrayal, patriarchy and the absence of the nuclear family. These factors complicate the couple's life and strengthen the desire for divorce, leading to disagreement with their husbands about the desired pattern of marriage. According to sociological telephone survey, conducted by the Research Centre Discourse in May 2016, half of young women with children believe that the wife has the moral right to divorce her husband, whom she does not love, even if he is not guilty in front of her and they have children. In this situation, even perfect behavior of one of the spouses makes no warranties from divorce at the demand of the other spouse (Sinelnikov, 2017).

Longitudinal research shows that predictors of marital disturbance include domestic violence, regular conflict, disloyalty, the amount of perceived relationship difficulties, a



weak obligation to marriage, and low levels of affection and faith between partners (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). Amato and Hohmann-Marriott (2007) conducted a collection of analysis of couples who divorced between two survey waves. Their analysis made two distinctive groups. The first included partners who stated recurrent arguments, physical hostility, thoughts of divorce, little marital contentment, and slight interaction. The second group included couples who reported few arguments, little physical aggression, few feelings of divorce, and sensible levels of marital pleasure and contact.

A study that examined that was carried among the Arab population in Israel and includes 312 Arab Muslim men and women found that the divorcees, both men and women, reported a mixture of modern and traditional motives for their disintegration, among them some common reasons for divorce in the West today like communication difficulties. This echoes the change towards the westernization in Israeli Arab society (Cohen, & Finzi-Dottan, 2012).

#### **1.7.1.4 Reasons for divorce within the Arab community in Israel**

The decision for getting divorced is a multifaceted decision. The literature indicates more than one reason for divorce. A study conducted by Cohen and Savaya (2000) (cited in Cohen & Savaya, 2003) that examined the reasons of divorce among Muslim Palestinians in Israel revealed a combination of "modern" and "traditional" motives in the population. A large proportion of the study participants reported on the emotional and common causes of modern cultures, including communication difficulties, disappointment to survive, verbal mistreatment, and lack of commitment to marital life and family. Also a great proportion of the participants reported severe existing problems (mainly husband physical cruelty, drug use, alcohol and refusal to work), extended family intervention and problems of fertility as motives for getting divorce in developing and traditional cultures (Cohen & Savaya, 2003).

Scholars have seen this outline of motives as a result of the change or reflection of the evolution that Palestinian Arabs in Israel have experienced in recent decades from conventionalism to modernism. This view is supported by research findings indicating that 165 of the participants noted differences between spouses concerning living a modern or old-fashioned lifestyle as a reason for their divorce (Cohen & Savaya, 2003).

In Meler's (2013) study, which is based on data collected from semi-structured and in-depth interviews conducted among Israeli-Palestinian women, the interviewees cited five main reasons for divorce: violence, infidelity of the husband, patriarchy, and lack of independence of the nuclear family. These factors complicate the life of the couple and strengthen the desire for divorce, leading to disagreement with their husbands regarding the desired marriage pattern.

## **1.8 Resilience**

Literature presents several definitions of resilience. According to Nguyen-Gillham, Giacaman, Naser and Boyce's (2008) article, resilience is depicted alternatively in terms of 'competence', 'capability' or 'restorative powers, mastery, constructive change'; it is the recognition of resources within individuals and communities and the change from highlighting problems to one of 'opportunities, hope and solutions' and signals the interest in successful health outcome. Burton, Cooper, Feeny and Zoellner (2015) define resilience as recovery from initial dysfunction, in contrast to resistance, a trajectory that does not include initial interruption to functioning. Resilience has major contribution to the field of therapy because, as Burton et al., (2015) claim, it reflects an ability to bounce back from the impact of traumatic experience and return to functioning.

Resilience is a multifaceted nature that is a combination of biological tendencies, psychological characters, and exterior backing systems. For example, most individuals who have overcome difficulty have at least a normal intellect, have an innate relaxed personality, are interested about their surroundings, and recognize themselves as physically resilient. Some of the psychological characters of resilient persons are optimism and inner locus of control; self-confidence in problem solving abilities and flexibility in responding to difficulty; strength of character; and truthful self-appraisal, fulfilment with self-worth, and self-esteem. Resilience has been associated with many adverse events in people's lives, e.g., childhood abuse, war, criminal victimization, bereavement, and breast cancer (Schaan & Vögele, 2016).

### **1.8.1 Resilience and divorce**

Resilience is defined as an individual's total capability and disposition to completely adapt in the face of a main hardship. When relating to divorce, it is the ability to "bounce back" from the course and sequelae of divorce to a past state of positive adaptation. For example, there are four shared consequences resulting from such a harsh conditions: submitting (giving up; e.g., alcoholism, suicide), existence with injury (long-term negative psychological impacts), recovery (return to the prior level of positive modification), and flourishing (facing development beyond the former level of adjustment); the latter three are considered resilient (Quinney & Fouts, 2004).

Despite the impact of the negative psychological, emotional, and physiological consequences of divorce on the divorcees, some persons, who been through a divorce, experience positive consequences. Individuals who undergo these positive effects seem to be more resilient to this adversative event. There are numerous potential clarifications for that positive consequences (Frisby, Butterfield, Dillow, Martin&Weber, 2012):

Firstly, positivity following divorce may result from real conflict management and feelings of assistance (Frisby et al., 2012). Amato (2000) argued that the outcomes of divorce can be positive when difficulties between the divorcing spouses are fixed efficiently. Much research has been dedicated to conflict management as a technique to improve views of successful closure, and fruitful results of post-divorce. Partners may experience lonesomeness and despair while married and may view divorce as an exit from an already negative situation. For example, some divorcees even experience feelings of happiness, freedom, and demonstrate progress by reinventing themselves following the decision to divorce (Dooha, Carrere & Riggs, 2010).

Secondly, some persons may be more resilient. Binanno (2004) argued that resilience may happen as a result of other aspects, including relationship superiority, backing, one's worldview, and suitable factors in which the opposing event ensued (Bonanno, Wortman & Nesse, 2004). The extent study on resilience after divorce has almost entirely focused on the resilience of offspring from divorced families or resilience of the parent-child relationship in the aftermath of divorce (Frisby et al., 2012).

Thirdly, strategic face-work, or the security of the former partners' character and feelings when demanding a divorce, may be associated to views of an effective divorce and resilience. Working on face-work very early in the divorce course may be related to lower face risk, and reduced sequential conflict between the involved persons. Face subtle divorce meetings may also sustain the face of each divorce to his/her social nets and families, setting the stage for a more harmonious end (Frisby et al., 2012).

Some persons leave divorce with comparatively few negative consequences, indicating resilience, defined as the capability to continue moderately steady, vigorous levels of psychological and physiological functioning (Seery, Holman, Alison, & Silver, 2010). In fact, Bonanno, Wortman, Lehman, Tweed, Haring, Sonnegg and Nesse (2002) found that resilience was more frequent than grief. People who are resilient display fewer despair and grief indications. Most resilience study examining loss has focused on passing away. However, resiliency should also be considered in divorce, as individuals who have practiced departure and refusal from a marital spouse physiologically and psychologically may experience grief comparable to those who have miss a loved one because of death.

Resilience models focus on the risk factors that disturb the consequences of the individuals when confronted with life stressors such as divorce (Seery, et al., 2010). Afifi and Hamrick (2006) recognized communication as one of three main factors that influence resilience. They claim that communication is one definite risk feature that can lead to either positive or negative consequences (Afifi and Hamrick; 2006). Classifying factors that improve risk or resilience after divorce could permit researchers and specialists to aim particular persons who are in need of a post-divorce involvement or counseling. An understanding of the diverse reactions to divorce, and who will react in certain ways, can also update social nets about providing relief and well-being, since social networks are often a principal cause of support following closure (Frisby et al., 2012). One step toward recognizing those who are at further risk starts with understanding background factors, as suggested by Bonanno (2004). Precisely, understanding the setting in which the divorce took place, starting with the decision to get divorce, and the roles partners play in the divorce, will start to lighten risks that each partner may encounter.

## **1.9 Economic hardship and divorce**

The distinguished positive association between divorce and financial hardship has long stimulated discussions over a range of public strategies. Many viewers understand this association as indication that divorce leads to hardship, such as if divorce reduces chances to share domestic expenses or if divorcing partners leads to extract possessions that were previously held cooperatively. Those who adopt this opinion often respond by suggesting procedures intended either to lessen the occurrence of divorce, to offer economic support to people disadvantaged by divorce, or maybe to modify the financial payments between divorcing partners (Drewianka & Meder, 2020).

The financial condition of a person after a divorce is central, because it upsets other areas of the individual's life progress, and principally his/her health and wellbeing. Economic difficulties after the end of a bond are attributable not only to a loss of financial prudence of scale. Indeed, money problems in the wake of a break-up may be triggered by many other tasks in the individual's lives of the ex-spouses, and of their family fellows and friends (Mortelmans, 2020).

Esmaeili, Yaacob, Juhari and Schoebi (2015) claimed that divorced individuals experienced more traumatic life actions, which might be related to the loss of social systems and economic difficulties that increase negative health consequences. Education, work, and wages are related to psychological suffering among divorced partners (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). Research showed that very educated individuals compare with less educated persons can find occupations easier, have developed problem-solving abilities, and have a resilient sense of control, which could be valuable after divorce. For divorced people, work also provides required income, chances to broaden the social net, and a sense of self-worth and independence (Tamborini, Reznik, & Couch, 2016).

The existence of children can have undesirable impacts on divorced persons. It is problematic for divorced custodial mothers to find and grip a job or to get married again. Bigger psychological pain among divorced mothers might therefore arise because they encounter the problems of child care on their own, whereas married parents are in a situation to share these household tasks. Bigger economic difficulties and sole child custody are amongst the most mentioned stressors that are connected to divorce; these

position persons at a sophisticated risk for psychological suffering (Esmaeili et al., 2012). Study showed that divorced persons have larger economic sorrow than married persons, although this specific difference is significantly higher for women than for men (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). According to Esmaeili et al., (2012), a high level of financial anguish continues for at least 5 years in divorced persons. The experience of being divorced leaves many people, especially mothers, in long-lasting difficult economic situations, and these conditions have opposing impacts on psychological anguish. Furthermore, Tamborini, Reznik and Kenneth (2016) found that divorced women, compared with married women and divorced men, report more enduring economic problems, such as being incapable of paying bills or buying necessary supplies. Divorced women continue to be economically underprivileged if they have custody of children.

Divorce is associated with financial difficulties, social isolation, and dangerous health behaviors among adults and children. Divorce has long been associated with physical and emotional health problems (Lorenz et al., 2006). The study by Scott, Rhodes, Stanley, Aline, and Merman (Scott, Rhoades, Stanley, Allen, & Markman, 2013) which is based on interviews of 52 divorced people (both males and females) supports the abovementioned information. The researchers cited a number of reasons for divorce such as betrayal, domestic violence, drug addiction, financial difficulties, high expectations of unfulfilled marriage, lack of commitment, and disputes and arguments. In addition, Rani's study (Rani, 2014), which included interviews of 412 litigants (those who filed for divorce) in Chennai Family Courts in India, lists a number of reasons that are consistent with the other studies in the research literature. He talks about social, psychological, economic and cultural reasons, lack of compliance, interference from the family of the other spouse, cruelty, domestic violence and irregular communication.

Divorce may impact a woman's likelihood of undergoing a work incapacity later in life through numerous ways. Economic assets related with marriage are principally useful (Halpern-Manners, Warren, Raymo & Nicholson, 2015) on the other hand, economic hardship characteristically follows a divorce. Economic properties, in turn, are connected with health, including the chances of reporting a labor incapacity and women's permanency (Rank and Hirschl 2014). Moreover, divorce can lead to the loss of health coverage (Lavelle and Smock 2012), mainly among lower-educated mothers

(Peters, Simon, and Taber 2014). Over time, the loss of economic resources following divorce may cause an augmented risk of work incapacity among women. Blau, Kahn, Brummund, Cook, and Larson-Koester. (2017) thinks that ever-divorced women work more hours per year than un-divorced women.

Another challenge that distinguishes changes in a family after divorce, are changes in economic position; although specialized studies illustrate that mothers are more expected to undergo post-divorce economic crisis, fathers also, sometimes, faced with these economic difficulties, but are less common, chiefly because men barely keep on child custody and later because all research show that, in general, men are funded more than women (Ghebrea, 2003).

### **1.9.1 Coping strategies**

A technique of accessing the financial costs of a separation is to not look at the loss of resources, but at the following recovery. When we apply a life course agenda, we can realize that people's lives do not cessation after a break-up. The sociology of the life development stresses that there are chronological modifications in people's lives (Mortelmans, Matthijs, Alofs & Segart, 2016). This suggests that life goes on after divorce, and that people take action when challenged with difficulty. Looking at the post-break-up approaches of previous spouses unavoidably carries us to the notion of managing tactics. A coping approach is defined as "a behavioral form of a performer to deal with difficulties, mentioning the typical and established behaviors of feeling, thinking and acting in such circumstances". When investigating the economic coping behavior of ex-partners after a divorce, we can distinguish two chief coping mechanisms: finding a new spouse and altering one's labor market conduct. Both policies are known to completely impact the financial well-being of an ex-partner. A third possible plan that is sometimes measured is returning to the parental home, also termed the "boomerang effect" or the "boomerang move" (Albertini, Gähler, & Härkönen, 2018).

### **1.10 Self-esteem**

Self-esteem can be defined as the value which individuals assign to themselves, their potentials, and behavior. It is also the general value that individuals give to themselves,

which can be either negative or positive (Farid & Akhtar, 2013). Low self-esteem is related to factors like non-social behavior, depression, insecurity, and physical illness or physical disability (Myers, Willse & Villalba, 2012). (do you want me to delete this section?)

#### **1.10.1 Self-esteem of divorced women**

When marriages finished in divorce, numerous divorced individuals keep struggling with the disturbances of post-divorce existing (Esmaeili et al., 2012) showed that even years after the divorce, an important minority of divorced partners continue to report high levels of psychological suffering, including despair, sorrow, powerlessness, violence, grief, blame, lonesomeness, anger, low self-esteem, and anxiety. Moreover, Fenniman (2010) pointed out that loss of psychological security out of divorce may lead to instability, anxiety, stress, introversion, feeling guilty, loss of self-confidence, low self-esteem, and loneliness

In a study conducted by Baum and Rahav (2008) that includes a mixed sample of 70 divorced custodial mothers in Israel, discovers modifications in the self-concept of divorced women. Findings show that most of the study participants saw themselves as having transformed, and developed, in the measured features of self-concept. Paralleling their current state to that before their divorce, most reported that they became more autonomous, more in control of their lives, and more accountable for themselves. They informed feeling larger self-esteem, more capable, and more probable to see the responsibilities facing them as trials. Furthermore, they perceived these changes as very significant and substantial. In contrast, a quarter of the divorced women saw themselves either as unaffected or as having altered in an unwanted way. The findings support the view that self-concept can be altered in adulthood, as well as the claim that divorce brings not only damage but also chance for self-development (Baum & Rahav, 2005).

Shackelford's (2001) study studied 214 persons and estimated their self-image and provided information about marriage conflict and satisfaction. Spouses were interviewed by two interviewers who autonomously evaluated each participant's mate value and physical attraction. The outcomes offer support for both theorized roles of self-esteem. Main findings contain: husbands' self-esteem is harmfully connected with wives' sexual unfaithfulness and with wives' complaints of husbands' mistreatment and



jealousy; wives' self-esteem is destructively connected with husbands' derogation of wives' physical attractiveness and completely correlated with interviewer's rankings of wives' physical desirability.

In Muhediat, Al-Harbi and Abood's (2020) research, that study 50 divorcees (25 and 50 years of age) found that divorce may lead to low self-esteem of the divorcee due to the negative opinions of those who view her as a failure. Divorced women are assumed to be guilty in Jordanian society, and sometimes this judgment is wrong because husbands are the main reason as a result of their wrongful actions at home. These actions generate psychological tension with wives and eventually the wives ask for divorce.

Zafar and Kausar's (2015) research showed that divorced women have lower sense of competence and self-esteem and higher sense of time perspective as compared to married women. Averdijk, Malti, Ribeaud, and Eisner (2012) investigated aggression and internalizing behavior in a sample of 40 divorced women who were recently divorced and second set of women consisted of 40 women who were happily living with their husband. Divorced females have lower sense of self-esteem as compared to their married counterparts. In addition to lower self-esteem, divorced women are reported to be more depressed, report more anxiety and stress as compared to married women. Moreover, feeling of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced women.

### **1.11 Arab divorced women in the district of Nazareth**

Divorce has long-term effects on their personal lives and the well concluded that divorce affects women more powerfully than men, personally, emotionally and financially (gurus, 2009). For most women, divorce is associated with economic stressors. Women with children have financial difficulties related to divorce and are slowly recovering from the situation. Also, women with low education and career skills find it difficult to acclimate to their new lives. Women divorced suffer psychological distress along with mental health problems such as depression, immediately after the divorce and for a long period afterwards. Their physical health is in worse shape than the health of married women, and their lives are most stressed. Studies conducted over the years indicate a steady increase in divorce rates in Israel. For example, while in the 1970s, the percentage of divorced and divorced in Israel stood at only a few percent

(about 2 percent in the early 1970s), in 2014, about 13 percent were measured (Zur,2012).

With the stable growth in divorce rates all around the globe , divorce is still supplemented by many stressors, mainly for women in male-controlled cultures (Haj-Yahia, 2002). As a result of exposure to the Jewish population and Western society, many Muslim-Arab women in Israel have tried to combine traditional and modern life forms (Abu-Baker, 2003). This multifaceted cultural meeting between tradition and modernity occasionally causes families to breakdown. Remarkably, the position of women in the family hierarchy in Arab society is low, and countless control devices are used to limit their freedom of action. The social position of women focus principally around their spousal and maternal roles and wives are subordinate to their husbands. In that context, women might want to finish their marriages. Nevertheless, in doing so, they come across severe problems, including an unconfident future and a diversity of emotional, economic, and social stressors. Moreover, their probabilities of re-wedding are few, and, in many cases, their only decisions for remarriage are becoming a second wife to a married man or marrying an aging widower. Consequently, most Muslim-Arab women choose to be in traumatic marriages to escape the stigma of divorce and the threat of losing custody of their children (Kulik & Klein, 2010).

To sum up, this research study the relationship between divorce and other three factors, self-esteem, economic hardship, and resilience among Arab women in Nazareth, Israel. The literature review shows that divorce affects women's self-esteem in a negative way besides causing them economic hardship. Concerning the factor of resilience, the review shows that it can be a helpful method to improve the life of divorced women and assists them in overcoming the consequences of divorce and overcomes it. In other words, resilience can help divorced woman starts a new life. The lack of data concerning this specific field of research has been a reason behind studying Resilience, economic hardship and low self-esteem among Arab Muslim divorced women in the district of Nazareth. (this paragraph is a summary for the literature review).

## Chapter Two

### Research Design and Methodology

This section discusses the methodology used for this study. It is based on using the qualitative approach in order to answer the research questions. It presents the research objectives, the questions of the research, the participants, the research approach and the data collection method. It provides explanations of validity and generalisability pertinent to this study. Finally, it highlights the ethical considerations that had to be undertaken

#### 2.1 Target population

15 Arab divorced women from the district of Nazareth between 25 and 57 years old, with and without children who agreed to participate in the research. They worked as teachers, layers, hairdressers, engineers, accountants and tailors, nurses, secretaries or simply they do not work; they are housekeepers. Below, the demographic characteristics of the subjects listed in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Demographic characteristics of the study population (N=12).*

		NO	%
<b>Age</b>	25-30	5	33.33%
	31-40	5	33.33%
	41-50	3	16.66%
	51-60	2	16.66%
<b>Years of divorce</b>	1-3	8	53.33%
	4-6	4	26.66%
	7-8	3	20%
<b>children</b>	0	2	13.33%
	1-2	9	60%
	3-4	4	26.66%

## **2.2 Research approach**

The research was conducted using the qualitative method. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible. It tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples, which are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aim to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth' (Punch, 1998). Or as Sherman and Webb (1988) define it: "'Qualitative' implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'".

## **2.3 Data collection methods**

The "fitness for purpose" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000) controls the choice of an interview. The research tool in this study is a closed-ended interview. Interviews allow close contact between the interviewer and the interviewee enabling both of them to clarify issues. In addition, the interview allows the interviewer to observe the interviewee's body language and so direct his/her questions in a way to obtain the unexpected information from the interviewee (Cohen et al., 2000). The advantages of the questions of the closed-ended interview are: (1) the communication skills of the respondent are less critical, (2) the Respondents can answer close-ended questions quickly, and (3) the data is quickly coded, entered, and analyzed (Hyman & Sierra, 2015). The interview consists of five questions that deals with self-esteem, economic hardship and resilience (appendix 1):

1. Tell me about your life after getting divorced.
2. What are the challenges you faced after getting divorced?
3. Tell me about the most important factors/sources that helped you adapt after getting divorced.
4. Tell me about the economic difficulties you faced
5. Tell me about your self-esteem after the breakup.

## **2.4 Study design and procedure**

The research is based on the qualitative method and a closed-ended interview has been used, as a tool of the qualitative approach. In the first phase, the research questions were formulated and, accordingly, the qualitative tools were tested for choosing the tool which could be relevant and suitable for examining the research questions. In the

second stage, the process of locating the research population is done using the snowball method technique whereby the research population is recruited in the form of a friend bringing a friend, through a researcher friends. Anyone interested in participating in the study and met the criteria of participation was asked to contact the researcher via telephone. At the beginning of April 2020, after contacting the study participants and obtaining their consent, the researcher set an online meeting through which she explained the nature of the research and obtained their written consent through phones.

## **2.5 Data Analysis**

Data were collected through a closed-ended interview agenda. The data was examined using a qualitative approach; the thematic approach was used as an inductive way of data examination. Thematic analysis done through numerous phases. To capture the meaning and be familiar with the data, each interview was recorded many times and transcribed the verbal and non-verbal recording cues like pauses, crying, laughing during the first phase. The researcher used pseudo-names for the analysis of in-depth interviews. Generally, the researcher used the following steps to reach the analysis: familiarization with data, internalized through transcription and translation, the reading of records for numerous times for precise translation. All interviews were translated into English, verbatim, by the researcher. The transcripts were coded on it. In the final stage, theme development was made and followed by data reduction, simplification, defining and redefining theme were presented in the final stages

Data analysis using Colaizzi's (Colaizzi, P. (1978). Psychological research as a phenomenologist views it. In: Valle, R. S. & King, M. (1978). Existential Phenomenological Alternatives for Psychology. Open University Press: New York) techniques led to four themes emerged from the data: The initial emergence of the negative effects of separation, Post divorced women challenges, Adaptation and adjustment, and Self-esteem after divorce.

Subthemes are offered and explicated to demonstrate difference within and depth for each essential theme. Additionally, participant quotations are written in italics to distinguish them from the study findings and included to give examples of statements that speak to each presented theme. Finally, select memos, which were recorded throughout the entirety of the study, have been included to make transparent some of

what reactions or ideas emerged for me and how what emerged may have influenced my interpretation of the participants' experiences.

## **2.6 Generalizability**

As this research is qualitative in nature it does not aim to claim generalizability. However, a partial generalizability can be conducted and in similar contexts. This generalization is not made by the researcher but by those who need it.

## **2.7 Validity and Reliability**

According to Tsavar-Ben Yehoshua (2001b), Validity means the appropriateness of the description, the analysis and the explanations for the experience under study. It is measured in open-ended qualitative research through generalizability and more in relation to internal validity. In this study, the researcher was careful about a reliable application of this definition. This application was expressed in identifying and accurately describing the interviewees, describing the processes and the patterns included in the research questions which are being anchored in the existing knowledge, with reference to the population under study. Creating necessary conditions for conducting the research: trust, direct and clear presentation of things. Readiness to criticism in all stages of data collection, recording, presentation and processing. Presenting the findings with the rigor of being authentic, descriptive, interpretive and evaluative, rich and comprehensive.

## **2.8 Ethical Issues**

Ethical issues may arise at any stage of the research phase and relate to its value for the body of knowledge being researched and the interviewees' awareness of their participation and implications. To address these issues the researcher gave the interviewees information about the research and its methods, a full explanation of the researcher's identity and the organization she represents. Moreover, the researcher ensures that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the research whenever they choose to. Furthermore, the researcher informs them about the risks and benefits of participating, and their consent that must be obtained. These considerations were also maintained for the interviewees who did not seek confidentiality, out of sensitivity to the implications of the interviews on their family members. Confidentiality is maintained by means such as renaming and blurring other

identifying information about place of residence, unusually identifiable events, as well as random change of personal details such as education, occupation, family structure, etc., as long as these do not harm the essence of the interviewed content. Requests from interviewees to sift through sensitive content from the interview were fully answered, and many interviewees noted that the time between the first contact and the interview, as well as the time after, were seen as a significant opportunity for the interviews to whitewash this issue, central to their lives. It can be noted that all the interviewees participated in the study to their full will. Before commencing the research, the participants were informed about the research and were assured that it will be for the benefit them, other divorced women and the connected research, in general. The participants were informed about the general purpose of the study before they decided to participate. I prepared a written form of consent for the women who have been interviewed, and read it to them before they signed it.

## **2.9 Translation**

As a fluent Arabic speaking researcher, the researcher conducted the interviews in Arabic using the local Palestinian dialect of the participants (urban and rural). The audio interviews were transcribed and data was analyzed using also Arabic. Translation the data to English was done by paying to an external translator. The researcher reviewed and compared the translated interviews with the original transcriptions to ensure accuracy.

## **2.10 Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is self-critical examination of the researcher's assumptions and beliefs and it contains self-criticism through each research stage and writing style. This qualifies the researcher to be more self-conscious concerning her relationship with those whom she studies, the data and with the study itself (Bryman, 2012). The reflexivity of the researcher enriches the data. Reflexive comments of feelings and thoughts during the data generation process will be addressed in the thesis to meet objectivity. In addition, reflexivity helps the researcher to be more self-aware of her feelings, background, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors during the data generation and writing up process (Daly, 1992, Atkinson, 2002).

Being a divorced woman and it is the research I chose to carry on, I decided to avoid bias by asking an external researcher to help me analyzing the findings of this study.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Findings**

#### **Introduction.**

This chapter aims to show the emerged themes from the interviews with divorced women. The first section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents, whereas the second presents the primary themes and sub-themes.

#### **3.1 The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.**

##### **Age:**

The interview was conducted with 15 divorced women who live in Nazareth, Palestine. The data that was collected using a semi-structured interview revealed that these participants were divorced women. The data obtained from the participants showed that the majority of them aged between 27–57 years old.

##### **Type of occupation:**

Out of 15 in-depth interviews, 2 of them were house wife, 1 was house keeper, 3 was teachers, 1 was lawyer, 1 was engineer, 1 was accountant, 3 had their own business, 1 was a nurse, 1 was a secretary.

##### **Divorced years:**

The respondents showed that the divorce period was between 2–8 years.

**Children:** most of divorced women had between 1-3 children and one of them had 4 children while the other 2 divorced women were childless.

**Table 2***The demographic characteristics of the divorced women participants.*

	Age (years)	Work	Divorced years	Children (years)
W1	34	Teacher	3	2 male
W 2	47	housewife	6	2 female+1 male
W 3	28	Lawyer	4	1 female
W 4	54	housewife	8	3 male
W 5	27	Hair Salon	2	1 male
W 6	40	Sports teacher	4	1 male+ 1 female
W 7	38	Lawyer	8	1 female
W 8	57	Gift shop	3	childless
W 9		Engineer	3	1 male+ 1 female
W 10	44	Accountant	2	1 male
W 11	36	Sewing clothes	2	2 female
W 12	30	English teacher	2	1 male
W 13	30	Secretary	3	childless
W 14	48	Nurse	8	2 male
W 15	36	Housekeeper	6	4male

Through a deep qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews with divorced women in order to try to explore their lived experience of divorce and its effects on them as well as the challenges and its impact on their self-confidence and resiliency, it was found that they live in a very complex situation and vary in feelings and ideas.

Despite this difficult situation, they expressed its negative impact on them with different descriptions of those effects.

Divorce was such a problem that classes many other psychological, emotional instability, economic crisis, and social constraints which compel the divorced women to lead to traumatic life events/ experiences. Although the responses of divorced women were similar regarding the negative repercussions of divorce on them, there were differences in the expression of these effects.

The following is a list of the themes and the sub-themes:

**Table 3**

*The following is a list of the themes and the sub-themes.*

Theme	Subthemes
<b>The initial emergence of the negative effects of separation</b>	A plurality of opposites feelings: “Mixed feelings between acceptance and non-acceptance” Uncertainty of feelings Societal negative Attitudes towards divorced women The burden of single parental responsibilities: social, financial, self, family Lowering the standard of living Feeling like a child: forbidden and allowed by parents Mixed of heavy psychological effects: anxiety, loneliness, Anger, Fear, Ashamed, Grief
<b>A spiral of overlapping and cumulative post divorced challenges</b>	Community related challenges: Parents, friends, children, place of residence Self-related challenges: adjustment, decision making, long work hours, feelings of incompetence Financial challenges: Divorce payment, Special condition to get social affair support, Children's expenses and their education, low income, Ex-husband financial status, Family financial status, work
<b>Adaptation and adjustment: Time is the key</b>	Self-related factors of a divorced woman Faith in God Intellectual and educational awareness Living independence Occupation: Work as an Empowering Experience Parental support and awareness Children support Social affair
<b>Self-esteem after divorce</b>	Divorce as Guilt vs. Relief: <i>Self Blame vs. Self-Growth</i> Finding strength through support from families and others The financial independence of the divorcee: Work as an Empowering Experience

### 3.2 Primary Themes and Sub-Themes.

#### **Theme1: The initial emergence of the negative effects of separation:**

##### **Subtheme 1: A plurality of opposites feelings: “Mixed feelings between acceptance and non-acceptance”.**

Despite the divorced women’s recognition of the negative effects of divorce and the variety of expressions and responses about these effects, the one who goes deep in trying to comprehend what the divorced woman thinks about these effects elicits a conflict and a mixture of those feelings between satisfaction and lack thereof, and this reflects the difficulty and complexity of the situation in which they live in that period, especially at the beginning of the matter.

#### **Example Ms. 1 described her situation after the divorce as.**

*"Life, despite all these positive feelings, I feel now more responsible, many duties, especially divorced women and play the role of mother also and more restricted because of the society's view of the divorced woman".*

*"I feel more comfortable, I go to my bed to sleep and I feel safe, but in return it increased my responsibility and concern for my children". Ms. 2.*

*" I accepted it, but I am not satisfied with it “a life we want to live”, for sometimes I feel myself that I am not able to bear the responsibility alone, especially a mother of three children, a lot of responsibilities even though my children are adults, they count, “a life we want to live”.*

*months I'm accepting". Ms. 4.*

*“My life after divorce is honey and onions (with a smile) ”.*

*"My life after the divorce, in the beginning after the divorce, is not easy; it is not as we think. Life after the divorce, the person rests, from the person who was hitting her, who made her life black, that is, yes, she rests from these things, but in return there are many difficulties, especially the divorced woman who the role of the mother." Ms. 9.*

### **Subtheme 2: Uncertainty of feelings.**

It was not only a conflict of feelings and expressions for the answers of the divorced women, but also reflected a kind of feeling of mistrust or certainty of those feelings, and this confirms the difficulty and complexity of what goes around inside these women.

*"I saw myself in a circle full of problems and responsibilities, many times I feel myself lost in a world that I do not understand a difficult reality". Ms. 7.*

*"After the divorce, I started blaming myself, in addition to society blaming me for the failure I had suffered and which led to the divorce." Ms. 14.*

*"I do not deny that despite my new lifestyle, which is the best pattern, I feel more anxious about.*

*"My life after the divorce, a life with many ups and downs, especially after a year of divorce, a life full of surprises, criticism, difficulties, certain shocks" My life after the divorce was very difficult, I expected joy, pleasure, but I was shocked by many things that were not within my expectations". Ms. 6.*

### **Subtheme 3: Societal negative Attitudes towards divorced women.**

The society's view and attitudes towards divorced women had a great negative impact through the interactions of that view and its impact on others, including family, friends, colleagues and neighbors, which led to their being affected by this negative view and thus adopting those ideas towards divorced women and transforming them from supportive to frustrated or negative towards divorced women.

*"Many challenges faced me, the whole community was a challenge (neighbors, relatives, friends) I became a different view after I became divorced, although many of my countrymen were watching how he beat and humiliated me, but some friends cut off contact with me, the many criticisms from people " Ms. 2.*

*"And the negative view of society for this word "the girl of so-and-so is divorced." A girl of my generation bore a lot, especially people's questions. Embarrassing questions were "Why did you divorce?"*

*"Society's criticisms and comments against the divorced woman were many." Ms. 7.*

**Subtheme 4: The burden of single parental responsibilities: social, financial, self, family.**

Divorced women fall under a heavy burden as the single responsible person of the family, and this unfortunately doubles the social, financial and family responsibilities.

Expenditures burden the divorced woman, as she, on one hand, increases the demands, especially since she is often the one who asks for divorce, and thus pays the expenses of the lawyer and advocacy, and on the other hand, it affects her work, forcing her to be absent and thus decrease her income.

*"I feel more responsible now, many duties, especially divorced and playing the role of a mother."* Ms. 1.

*"My life after divorce is described as life, a very difficult life. I now live in rent. The monthly income is barely enough for us, the expenses and requirements of life are many, especially I am a mother of a housewife and I have three children, many obligations and responsibilities."*

*"My eldest son in the family, after the divorce, feels that he is the one in charge, responsible for managing the house, especially the matters related to his sisters, who are younger than him. Various pressures we went through as a family, a single-parent family, especially my eldest son, and his contribution to supporting me financially."* Ms. 2.

**Subtheme 5: Lowering the standard of living.**

The burden and weight of multiple responsibilities and expenses that exceeded the income of the divorced woman led to her thinking of solutions to that distress, forcing her to downward her own mobility and her family ad icrease number of work hours.

*"Many and multiple challenges, the duties and tasks that I must fulfill abound, professional challenges also. I work for long hours so that the monthly salary is sufficient for me and my children"* Ms. 1.

*"I was disturbed. My son and I got used to a new lifestyle. My son and I must change our lives a little so that the situation can be stabilized with the least expenses (reducing trips - and traveling abroad)." Ms. 10.*

*"My loss of a large number of clients has had a great impact in terms of income from my profession. My daughters' expenses are also not simple. My husband's monthly salary is not a large salary, so he supports me with a very small amount. I also resorted to the Social Affairs Center in the hope that he would support me, but unfortunately Also, a very small amount that barely supports me, household expenses, needs and expenses are not easy" Ms. 11.*

#### **Subtheme 6: Feeling like a child: forbidden and allowed by parents.**

*".....My family, as many decisions are not supported by my father, mother and brothers. "You are divorced. It is not permissible to do that," Ms.1.*

*"At the beginning of the separation, I felt that I was a child at home. There is a constitution in the house that I must fulfill its provisions.....before going to sleep every night there is a session with my father and mother, and this session is full of orders. It is forbidden, it is not permissible." ..... It is forbidden to go out after seven in the evening.....It is forbidden to work late hours or stay up late with my friends in open places and other items that I must meet."*

*After this incident, my family treated me like a little girl who was very worried about me and rarely left me alone." Ms.5.*

#### **Subtheme 7: Mixed of heavy psychological effects: anxiety, loneliness, Anger, Fear, Ashamed, Grief.**

Post-divorce divorced women suffer from many negative psychological effects such as anxiety, fear, loneliness, sadness, depression, anger and shame.

She is now alone, burdened with responsibilities and expenses, with little income within a society that has a negative view of the divorced woman and this mixture of negative feelings and feelings increases the situation, making the experience more difficult and complex and beyond the limit to be tolerated or even expressed. Divorced women live

in a state of internal and external conflict and a state of disorientation and loss, to the extent that some of them took sedative medications, and others even thought of suicide.

*"For example, "If you asked me about the beginning of my life immediately after the divorce," I felt very sad, it was very difficult to describe it, although I thought for a long time....""But my life after the divorce at first was very sad and difficult." Ms.3.*

*"Even in the first period of the divorce, I decided to commit suicide. I drank a set of pills for a headache once. After an hour, I felt nauseous and did not regain consciousness. My family immediately took me for treatment in the hospital, I stayed for three days and then I returned home." Ms.5.*

*Very introverted person, I don't want to go out, I don't want to face society, I don't talk very little" I am an introverted person, and I sometimes felt that I hated myself, and my self-esteem was very low. Ms.6.*

*"At the beginning of the divorce, I felt that my self-esteem had decreased by a very small percentage, so I was ashamed when I was defined as a divorced woman". Ms.3*

*"I see myself as another person, the sensitive, weak, wrong person in her decisions. I used to see myself as the successful person in her home, her profession, the master of the right decisions. But after the separation, I became a less independent and more dependent person in my life. Every decision I made would be hesitant and consulted." Several directions to guide me, life is not easy, transition is very difficult. Ms.12.*

## **Theme 2: A spiral of overlapping and cumulative post divorced challenges.**

A divorced woman faces, especially at the beginning of the divorce period, a cycle of overlapping and cumulative challenges, and whenever she tries to control one of these challenges, another challenge intensifies.

For example, she tried to control the lack of income through long working hours but, unfortunately, that led to a decrease of the care of children, and another woman tried to stay away from people to avoid their embarrassing looks and questions, and to mitigate the impact of the negative society's view, which led to an increase in the feeling of isolation and loneliness, and this reflects the difficulty and complexity of this experience on divorced women.



**Subtheme 1: Community related challenges: Parents, friends, children, place of residence.**

At a time when divorced women are in dire need of support from the environment and society, especially family, friends, neighbors and colleagues, however, she is shocked that many people are accused of shying away and ignoring. Some even blame and boycott, because society views divorced women negatively.

*"...Girlfriends cut off contact with me, a lot of criticism from people"*

*"Why did you divorce?"*

*"What are you going to do; you are getting divorced with three children."*

*"Many challenges faced me, the entire community was a challenge (neighbors, relatives, friends) I became a different view after I became divorced, although many of my countrymen were watching how he beat and humiliated me, but some friends cut off contact with me, many criticisms from people "* Ms. 2

*"I faced several situations where I avoided this term, or the people around me knew that I was divorced."*

*Can you tell me about some of these situations?*

*In my professional and social field, I did not want to know that I was divorced, and especially, the professional staff, I did not want to know that I had become divorced, especially my profession that I am a lawyer"* Ms. 3.

*"The most important challenge was the children and everything related to their lives. It is not easy to handle everything myself. The children miss the role of their father in their lives because he has become more busy with his second wife. Another challenge is my family's pressure to send the children to their father and remarry."* Ms. 14.

**Subtheme 2: Self-related challenges: adjustment, decision making, long work hours, feelings of incompetence.**

A divorced woman is exposed to additional burdens and burdens in terms of adapting and making decisions at a time when she feels that she is weak and incompetent. On the

one hand, she is trying to carry out the tasks of the home and education, and at the same time she needs to work outside the house for a longer time, which makes her feel that she is unable to perform her duties, which makes it more difficult for her to adapt to the new situation.

In addition, she needs to make a lot of decisions while she is in a situation where she is trying to adapt, which increases her situation complexity and difficulty and this leads to her feeling weak and unable to cope with the situation.

*"The many challenges I faced, I felt that I was a very weak person and I did not have the ability to face them. In the first months of the divorce, I used to repeat these sentences a lot: "I am a weak person."*

*"I'm a failure"* Ms. 5.

*"In my professional and social field, I did not want to know that I am divorced, especially the professional staff, I did not want to know that I became divorced, especially my profession that I am a lawyer."* Ms. 3.

*"There are many difficulties, especially the divorced woman who plays the role of a mother. Motherhood is a role that carries a lot of responsibilities. I am now a divorced mother to a daughter and a son. I do a lot of responsibilities on my own, a worker, a housewife, I carry the burden of a single-parent family."* Ms. 9.

*"My life after the divorce, a very difficult life, with everything I found it difficult, raising my daughters, managing the house, in terms of profession, financial difficulties, from wrong decisions and regretting them by filing a divorce lawsuit against my husband, I have so far regretted this decision."* Ms. 11.

**Subtheme 3: Financial challenges: Divorce payment, Special condition to get social affair support, Children's expenses and their education, low income, Ex-husband financial status, Family financial status, work.**

At a time when the burdens and responsibilities on divorced women increase, the income decreases, which makes the financial difficulties intensify and be one of the most influential challenges as it exacerbates other challenges.

*"Many, many economic difficulties, until my son had to stop his university education and catch up to work, and work long hours, to contribute to the expenses. A single family, twenty adults, and his contribution to support me financially as well. Unfortunately, he supports us with something. He does not work and has no income, "lives at the expense of the state." And according to the law, he is exempted from many obligations since he does not have a monthly income. The laws, frankly, are not fair. For the sake of the divorced woman, I did not expect that the government assistance to divorced women is very limited, so that we moved from house to house because of paying the rent "in certain places I asked them for help to overcome these difficulties." Ms. 2.*

*"I felt difficult and severe economic difficulties, especially in the beginning, he paid the lawyer to get all my rights. Hearing the many stories of divorced women, I found it very important to appoint a capable lawyer even if he asked for a lot. (until I get my rights only through a lawyer), I and my son got accustomed to a new lifestyle, my son and I, we must change our lives a little so that the situation can be stabilized with the least expenses (reducing trips - and traveling abroad." Ms. 10.*

### **Theme 3: Adaptation and adjustment: Time is the key.**

*"My self-esteem has improved over time by changing my perception of my crisis, my life and my thoughts. I feel much better and I have received the necessary treatment that helps me to improve". Ms. 14.*

#### **Subtheme 1: Self-related factors of a divorced woman Faith in God.**

Belief in God, prayer and supplications were among the most important tools that divorced women used to adapt to their new situation and to adapt to many challenges.

*"A of the important factors is belief in God and prayer. It gave me a feeling of comfort and strength, especially when I go to Jerusalem and pray at Al-Aqsa. I return home with a beautiful spirit, with the hope that the world will be fine. Ms. 2.*

*"Also my faith, my prayer, my trust in God Almighty, and myself, for faith and prayer are comfort, and the calmness of my soul is very special." Ms. 8.*

*"My brother's house, faith, prayer, they changed a lot, so I started to see myself as something big. I am a pious person who fears God, morals, literature, ....."* Ms. 8.

### **Intellectual and educational awareness.**

*"One of the most important factors was my personality and myself, which was accompanying this factor. My academic degree contributed a lot to adapting and overcoming challenges. I felt intellectual maturity, resistance and strength more, and it gave me the opportunity for the professional world to work and financial independence".* Ms. 1.

### **Living independence.**

*"I am a person capable of overcoming problems and overcoming them. I am very happy with the establishment of my small project, a hair salon. The feeling of independence has added many positive things in my life."* Ms. 5.

### **Occupation: Work as an Empowering Experience.**

*"Because I am a working person and I have a monthly salary every month. Praise be to God. I am now a satisfied and happy person. I go to my work in comfort."* Ms. 10.

### **Subtheme 2: Parental support and awareness.**

Although the talk of divorced women contained some contradictions, especially with regard to the parents, they considered the parents as one of the sources of support.

*"With the help of my family and their standing by my side, this thing has changed and my self-esteem is more."* Ms. 1.

*My mother is an old woman who helped me with her looks, with her brief words full of wisdom and her prayers "May God grant you success"* Ms. 2.

*"My family and their standing by my side had a very big role in changing my life for the better."*

*"My family, then my family, then my family" was the only source of support for me. My father supported me a lot. He opened a private office in it to engage in my professional work to overcome the difficulties after the divorce. With this step, I felt a lot of joy and strength. I now have a private office in it, independent. It was a very successful and*

*successful step. For me, my father, with this step, changed my view to a more positive one in various matters, it was a very wise decision". Ms. 3.*

### **Subtheme 3: Children support.**

It was one of the clearest and most beautiful phrases that were about the sons, which reflected a large amount of support and reassurance that the divorced woman obtained from her sons and daughters.

*"My children, my children are my life, one of the most factors that helped me and gave me strength, especially girls, their anxiety and concern for me gave me a feeling of strength." Ms. 2.*

*"I began to play the role of motherhood towards my daughter as it should, as the feeling of motherhood is also one of the most important sources for me, in my support and acceptance of my new life". Ms. 3.*

### **Subtheme 4: Social affair.**

Social affairs were among the sources of support, but the divorced women explained the existence of discrimination and requested conditions for obtaining support, which were much lower than the requirements and responsibilities.

*"The laws, the laws are frankly not fair to the divorced woman. I did not expect that the government assistance to the divorced woman is very limited."*

*"My resort to social affairs helped me a lot. This step helped me a lot, and I adhere to my decision to stop these pills, and I have to accept the new reality in my life. There the specialist supported me a lot, in these steps and the positive change."*

*"The Social Affairs Center, as I mentioned earlier, my vision for many divorced women in it, and their situation is more difficult than mine. It also gave me". Ms. 2.*

## **Theme 4: Self-esteem after divorce.**

### **Subtheme 1: Divorce as Guilt vs. Relief: Self Blame vs. Self-Growth.**

Despite all those challenges, difficulties, mixed feelings, lack of availability and great responsibility, the divorced woman was able to turn the feeling of guilt into a source of relief, and feeling of guilt and regret into a source of self-growth.

*"University education. My wish when I was young was to join the university. I repeated my matriculation and psychometric studies. I devoted most of my time to studying, and my mother helped me raise my child, and three years ago I graduated with a bachelor's degree in law."*

*I feel now that my life is more beautiful after the divorce. I learned, worked hard, and reached many of my aspirations and wishes. Ms. 7*

*"I opened my mind to new things like sports. I began to take care of my beauty and health. I revived all my hobbies and needs that I had suppressed for years". Ms. 15*

**Subtheme 2: Finding strength through support from families and others.**

*"My mother supported me a lot and took me to a psychiatrist for treatment. The sessions helped me a lot. I felt hopeful and optimistic. I am now divorced and free. I went to education in the field of beauty and hair. I love this field a lot and I am now independent in my work". Ms. 5*

**Subtheme 3: The financial independence of the divorcee: Work as an Empowering Experience.**

*"I am a person capable of overcoming problems and overcoming them. I am very happy with the establishment of my small project, a hair salon. The feeling of independence has added many positive things in my life." Ms. 5*

## **Chapter Four**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

"Divorce (or the dissolution of marriage) is the termination of a marital union, the cancelling and/or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between a married couple under the rule of law of the particular country and/or state" (Kapila & Kumar, 2015: 2). It could cause low self-esteem and economic hardship among women. This section deals with the findings of the study with relation to self-esteem, economic hardship and resilience among Arab women from Nazareth district, for the purpose of providing answers to the research questions, as follows: (1) How do divorced women rebuild their self-esteem after getting divorced? (2) How do divorced women overcome their economic hardship? (3) Why does divorce cause economic hardship and low self-esteem? (4) How does resilience empower divorced women during and after marriage? Answering and discussing the question is based on the themes and the sub-themes presented in the findings part, as follows:

#### **4.1 How do divorced women rebuild their self-esteem after getting divorced?**

The results of this study show that women rebuilt and improved their self-esteem after getting divorced using five different factors and aspects: (1) self-related factors of a divorced woman which includes (a) faith in God (belief in God, prayer and supplications were among the most important tools that divorced women used to adapt to their new situation and to adapt to many challenges), (b) intellectual and educational awareness, (c) living independence and (d) occupation: work as an empowering experience. (2) Parental support and awareness: Although the talk of divorced women contained some contradictions, especially with regard to the parents, they considered the parents as one of the sources of support. (3) Children support: it was one of the clearest and most beautiful phrases that were about the sons, which reflected a large amount of support and reassurance that the divorced woman obtained from her sons and daughters. (4) Finding strength through support from families and others (such as psychiatrists and psychologists). Although the talk of divorced women contained some contradictions, especially with regard to the parents, they considered the parents as one of the sources of support.

The most important factor that help women rebuild their self-esteem is the insistence of divorced women to do so, which comes under the sub-theme, Divorce as Guilt vs. Relief: Self Blame vs. Self-Growth (5). Despite all those challenges, difficulties, mixed feelings, lack of availability and great responsibility, the divorced woman was able to turn the feeling of guilt into a source of relief, and feeling of guilt and regret into a source of self-growth. This factor is the most important because it is intrinsic; comes from the women's intention with or without the help of external people. This rebuilding is the most to survive and succeed because it is done by the divorced women themselves, not from external factors that could disappear in any time. This finding corresponds with Baum, Rahav and Sharon's (2008) study that exposed that most of the study participants saw themselves as having rehabilitated, and enhanced, in the surveyed facets of self-esteem. Comparing their current state to that before their divorce, most stated that they became more autonomous, more in control of their lives, and more accountable for themselves. They informed feeling more self-esteem, more capable, and more likely to regard the assignments fronting them as challenges. Moreover, they understood these changes as very significant and sufficient.

#### **4.2 How do divorced women overcome their economic hardship?**

The divorced women mentioned a number of elements, people and factors that helped them overcome their economic hardship. The first to be mentioned, according to the themes and the sub-themes, is the parental support and awareness and children support. Although the talk of divorced women contained some contradictions, especially with regard to the parents, they considered the parents as one of the sources of support. In general, in Arab society when a woman gets divorced, she goes to her family's house to find a shelter and decide about her future. In other words, her family becomes a coping strategy to deal with her economic hardship. When studying the economic adaptation conduct of ex-spouses after a divorce, Albertini, Gähler, & Härkönen (2018) find a third potential strategy that is sometimes considered, returning to the parental home, which is also termed the “boomerang effect” or the “boomerang move” (Albertini et al., 2018).

The other sub-theme that help divorced woman with their economic difficulties is the social affair which usually exists where they live. Social affairs were among the sources of support, but the divorced women explained the existence of discrimination and



requested conditions for obtaining support, which were much lower than the requirements and responsibilities. Although the amount of money provided by the social services is relatively few, still it can contribute to ease divorced woman economic hardship. This finding is consistent with Stack and Meredith (2018) who found that social services and governmental support can help divorced women overcome their economic hardship depend on the services they provide. The financial assistance might be little yet still it is a source of help.

The third factor as mentioned in the third sub-theme that helped divorced woman overcame their economic hardship is the financial independence of the divorcee: work as an empowering experience. This finding is consistent with Wang and Amato (2000) who state that for divorced persons, employment also offers the desirable wage, chances to broaden the social system, and a sense of self-worth and independence and a way to overcome their financial hardship. When investigating the economic managing conduct of ex-spouses after the divorce, we can distinguish two foremost coping devices: finding a new spouse and changing one's work market conduct. Both approaches are known to completely impact the financial well-being of an ex-partner.

#### **4.3 Why does divorce cause economic hardship and low self-esteem?**

A spiral of overlapping and cumulative post divorced challenges: A divorced woman faces, especially at the beginning of the divorce period, a cycle of overlapping and cumulative challenges, and whenever she tries to control one of these challenges, another challenge intensifies. Financial challenges such as divorce payment, special condition to get social affair support, children's expenses and their education, low income, ex-husband financial status, Family financial status, and work. At a time when the burdens and responsibilities on divorced women increase, the income decreases, which makes the financial difficulties intensify and be one of the most influential challenges as it exacerbates other challenges. For example, she tried to control the lack of income through long working hours but, unfortunately, that led to a decrease of the care of children, and another woman tried to stay away from people to avoid their embarrassing looks and questions, and to mitigate the impact of the negative society's view, which led to an increase in the feeling of isolation and loneliness, and this reflects the difficulty and complexity of this experience on divorced women.

Moreover, divorce causes woman economic hardship because it turns the family into a single-parent family where women are the responsible for all the expenses that related to the house, the children, themselves and endless list of financial demands and requirements (the burden of single parental responsibilities: social, financial, self, family). Divorced women fall under a heavy burden as the single responsible person of the family, and this unfortunately doubles the social, financial and family responsibilities. Expenditures burden the divorced woman, as she, on one hand, increases the demands, especially since she is often the one who asks for divorce, and thus pays the expenses of the lawyer and advocacy, and on the other hand, it affects her work, forcing her to be absent and thus decrease her income. Tamborini et al., (2016) found that divorced women report more enduring economic problems, such as being incapable of paying bills or buying necessary goods. Divorced women, particularly if they have custody of children, continue to be economically disadvantaged. Moreover, the existence of children, as Esmaeili et al., (2012) state, can have harmful impacts on divorced women. It is problematic for divorced custodial mothers to find and hold a profession or to get married again. Bigger psychological pain amongst divorced mothers might therefore rise because they face the loads of child care on their own. Augmented economic difficulties and single child custody are amid the greatest cited stressors that are connected to divorce; these position individuals at a higher danger for psychological suffering.

The other aspect of economic hardship that divorce causes is connected to the job that divorced women miss, which is connected to lowering the standard of living. In other words, the burden and weight of multiple responsibilities and expenses that exceeded the income of the divorced woman led to her thinking of solutions to that distress, forcing her to downward her own mobility and her family ad increase number of work hours. A number of them do not have a job. Research indicated that employment also provides required income, chances to extend the social network, and a sense of self-worth and independence for divorced women, (Tamborini et al., 2016). Moreover, the divorced women play the role of both parents and carry the burden of a single-parent family. This finding corresponds with Cohen and Finzi-Dottan (2012) who states that divorced women have greater economic distress and Zur (2012) who claims that women with children have financial difficulties related to divorce and are slowly recovering from the situation.

Concerning self-esteem, the results of the study show that divorce caused low self-esteem among the participants of this study for different reasons. One of the reasons behind the low self-esteem is that women feel helpless and worthless concerning the financial hardship. It is the self-related challenges sub-theme that includes adjustment, decision making, long work hours and feelings of incompetence. A divorced woman is exposed to additional burdens and burdens in terms of adapting and making decisions at a time when she feels that she is weak and incompetent. On the one hand, she is trying to carry out the tasks of the home and education, and at the same time she needs to work outside the house for a longer time, which makes her feel that she is unable to perform her duties, which makes it more difficult for her to adapt to the new situation. In addition, she needs to make a lot of decisions while she is in a situation where she is trying to adapt, which increases her situation complexity and difficulty and this leads to her feeling weak and unable to cope with the situation. Education, work, and salary are connected with psychological sorrow amongst divorced individuals, as Cohen and Finzi-Dottan (2012) claim. Those psychological distress among divorced women talked about committing suicide. This finding corresponds with the study of Leary et al. (2001) who found that those who experienced the loss of an close relationship, such a marital relationship, could deteriorate into more severe concerns, including substance misuse, suicidal thoughts, or suicide efforts.

Moreover, the plurality of opposites feelings: “Mixed feelings between acceptance and non-acceptance” is considered another sub-theme for self-esteem. Despite the divorced women’s recognition of the negative effects of divorce and the variety of expressions and responses about these effects, the one who goes deep in trying to comprehend what the divorced woman thinks about these effects elicits a conflict and a mixture of those feelings between satisfaction and lack thereof, and this reflects the difficulty and complexity of the situation in which they live in that period, especially at the beginning of the matter. The society’s view and attitudes towards divorced women had a great negative impact through the interactions of that view and its impact on others, including family, friends, colleagues and neighbors, which led to their being affected by this negative view and thus adopting those ideas towards divorced women and transforming them from supportive to frustrated or negative towards divorced women). And in case of our participants, low self-esteem is related to factors like depression and insecurity (Myers, Willse & Villalba, 2012). Furthermore, the low self-esteem of divorced women

is caused due to their inability to remarry. Kulik and Klein (2010) state that the social status of women centers largely around their spousal and maternal roles and wives are subordinate to their husbands. In that background, their chances of getting married again are limited, and, in several cases, their only choices for remarriage are becoming a second wife to a married man or marrying an old widower. Consequently, most Muslim-Arab women choose to stay in traumatic marriages to evade the stigma of divorce and the danger of losing custody of their children.

As for the low of self-esteem that results from the psychological pain of divorce, divorced women suffer from mixed of heavy psychological effects: anxiety, loneliness, Anger, Fear, Ashamed, Grief. Post-divorce divorced women suffer from many negative psychological effects such as anxiety, fear, loneliness, sadness, depression, anger and shame. She is now alone, burdened with responsibilities and expenses, with little income within a society that has a negative view of the divorced woman and this mixture of negative feelings and feelings increases the situation, making the experience more difficult and complex and beyond the limit to be tolerated or even expressed. Divorced women live in a state of internal and external conflict and a state of disorientation and loss, to the extent that some of them took sedative medications, and others even thought of suicide. This finding corresponds with Esmaeili et al., (2015) who claimed that divorced people experienced extra traumatic life happenings, which might be connected to the loss of social nets and economic difficulties that increase undesirable health consequences. Finally, divorced women connected the divorce to people's negative perceptions. This finding corresponds with Muhediat at al., (2020) research which found that divorce may lead to low self-esteem of the divorcee due to the negative opinions of those who view her as a failure. As a result, this causes feeling of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced women Averdijk et al., (2012).

#### **4.4 How does resilience empower divorced women during and after marriage?**

Resilience in our case studies was expressed by several factors that assisted divorced women during their divorce and after it. Frisby et al., (2012) state that recognizing factors that improve risk or resilience after divorce could permit researchers and specialists to target exact people who are in necessity of a post-divorce interference or therapy. An understanding of the diverse reactions to divorce, and who will respond in specific ways, can also update social systems about providing relief and well-being,

because social networks are often a main cause of support following dissolution (Frisby et al., 2012). One step toward recognizing those who are at additional risk begins with understanding circumstantial factors, as suggested by Bonanno (2004). Explicitly, understanding the setting in the divorce is set into motion, beginning with the choice to get divorce, and the roles persons act in the divorce, will begin to illuminate risks that each spouse may encounter.

The most important is the abilities and capabilities of the women themselves (divorce as guilt vs. relief: self-blame vs. self-growth). Despite all those challenges, difficulties, mixed feelings, lack of availability and great responsibility, the divorced woman was able to turn the feeling of guilt into a source of relief, and feeling of guilt and regret into a source of self-growth. The study shows that women's abilities and intentions are the factors that empower them during and after divorce. In other words, it the woman's herself to save herself. This finding corresponds with Burton et al. (2015) claim that resilience reflects an ability to bounce back from the impact of traumatic experience and return to functioning and that what most of the participants did. Some women leave divorce with reasonably limited negative consequences, showing resilience, which is their capability to continue comparatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physiological functioning (Seery et al., 2010).

The other factor that empowered the divorced women is finding strength through support from families and others, which was prominent in this study. Binanno (2004) claimed that resilience may happen as an outcome of other issues, including type of relationship, backing one's worldview, and contextual factors in which the contrary event happened. Having the family to support the divorced women helped them feel optimistic, confident and more focused. This finding corresponds with Schaan & Vögele (2016) who claims that resilient individuals become optimistic, controlled, confident in problem solving, determined, realistic, satisfied with their self-worth, and self-esteem.

Getting a job was a significant factor throughout the process of the divorced women's process of resilience. The financial independence of the divorcee; having work as an empowering experience and living independence means a lot to divorced women due to the fact that divorce leaves them financially burdened. Research showed that extremely educated persons in comparison with less educated people can find occupations easier,

have developed problem-solving skills, and have a solid sense of control, which could be beneficial after divorce. For divorced persons, work also affords required salary, chances to expand the social network, and a sense of self-worth and individuality (Tamborini, Reznik, & Couch, 2016).

However, despite the above mentioned, there were two women who were less impacted negatively by divorce; those women who reached intellectual and educational awareness. Actually, they found divorce to be the solution for their unbearable situation. This finding corresponds with Frisby et al., (2012) who state that despite the impact of the negative psychological, emotional, and physiological consequences of divorce on the divorcees, some persons, who experience a divorce, go through constructive consequences. This positivity following divorce, as Frisby et al., (2012), may be a result of actual conflict management and feelings of relief. Besides, these women, as Dooha et al., (2010) may have experienced loneliness and depression while married and may view divorce as an exit from an already negative situation. For example, some divorcees even experience feelings of happiness, freedom. It also might have a positive side, which means the release of unhappy or restrictive relationships and thus enabling the individual to build a new life, either alone or with a partner. (Domnica, 2005). To conclude, despite the consequences and difficulties of divorce concerning self-esteem and economic hardship, women can overcome this challenging experience using resilience, which is promoted and nurtured by several factors.

#### **4.5 The Limitations of the Study**

Numerous limitations should be measured when reviewing the results of this study. First, the small sample of this study might limit the generalizability of the results. This research restricted the sample by counting only women who get divorced for a maximum years previous to this study. Second, the research was limited to study a group of Arab divorced women only from the district of Nazareth. Finally, the data the interviews provided is based on the women's words, which questions on the reliability of the data.

#### **4.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

First, even though this study was conducted amongst divorced women, it is suggested that this study be replicated for a target population of divorced men in Nazareth. Second, this study was conducted amongst divorced women in Nazareth. Other studies should be conducted among numerous sociodemographic classes, groups, and societies.

#### **4.7 Theoretical and practical contributions**

On a theoretical level, the findings show that women's self-esteem, for most of the them, is generally low after getting divorced, their economic situation gets harder and resilience is an essential issue that can help them overcome the negative consequences of divorce. Consequently, this research can enrich the existing research literature. As for the practical contributions, the current study can help social service workers and counselors in caring for divorced women. First, the study provides social service workers with data about the divorced women that help them locate the aspects that need treatment. Second, the study raises the level of awareness of social service workers and counselors about the circumstances, difficulties, and ways of dealing with divorced women; The level of awareness will help think of ways to improve the situation of women who have experienced divorce.

#### **4.8 Implications and recommendation**

- Social service workers should intensify their effort, time and work for the benefit of divorced women. They should give more attention and try their best to provide the services for divorced women so the former know that they are not alone.
- Social services should provide courses to divorced women to enhance their self-esteem, which in turn affects the other aspects in divorced women's lives.
- The rules of the country towards divorced women should be regulated in a way to provide more support, especially financial.
- Mosques and churches should focus on this issue and try to raise the community awareness towards it in a way to promote the situation of the divorced woman and the way the community perceive them

To sum up, I think that the whole society has to invest enough effort in supporting divorced women to help than overcome their difficulties and start a new healthy decent life.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A The Interview

An-Najah University

Department of Postgraduate Studies

Clinical Psychology

Dear participants,

My name is Nesreen Shalabi. I am a student in Master's in Clinical Psychology. I am carrying out a study on Arab divorced women. Thanks for taking part in my study entitled " **Resilience, economic hardship and low self-esteem among Arab divorced women in the district of Nazareth**".

I do appreciate your participation.

Nisreen Shalabi

Each variable in the study includes a set of open-ended questions that focus on two sections: the first is a definition of the subject of the study and the second includes various questions that focus on the study variables (psychological resilience, economic difficulties and self-esteem):

6. Tell me about your life after getting divorced.
7. What are the challenges you faced after getting divorced?
8. Tell me about the most important factors/sources that helped you adapt after getting divorced.
9. Tell me about the economic difficulties you faced
10. Tell me about your self-esteem after the breakup.

## Appendix B

### Results of the interviews

1. Tell me about your life after getting divorced.
2. What are the challenges you faced after getting divorced?
3. Tell me about the most important factors/sources that helped you adapt after getting divorced.
4. Tell me about the economic difficulties you faced
5. Tell me about your self-esteem after the breakup.

**P= Participants; Q= Question**

P.	Q.	Coding	Answers
1	1	Family's support Social difficulties	calmer, reassuring, and independent. more responsible; more duties on my back. play both the father and the mother. avoid participating in many social events
	2	Financial difficulties Social difficulties Family's restrictions	Financial: work for long hours. Social: embarrassed with people's questions; family: restrict rules; no hanging out with friend, a child to obey orders
	3	Personality traits Financial support Family's support	Myself, academic degree. intellectually more mature, resistant and strong financial independence, meet necessary needs. And my family, emotionally
	4	Financial difficulties Social services support	lawyer, papers for the courts and money for the children, etc. though my monthly salary was little, it helped me in a way to overcome my economic difficulties. And not forgetting the social services aid.
	5	Low self-esteem Family's support Financial difficulties Social difficulties	In the beginning, I suffered low self-esteem, yet it improved by the help of my family, children, work. Divorce causes low self-esteem because it causes major changes in all family functions: economic, solidarity and social functions
2	1	Financial difficulties More responsibilities Emotional stress	difficult. to rent a house, to be responsible for all the expenses and demands of the family; a mother of three, i.e., more obligations and responsibilities". Stress and anxiety, pills to relax and sleep. nervous and impulsive. Yet not beaten by him
	2	Social difficulties Family's difficulties	Socially, friends cut off their contact. criticisms from people. no motivation to do anything; I neglected my children, and the house
	3	Self-esteem Family's support Social services Divorced women's support	My children: their concern gave a feeling of strength, passion, tenderness. my mother helped me with supporting words: Social Affairs, meet divorced women: believing in God and praying gave me a feeling of comfort
	4	Financial difficulties	my son has stopped his university education and work to help with the expenses. single-parent family. ex-husband did not



			support us with anything. Not enough governmental aid for divorced women, though it help a bit.
	5	Physical sickness Emotional difficulties Support of courses Travelling Low self-esteem	In the beginning, felt failure; cried a lot, when they called "divorced". pills for sleep and rest. anger and despair. 6 yrs. Later, accepted my social condition and appreciated myself more. happy my son attended a university, pleasing myself. participate in courses and started going places. Divorce causes low self-esteem because it deprived me from the man I love to be with.
3	1	Emotional difficulties Family's support	Very sad in the beginning, difficult reality more than expected. my family's support, my life changed for the better. The more years pass, the more positive my life becomes
	2	Emotional difficulties Social difficulties	Emotionally being called "divorced". I did not have the desire to be known as "divorced", especially, where I work as a lawyer.
	3	Family's support Financial support	"My family; my father supported me. gave me a private office to help overcome difficulties. I'm independent and successful. This office changed me positively. It was a very wise decision.
	4	Family's financial support Professional development Emotional improvement	I did not feel them because my family's financial situation is very good. I live with my family. No expenses for a rental house. father is a businessman. He paid for courts expenses and gave me my own office. professional success improve my financial, social & emotional situation.
	5	Low self-esteem then improved Social difficulties Emotional difficulties	self-esteem after the divorce improved as opposed to when being married. Married- low self-esteem. At the beginning of divorce, low self-esteem. ashamed when defining me as "divorced". By time, self-esteem improved. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I was accused of causing my divorce
4	1	Social difficulties Emotional difficulties Financial difficulties	very difficult in many respects, the way society sees me – "divorced". lonely at the beginning. lived alone. Months later, I accepted being divorced - new lifestyle. accepted but not satisfied. life I have to live. Sometimes, I am not able to bear responsibility. I am a mother of three children. Much economic pressure to be handled.
	2	Family's difficulties Social difficulties Economic difficulties Improved self-esteem later on	family, social, economic; biggest challenge: my children refused the divorce and leaving their father. So, they lived with him. They grew up; barely visit me because their father lives in another village. 2 <sup>nd</sup> challenge: my brother's wife was not divorced like me because my brother refused. Consequently, fights started between us. recently, I began to accept my new reality. Slowly, my relationship with my brother improved.
	3	Family's financial support Psychological treatment Spiritual support Family's emotional support Courses support Divorced women's support	family supported me in terms of housing. They addressed me to a psychiatric. religion and close to God is the best way to feel calm. sister and her daughters supported me. Social Affairs helped financially. I participate in courses change my mood/reduce loneliness. Meeting divorced women with stories, I feel safe. my situation is relatively good compared to that of other divorced women.
	4	Economic difficulties No family's support No governmental support No work	many difficulties. financial support from government institutions. is very little with the high cost of the life that we live, especially in my situation - a housewife. Moreover, my family's financial situation is difficult. My economic difficulties were also a reason behind accepting my children live with their father. I do not have enough space to have them;

			no money either. Consequently, I accessed institutions for help.
	5	Negative self-esteem Emotional difficulties Social worker's support Attending courses Spiritual support	negative self-esteem. I became a divorced, pathetic and lonely woman. Yet, after accessing various centers, my situation improved,. Being on fixed meetings with the social worker there and my participation in course greatly improved my sense of self-esteem. my closeness to God improved my self-esteem; I am more satisfied. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I am a single woman again against my will
5	1	Psychological difficulties Family' restrictions psychological help	A difficult life, especially in the first period after the divorce. led me into commit suicide. After this, my family treated me like a young girl. more worried about me and did not leave me alone. My mother supported me a lot and she took me to a psychologist I became more hopeful, optimistic, and free.
	2	Social difficulties Low self-esteem Emotional difficulties	I am divorced. It does not feel good. The questions of neighbors, relatives, and friends made me hate everything. challenges made me very weak and unable to face. I wanna die. I cannot survive without him.". I thought about committing suicide in order to relieve myself from this idea
	3	Family's support People's criticism	"My mother is the main factor: her tenderness and care despite the people's criticisms. It encouraged all members of my family to accept my new social condition - "divorced" , even my father though at first he was against the idea of divorce. Her way of perceiving divorce as a normal event and that I am young and have happy life waiting for me.
	4	Not many economic difficulties Family's financial support	I did not feel many economic difficulties; our family is only 3 members, and I am the eldest. The economic situation of my family is relatively good. My father supported me. He paid the costs of the divorce, the lawyer, the official expenses. Today, my son and I live with my family. My father pays for everything: food, electricity, water, etc. I get back to college to study.
	5	Low self-esteem Family's emotional support Emotional difficulties Improved self-esteem	At the beginning my self-esteem was very low. I used to repeat negative sentences to myself: self-esteem drove me to committed suicide. I've been to a therapeutic psychologist. My family supported me during the treatment process. I felt different person. Now, I love myself more and devote a lot of time to my happiness. I do the role of A mother as supposed. Divorce causes low self-esteem because it caused me much psychological pain.
6	1	Social criticism Social difficulties Improved self-esteem Improved emotional state	My life after the divorce is ups and downs; a life full of surprises, criticisms, difficulties and traumas. very difficult. I expected joy, pleasure that my dream came true and I got rid of the person who hurt me so much. became introverted. I avoid confronting the society. speechless. neglect my kids. With this transformation, I feel my new life values after the divorce.
	2	No family's support No independent life Financially independent Became independent later on	My family was against the idea of divorce. I decided to rent a house and live alone with my children, I did not feel comfortable living with my family in the same house. My parents used to shout at my children. hurt them. moving to new house, I stopped being a burden on my family. they accepted my divorce. My relationship with them improved. I have a calm life; I am Independent: housing, salary, etc. I am my own master

	3	Improved self-esteem Intellectual awareness Family's non-accept of divorce	Myself, thoughts, intellectual awareness, faith, education, salary, children, work. my family's acceptance of the idea of divorce; they became a strong source of my support. The main factor to support me, as I concluded after divorce, it was only myself.
	4	Financial satisfied Husband's financial support'	Overall, I did not feel economic difficulties because I work. I pay for all my expenses. The divorce procedures were away from court which save the expenses for both of us. My ex-husband financial condition is good so far, and I am committed to the provisions that pertain to the financial aspect, especially what is related to our kid's expenses.
	5	Introverted person Emotional difficulties Independency (housing) Improved self-esteem More responsibility Pride	In the beginning, I turned into an introverted person. I hate myself and my self-esteem decreased. However, later on, I made many decisions, the most important of which is living in a house of my own. I appreciate myself more. I worked on improving my self-esteem. I am a mother, a housewife, a worker; I am responsible; I am proud of myself. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I lost my partner.
7	1	Social difficulties Emotional difficulties	not easy, especially we have a girl. I became divorced with a relatively young age. It was so hard. It was difficult for a young woman like me to be divorced. I found myself lost in a world that I do not understand; a difficult reality with people looks and hard words. I hate people's embarrassing questions.
	2	Social criticism Social isolation	criticisms of the society about getting divorced. A number of my close friends and my relatives stopped their relationship with me accusing me I am responsible for the divorce.
	3	Family's support	One of the important factors that helped me adapt is my parents and my daughter. Her smile relaxed me. She is a bless. When she hugs me and says "mom, don't worry. Things will be ok", I forgot all the stress.
	4	Family's financial support	My family has a house of 2 floors. I live in the second floor alone, and my father is responsible for the house expenses (electricity, water, housing tax). My family helped me a lot especially my father till I finished my studying and got a job and even after that he keeps giving me money.
	5	Low self-esteem Society negative perception & criticism Emotional difficulties Improved self-esteem by time	In the beginning of the separation, I had low self-esteem. The society looks at me as a divorced woman with much criticisms. Stress and anxiety, yet by time I understand that there is no one to insults and hits me. I see myself as another person, who cares of herself and her daughter. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I feel I am a widow
8	1	Low self-esteem Husband's abandonment	Awful. My ex-husband kicked me out of the house though I sacrificed myself. I never expect this end. My goal was to only please him and save money avoid him getting into financial crisis..
	2	Emotional difficulties Financial difficulties Self-independence Developing a career	most important and difficult is loneliness. I am old. I haven't completed my studies. It is hard to get good work. My parents are dead. my older brother offered to live with them. I refused because I want to live by my own. After living in a room in his house, he saw me sad, he helped me rent a house in the same neighborhood. I opened my business (gift shop) and these steps were very important in my support and acceptance of the reality of being a divorced woman
	3	Family's support	The main factor and source was the support of my eldest

		Financially become independent by time Spiritual support	brother. He was the first to open his house and offered financial support. He is a believer; a real man. My brother is one of the factors that helped me adapt to the new world and support me in starting my own small business. The other significant factor is my faith, my prayers, my trust in God Almighty
	4	Economic difficulties No job Family's financial support Later on, financially independent	Yes, there were economic difficulties, because I did not save money. I have no job. I want to rent a house because my family's house no longer exists. I lived with my brother for a while, and he paid for everything. After starting my own business, I no longer ask him for money. My business supported me in terms of economics, emotional and social aspects. I am no longer feel lonely as before.
	5	Low self-esteem Emotional difficulties Family's support Spiritual support Improved self-esteem by time	My self-esteem was low. I count myself worthless. I hate the way people look at me – "divorced". However, my eldest brothers' support raise my self-esteem: "You are a believer! You will overcome these problems." My brother's house, my faith have changed me. I see myself good person who fears God. I have morals. I have my own business. I love myself. I make myself happy, I now buy clothes, travel and donate. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I lost my partner.
9	1	Economic difficulties Emotional difficulties of losing the husband Single-parent responsibilities	It is easy especially I got rid of the person who used to hit me, yet there are many economic difficulties, especially the divorced woman who plays the role of both parents. I am divorced, a mother of three kids. So many responsibilities on my own, a worker and a housewife. I carry the burden of a single-parent family. psychological pressures. My life was sad and full of worries
	2	More responsibilities for kids Society pressure and perspective	The biggest challenge I had was being a mother of two sons, a great responsibility; it is not easy. Even my children did not accept the idea of divorce at the beginning. They did a lot so that the divorce did not occur. Yet by time, began to understand and accept the idea of divorce. Also the other challenge is being called the "divorced engineer".
	3	High self-esteem Support of job Family's support Financial support by family	One of the important factors that helped me was my work. At work, I renewed my energy. Moreover, my children increased the joy in my life despite the hardness of the divorce. Then comes my family's support especially my single sister who helped me with my children and also financially.
	4	Not many economic difficulties Independent housing	In general, there were not many economic difficulties. I work. I have a car. In the beginning I faced some difficulties in terms of the costs of the lawyer and the courts, and I still pay to get my dues, the most important of which is the house for me and my children. So far I live with my children at my house and do not want to leave it, and my ex-husband lives in his family's house.
	5	Moderate self-esteem Professional woman Responsible mother powerful	My self-esteem has not changed, because I've always seen myself a successful professional woman, a responsible mother. Being divorced, my self-esteem improved even, because I bear more responsibilities pressures. I consider myself more powerful now.Divorce did not cause me low self-esteem. Actually it did the opposite
10	1	More stable emotional life Son suffers his father's	In the beginning, my life wasn't easy; difficulties. Then, my life stabilized and I overcome many difficult things. I'm more

		detachment	comfortable, secure. My life is quiet. No one to shout, break stuff or threaten. On the other hand, I feel more anxious about my son. alone. does not feel the presence of the father. his father does not miss him, nor asks to see him or talk.
	2	Society pressure Social difficulties Spiritual support	society's view. When someone gets divorced, everybody knows. I received lots of phone calls and messages; questions to be answered about my divorce news. Yet, despite this difficulty and others I am a person who is aware, a believer, I did not allow such matters to affect me in a negative way. I tried as much as possible not to allow people's chatting and rumors to destroy my life
	3	Family's support, both financial and social Little independence Has a job Moderate self-esteem	My family, my brothers and sisters and especially my eldest sister help me take the right decision, divorce. my job was the main source of my adaptation to the separation. a little independent. I go to my job. I am energetic and happy. Recently, someone appeared in my life - man. he gives me the emotional support. he is divorced. He understands me when talking about divorce and its consequences
	4	Financial difficulties Get a job Economic situation improved Family's support	I felt difficult and harsh economic difficulties, especially in the beginning. I paid the lawyer to obtain all my rights. I had to get used to a new lifestyle. Actually, I can say that now I overcome those difficulties because I am earning more money and I live in the same house with my parents, in a way I saved a lot with my family's support.
	5	Low self-esteem Family's support Becomes successful by time Adequate financial situation	In the beginning of the divorce, I did not appreciate myself, sometimes I hated it. Yet, after the support of my family, and my belief in myself, and my abilities, I saw myself differently. I am a successful accountant. I do not deserve to live with a failed human being like my ex-husband. I am a good mother. I have money. I am now a satisfied, happy person. I share people their social occasions. Divorce causes low self-esteem because I used to see myself through my husband.
11	1	Difficulties in responsibilities Low self-esteem	very difficult. It became difficult to raise my daughters and run house. I regret filing a divorce case against my husband, I still regret this decision. If I had stayed in my house and gave up a little, my life would have been better than now."
	2	Social difficulties Emotional difficulties Cannot be attached from husband Society pressure Psychological pressure	family, social, and financial levels. The first challenge was convincing myself the new reality; to live alone with my daughters without the person I loved for many years. I still love him and cannot forget him. the other challenge is confronting the society as a divorced woman. Concerning the work challenge, I no longer work in my house. I have to find a place to sew clothes. I fell under great psychological pressure. I felt more nervous about my daughters, my family, my mother, and my father. I want to get back to my husband".
	3	Family's emotional support Living with a family Mother's prayers	my daughters; their laugh. I feel comfortable and hopeful, especially when they go to their father and return with joy. They give me the feeling that their father would remarry me. Moreover, my family's support. They accepted me in their home. I add my mother's prayers and my father's words and advice is a great support for me. Many divorced women in my village live in rent house. It is very difficult. At least, I live safely in my family's house.
	4	Economic difficulties	many economic difficulties. In the past I used to work in my

		Society pressure Losing a job Love issue	house. I had many customers in that neighborhood. After getting divorced, I lost those customers and many stopped contact with me because my ex-husband is their neighbor and they think he is right to marry his dead brother's wife. His brother's wife shouldn't remain without a man to protect her and protect her children after the death of her husband.
	5	Low self-esteem Self-blaming Society perception	My self-esteem after the decreased. I hate myself for my stupid decision. I am not a good mother because I deprived my daughters of living in a normal family because of my selfishness. I did not accept the existence of another wife, although I know there is a strong reason that led to this new reality. Divorce causes low self-esteem because people started looking at me as pathetic
12	1	Difficult life Emotional difficulties Dependent Less stable life Complicated life Lost everything	My life after the separation is difficult life. I began to see myself another person, sensitive, weak, and unable to take decisions. After the separation, I became a less independent. For every decision I take, I consult several parties to guide me. A very difficult transition, from an independent life in which I am the boss into a less stable and more problematic life. I did not appreciate my life before the separation until I faced the worst and blackest of the separation. Everything that my ex-partner and I had planned for, we achieved: MY studies, work, marriage, childbearing, home and so on.
	2	Emotional difficulties both for her and her son Living with her family Family's pressure, criticism	Many challenges. The man I loved since university, a companion, a colleague, everything for me. Now I live without him. It is very difficult to have a partner in your life added our small angel, and then this person disappeared. Also, my son found it very difficult to live far from his father and see him only once a week. I faced many challenges regarding him, and these challenges, according to my opinion, remain constant. Among the challenges I faced was returning to live in my family's home, under the supervision of my parents, and accept their objection or criticism towards my behavior or thinking. I am no longer the independent person as before.
	3	Financial independent Moderate self-esteem Family's support Unstable life Emotional difficulties	Among the factors and sources that helped me, myself, profession and my financial independence. The presence of my parents. I am the eldest in the family yet until now I am the spoiled girl, they always want to see her cheerful and does not complain about pain or sadness. Their supportive sentences strengthened me a lot, though sometimes I see my mother the guilty of the decision I made and the unstable life that I live now. Another secret supportive factor is that my ex-husband has not married yet. He lives alone at home. Perhaps this would be an impetus for our return to each other."
	4	No economic difficulties Family's support She has a good job	In general, I did not go through economic difficulties, my father and my mother supported me and until now they support me with many things. My father is an engineer and my mother is an accountant; a higher monthly income in the family. My family is small; I am the eldest. I live in my family's house and most of my expenses on my family's account. My brother is in high school, and my sister is in her first year at university. She is studying law. She works as a waitress. In addition, I have been working as a teacher for a full job for four years as well. I have my monthly salary that belongs to me and is sufficient for

			my expenses and my needs as well as my son.
	5	High self-esteem Sometime low self-confidence psychological pressure more responsibilities duties, sometimes anxiety	Before the separation and after the separation, I value myself, I love it, and I love making it happy, but on the other hand I do not deny that my self-esteem has been harmed a little after the separation. I have experienced many situations in which I felt low in self-confidence and self-esteem. The person I loved and who supported me a lot, no longer present in my life. My self-esteem decreased after the separation, especially my self-esteem as a mother. I feel that I do not fulfill my duties and responsibilities as I had before the separation. The psychological pressure, the increase in my responsibilities and duties, the anxiety that prevailed my life after the separation contributed to reducing my self-esteem
13	1	Self-blaming Society blame Feeling guilty Social pressure Emotional pressures	After getting divorced, I started blaming myself besides the blame of the society blames for the failure I experienced and results in being divorced. I felt guilty for not being able to stay married. I get away from people who don't understand my feelings. I felt sorrows and worries and uncomfortable.
	2	Family's pressure Dependency	The most important challenge I faced is getting back to live in my family's house. I waited to leave my family's house and I have not expected I will be back so soon. It is not a situation that satisfy my family since they waited for me to start a new life. My challenge now being able to convince my family and find myself a house to live by my own. I cannot tolerate reliving with family after leaving them for 3 years. I want to be independent.
	3	Friend's support Energy therapy	I have my best friend who keeps in touch with me all the time. She is the one that felt my pain and the only one that helped me overcame the difficulties of divorce. My friend works as an energy therapist and she considered me as one of her cases that she need to deal with and achieve results.
	4	No economic difficulties Has a job	I have not faced any economic difficulties because I have been working for years and I have my own savings. Though my marriage life was not moving well, my ex-husband never ever took a penny from me. So, financially, I am managing.
	5	Optimistic view towards life Forgiving the self New beginning Improved self-esteem	I become confident that divorce does not mean that I am finished, but it may be the beginning of a new lifestyle that brings me more happiness than before. Forgiving myself and the people who hurt me was the best way to start an independent and new life. My self-esteem improved thanks to my best friend. I am ready to start a new life with a new man.
14	1	Financial support Lots of responsibilities Lonely and sad	I was 40 when I got divorced. I stayed in the house with my kids because my husband decided to move and live with his mother. My husband kept bringing the things we need to support the family. Most of the burden that is connected to kids was thrown on me. My ex-husband got married and I couldn't leave my kids with him. I decided to live for myself with my kids. Life is hard because I feel tired to do everything by myself
	2	More responsibilities with kids Hard to de independent Husband got married Emotional difficulties	The most prominent challenge was the kids and everything connected to their life. It is not easy to handle everything by myself. The kids miss their father's role in their life because he got busier with his second wife. The other challenge is the pressure of my family to send the kids to their father and

		Physical needs	remarry, which is an issue that is not on my agenda. Moreover, I have the challenge of being a woman with need that cannot be satisfied unless she marries another man, an impossible issue because that means losing my kids.
	3	Positive perspective towards future Improved self-esteem	First of all, I cut off the contact with my ex-husband for a certain period until I could come over the feelings of longing and nostalgia for the past. This behavior makes me feel that things will not be as before. I, myself, get back the positive energy that the divorce robbed me of, especially when I know that there is no going back from this divorce. I decided to move with life as if nothing happen and start a new life.
	4	Positive thinking More independent More thoughtful Economic difficulties External support Husband's support	Divorce is reflected positively on me, so I become independent seeking my livelihood and the livelihood of my children. In the light of the difficult economic conditions, I am both the mother and the father. Law does not always stand by me, neither before nor after the divorce. When I found that divorce is the only solution, I planned it more precisely. I became more patient and trained myself on how to deal with its consequences. I gained positive energy from patience that helped me lessen my suffering and adapt to the new reality. There always will be economic difficulties, yet there will also be people to help you overcome them. My husband send money every moth and I work hard to complete the missing.
	5	Low self-esteem Changing perception See life differently Improved self-esteem	My self-esteem! In crisis as divorce, I cannot say that my self-esteem was good. I suffered a lot. Imagine that you are living a sort of life and suddenly, you have to live another, how would you feel inside yourself. Yet, my self-esteem improved by time through changing my perception towards my crisis, life and thoughts. I feel much better and I got the necessary treatment that helping me get better.
15	1	Hard life Dependent Challenging life	Very hard! I am a simple women and along my life with my husband I depend on him. I was the housekeeper and the mother that stayed at home all the time raising the kids, doing the house hold and providing services for my husband. When I got divorced, I found out how weak I am to be by myself with 4 kids. My husband decided dividing the kids between us and could not refuse because I cannot survive with all of my kids by myself. A very challenging situation.
	2	Dependent No job Emotional difficulties	Many challenges. First of all, I have not work to do and earn my living. Second, not all of my kids are living with me. Having half of them visiting me once a week is not enough. I miss them. Moreover, I was not used to manage in life by myself because I am not an independent woman. Further, the financial situation is hard because I do not work and I count on my husband all the time.
	3	Sister's support in aftermath of same experience New perspective of life	Hopefully, I have another sister who got divorced before me and had already gone through this painful experience. She was the main factor to stand by me and support me to survive. She taught me the way to keep energetic and try as much as I can to understand that despite the pain, there is always hope to restart a new life; that divorce is not the end of life but a beginning of a different life that I have to face and experience it just differently.
	4	No job	As mentioned before, I am a woman who has not worked



		<p>Economic difficulties</p> <p>Little financial support</p> <p>Found a job</p> <p>Charity</p>	<p>before. Missing work affect the economic difficulties in a bad way. Although my ex-husband sends me the needed money, I still need more money to survive. I have never ever been responsible for a whole family and a house. My family helps me a little bit. My sister found me a job and I started cleaning house. It is not an easy job but I benefit a lot because people know my situation and they helped me from time to time. I also addressed the committee of charity in the mosque and they give help me when I need.</p>
	5	<p>Self-esteem changed for the better</p> <p>Exploring the self</p>	<p>What started to be unbearable, became the opposite. Nothing stays as it is. Things change. I changed and my self-esteem as well. I opened my mind to new things like sport. I started looking after my beauty and health. I refresh all the hobbies and needs that I repressed for years. My self-esteem is not totally improved, yet it is improving.</p>



جامعة النجاح الوطنية  
كلية الدراسات العليا

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النساء العربيات المطلقات في منطقة الناصرة

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قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول علي درجة الماجستير في علم نفس اكلينيكي، من كلية الدراسات  
العليا، في جامعة النجاح الوطنية، نابلس - فلسطين.

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# الصلابة النفسية، والصعوبات الاقتصادية، وتقدير الذات لدى النساء العربيات المطلقات في منطقة الناصرة

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## الملخص

يوصف الطلاق بأنه موقف مرهق، وهو اضطراب في التوازن العاطفي والجسدي للفرد، والذي ينجم عن عدم قدرة الشخص على التعامل مع متطلبات الحياة بسبب نقص الموارد.

**أهداف الدراسة:** مناقشة الصعوبات الاقتصادية وتدني احترام الذات والتي يسببها الطلاق بين النساء. تقديم طرق للتغلب على الصعوبات الاقتصادية وإعادة بناء احترام الذات المتمدني بين النساء العربيات المطلقات والنظر في دور الحصانة في تمكين النساء المطلقات.

**أسئلة البحث:** كيف تستعيد المرأة المطلقة احترامها لذاتها بعد الطلاق؟ كيف تتغلب المرأة المطلقة على الضائقة الاقتصادية الناجمة عن الطلاق؟ لماذا يسبب الطلاق مصاعب اقتصادية وتدني في احترام الذات؟ وكيف تمكّن المرونة المرأة المطلقة أثناء الزواج وبعده؟

**منهج البحث:** اشترك في البحث خمس عشرة مطلقة عربية من منطقة الناصرة تتراوح أعمارهن بين 25 و60 سنة، مع أو بدون أطفال. خضع المشاركون لمقابلة شبه مغلقة. **النتائج:** المطلقات يعيدن بناء احترامهن لذاتهن بعد الطلاق باستخدام أسرهن وعملهن، الحلقات الدراسية والدين وما إلى ذلك. المطلقات يتغلبن على مصاعبهن الاقتصادية باستخدام أسرهن، والخدمات الاجتماعية،

والحصول على عمل، وما إلى ذلك؛ الطلاق يسبب مصاعب اقتصادية وتدني في احترام الذات والحصانة تُمكن المرأة المطلقة أثناء الزواج وبعده.

**الاستنتاجات:** على الرغم من عواقب الطلاق وصعوباته فيما يتعلق باحترام الذات والصعوبات الاقتصادية، يمكن للمرأة التغلب على هذه التجربة الصعبة باستخدام الحصانة.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** الطلاق، الحصانة، المصاعب الاقتصادية، تقدير الذات.