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THE TREND OF MARRIAGE DISSOLUTION IN SEREMBAN, NEGERI SEMBILAN, MALAYSIA

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1. Introduction

Marriage is the legal procedure of bringing together man and woman in a rightful union. The legal way in fulfilling the intimacy between couples also known as marriage in term of Islam (Sanizah et al., 2014). In Islam, marriage or 'nikah' refers as solemn and sacred social contract between the bride and groom once the 'ijab' and 'qabul' is expressed clearly.

Hasbullah and Razak (2017) stated that marriage stage is the start of family institution when the married couples begin to have more dedication and duty towards their families. Maintaining the stability and lasting marriage is one of the difficulties for the married couples. Throughout the marriage, the couples surely will face the ups and downs in maintaining the lifelong marriage. The married couples hold the key to control and protect their marriage so that it will not end up in a divorce.

One of the social problems that involve the family institution is known as divorce. Divorce is the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court. Divorce is allowable when the relationship can no longer manage to keep going (Sanizah et al., 2014). Before divorce takes place, the couples will be persuaded to go along with the counselling sessions coordinate by the Jabatan Agama Islam. The counselling sessions are held in hope of reuniting the couples. On condition that if the sessions failed, they can proceed with divorce as it has been officially stated in the Islamic Law.

In this study, the researchers would like to examine the trends of marriage dissolution in Seremban.

2. Methodology

2.1 Source of Data

The data used for this study were collected from Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Negeri Sembilan. The data involved real divorce cases in Seremban that were reported by married couples in 2017. In this study, the data consisted of 118 non-divorced cases and 312 divorced cases.

2.2 Descriptive Statistics

In this study, the method that used in order to identify the trends of marriage dissolution in Seremban was the descriptive analysis method. There were few tools that used such as descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations and line graph. The cross-tabulations showed the distribution of the marital status of the couples and each segment represented the proportion of the couples who were in that category for example the percentage of the couples who get divorced within a certain range of age gap. In addition, line graph was also used in this study in order to represent the changes on the number of divorce cases in Seremban over the years.

3. Result and Discussion

In this study, the tools used in descriptive analysis were line graph, descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation tables. Figure 1 shows the total number of divorce cases recorded in Seremban from 2012 until 2017.

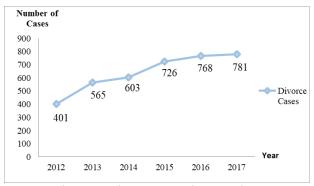


Figure 1: Divorce Cases in Seremban
Source: Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Negeri Sembilan (2018)

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that the number of divorce cases recorded in 2012 was 401 cases. However, as the years passed by, the number of divorce cases has increased steadily and this is worrisome since in 2017, there were already 781 cases recorded in Seremban alone which is quite high.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis							
Variables	Minimu Maximu		Mean				
	m	m					
Husband's Age	17	90	39.34				
Wife's Age	16	72	35.88				
Age Gap	0	42	4.74				
Husband's Income	0.00	50,000.00	2,620.318 6				
Wife's Income	0.00	10,000.00	1,654.979 1				
Length of	0.0000	43.0000	9.173054				
Marriage							
Number of	0	8	1.69				
Children							

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the determinants of marriage dissolution that had been comprised based on 430 divorce cases reported in Seremban. Based on Table 1, age was one of the variables that were used in determining the reason for high divorce rates in Seremban. The minimum age for both husband and wife when they filed for divorce was at the age of 17 years old and 16 years old which is quite young. It was also unexpected to find that there was a couple that filed for a divorce even at the age of 90 years old and 72 years old. Besides that, the average age of husband was 39.34 years old, older than the average age of wife which was 35.88 years old. This study also found that the maximum age gap of the couples involved in the divorce cases was 42 years old and there were also cases where the husband and wife were about the same age.

Furthermore, the minimum income for both husband and wife was zero which means that they were unemployed when they filed for the divorce while the maximum income for husband and wife that were recorded in the divorce cases were RM 50,000 and RM 10,000 respectively. In addition, the average income of husband was RM 2,620.32, higher than the income of wife which was RM 1,654.98.

Moreover, Table 1 also indicates that the average duration for a marriage to survive was nine years and the maximum length of a marriage was 43 years before the couples get divorced. However, there were also a few couples who failed to defend their marriage within one year and some of them even ended up with divorce only after a few months of marriage. This is very worrisome because no matter how long the duration of a marriage is, the possibility for the couple to get a divorce is still high. Lastly, the descriptive statistics show that the average number of children at the time the couples filed for divorce was one to two children while the minimum and maximum number of children that they had were zero and

eight respectively.

Table 2. Number of Cases Based on Husband's Income Level

		Marital S	Marital Status				
		Divorced		Non-Divorced			
		Count	%	Count	%		
Husband's	B40	261	60.7	97	22.56	358	
Income Level	M40	39	9.07	12	2.79	51	
	T20	12	2.79	9	2.09	21	
Total		312		118		430	

Table 2 shows the cross-tabulation between the marital status of the couples and the husband's income level. The income level of Malaysians were classified into three different groups where Bottom 40% (B40) indicates low income level, Middle 40% (M40) indicates medium income level and Top 20% (T20) indicates high income level. According to the Department of Statistics, the range of income for B40 and M40 in Negeri Sembilan were from RM 0 to RM 3,999 and from RM 4,000 to RM 7,999 respectively. Meanwhile, for those who earned RM 8,000 and above, they were classified as T20.

Based on Table 2, majority of the husbands who were divorced had low income level (B40) which was 261 out of 312 divorced cases. Similarly, most of the husbands who were still married also had low income level (B40) which was 97 out of 118 non-divorced cases. For husbands who had medium income level (M40), 39 of them were already divorced while the other 12 were not divorced. Moreover, out of 430 couples, the divorced and non-divorced husbands who earned at least RM 8,000 in a month were only 2.79% and 2.09% respectively.

Table 3. Number of Cases Based on Wife's Income Level

			Marital S		Total		
			Divorced		Non-Dive	orced	
			Count	%	Count	%	
Wife's I	ncome	B40	280	65.12	100	23.26	380
Level		M40	28	6.51	13	3.02	41
	Ī	T20	4	0.93	5	1.16	9
Total			312		118		430

Table 3 shows the cross-tabulation between the marital status of the couples and the wife's income level. Table 3 shows the number of divorced and non-divorced cases based on the wife's income level. Similarly with the husband's income level, Table III indicates that most of the wives who were divorced had also earned low income which was 65.12% of overall cases. The number of non-divorced cases that involved wives who had a low income level was 100 cases, which is also quite high. Additionally, there were 28 divorced wives and 13 non-divorced wives who earned medium income which was from RM 4,000 to RM 7,999. This study also found that only nine wives from 430 couples had gained at least RM 8,000 for their monthly salary.

Table 4. Number of Cases Based on the Length of Marriage

			Marital S	Marital Status			
			Divorced	Divorced		Non-Divorced	
			Count	%	Count	%	
Length	of	1-4 years	116	26.98	37	8.60	153
Marriage		5 years	196	45.58	81	18.84	277
Total			312		118		430

Table 4 shows the cross-tabulation between the marital status of the couples and their length of marriage. Based on Table 4, 26.98% of couples which was 116 out of 430 couples get divorced after one to four years of marriage. However, the number of couples who get

divorced after five years of marriage was higher, which was 196 couples. Furthermore, the number of non-divorced couples who had been married for between one to four years was 37 couples, while the other 81 non-divorced couples had been married for five years and above.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The primary objective of this research was to identify the trends of marriage dissolution in Seremban. The finding from Jabatan Kehakiman Syariah Negeri Sembilan shows that the number of divorce cases increased steadily from 2012 to 2017.

In this study, the average age of both husband and wife that filed divorce cases were 39.34 and 35.88 years old which were similar with the findings by Hasbullah and Razak (2017) who stated that 36% of husbands and 37% of wives with age range from 30 to 39 years old result in divorce. The age gap between zero to nine years leads to the highest number of divorce cases which was 267 cases, 39 couples with age gap between ten to 19 years end up getting divorced and for the age gap of 20 years and above, only six couples were divorced.

Besides, there were 50.47% divorce cases which the wives were employed at the time the couples filed for divorce, corresponding to a research conducted by Kim (2015) where most of the wives were financially stable without relying upon their husbands. There were 263 out of 312 divorce cases which the husbands were employed at the time the couples filed for divorce.

This study also found that husbands and wife with low income level has the highest percentage of divorce cases which were 60.7% and 65.12% respectively. This finding was supported by previous research that was conducted by Luscombe (2016) in the United Kingdom which stated that couples with low income tend to have a difficult life since they need to deal with the stress of having insufficient amount of money.

The findings of this study show that the percentage of the couples that married for five years and above was 45.58% and the percentage of couples who had divorced after one to four years of marriage was 26.98%.

Furthermore, this study illustrated that 210 out of 312 divorced cases which the couples end up separating, had children when they decided to file for the divorce. This finding was contradicted to a research conducted by Meikeng (2016) who stated that married couples who have children were more likely to stay together longer as compared to those who do not have any child.

Last but not least, the descriptive analysis in this study found that the major reason for filing divorce was the incompatibility between the couples where they were no longer tolerations for each other.

5. Acknowledgement

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