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Predictors of Postdivorce Adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish Population

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MS, Touro College, 2007

BA, Touro College, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

In general, divorce can be stigmatizing and can lead to social and financial hardships for those who experience it. However, the impact of divorce may be more severe for members of the Orthodox Jewish population, whose culture places significant value and importance on marriage. The purpose of this study was to address the gap in the literature pertaining to the experience of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish population and the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in this population. Family stress and coping theory served as the foundation for this study. One research question guided the study examining whether religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships affect the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community. Data were collected from a 110-item survey of 310 divorced Orthodox Jewish community members previously administered by the Institute for Applied Research and Community Collaboration, located in Spring Valley, New York. Bivariate analysis and hierarchical multiple logistic regression were used to explore the relationship of postdivorce adjustment to the primary independent variables. Results indicated that financial well-being postdivorce, gender, and self-reported personal well-being predicted postdivorce adjustment. Relationship status was significantly associated with postdivorce adjustment. Future researchers should address postdivorce adjustment in specific Orthodox communities and in men. The findings may promote social justice by clarifying the factors that contribute to positive outcomes among divorced individuals in the Orthodox community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Chana Chaya, and my children, whose love, kindness, and support have sustained me through many long hours of work. I also thank my parents, who instilled in me at an early age the value of lifelong learning and perseverance. I also thank the many friends who have helped me along in this journey: Your support and encouragement are greatly appreciated! Finally, I dedicate this work to God for granting me wisdom and guidance throughout the course of my graduate studies.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting postdivorce adjustment within the Jewish Orthodox community. Marriage and divorce within this community, which comprises about 10% of the overall Jewish population in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2015), might be viewed differently from marriage and divorce in the non-Jewish community. Orthodox Jewish individuals observe specific gender roles within marriage; for example, women are expected to serve as wives and mothers. Divorce often is stigmatized, leading to social exclusion and significant hardships for the individuals who experience this event (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). In spite of these views, divorce does occur in about 9% of the Jewish population (Pew Research Center, 2015), often leading to difficulties such as increased stress, depressive symptoms, or financial difficulties in adjusting to a new lifestyle (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Jewish individuals, including those who follow the Orthodox faith, have been largely omitted from the literature on mental health. Members of the Jewish culture might not have been viewed as a distinct cultural group within the counseling literature, and as a result, issues affecting this group have not been addressed adequately. Counselors who treat Jewish clients might find a dearth of studies informing culturally competent mental health care (Schnall, Pelcovitz, & Fox, 2013). Having a greater understanding of the factors affecting postdivorce adjustment might help counselors who serve the Orthodox Jewish community to develop effective therapies in promoting coping skills and adjustment. In this introductory chapter, the background of the study, problem statement,

purpose, research question (RQ) and hypotheses, theoretical basis of the study, nature of the study, and definitions are presented.

Background

Even prior to marriage, its value and importance are emphasized within the Orthodox community, as evidenced by culturally appropriate dating practices. Shalev, Baum, and Itzhaky (2012) examined the process by which Orthodox men and women select their partners. Results of their qualitative study suggested that a central purpose of dating is to find a spouse and establish a home and a family. The specific choice of partners is influenced by either cognitive or emotional factors.

Some of the participants in Shalev et al.'s (2012) study were labeled "cognitive selectors," meaning that they engaged in only a short dating period with the goal of determining the compatibility of potential spouses. For some of the participants, conflict existed between finding partners capable of meeting personal and internal needs and finding partners with compatible religious values centered on the home and family (Shalev et al., 2012). Study participants who were labeled "emotional selectors" adopted a different approach to finding potential spouses because most of the individuals in this group met their partners and married at a young age and within the context of being in love. Conflict between the secular world and desires and the traditional religious world also existed in this group. Shalev et al. concluded that dating within the Orthodox community, although influenced by the outside world, occurs within the cultural context of Jewish Orthodoxy.

Milevsky, Shifra Niman, Raab, and Gross (2011) pursued this topic in greater depth, focusing solely on the dating attitudes of Orthodox women. The researchers interviewed eight ultra-Orthodox Jewish women between the ages of 19 and 23 years. Results of this qualitative study revealed several key themes, including dating as a precursor to marriage, the lack of prior experience with close male relatives and prior intimate relationships in particular, the use of matchmaking services, the importance of religious values in potential partners, pressure to marry, and the idea that men have an unfair advantage over women when seeking mates. The participants in Milevsky et al.'s study emphasized that the purpose of dating was to find a spouse, not for the purpose of recreation. As such, the women desired to obtain as much information as possible about prospective mates.

Most of the participants in Milevsky et al.'s (2011) study had attended female-only schools, so they had little prior interaction with men before dating. For this reason, many dates were arranged by a third party, such as a professional Orthodox Jewish matchmaker or a common acquaintance. Religion was a primary factor in choosing a man to date, and women viewed men with a greater sense of religiosity than themselves in a positive light (Milevsky et al., 2011). Although the participants expressed satisfaction with the dating system and third-party matchmakers, they noted dissatisfaction with the pressure to find husbands. This perceived pressure originated with peers, family members, and members of the clergy. Finally, the respondents indicated that men were afforded advantages within the dating system, given that men often delayed dating for

several years after women began the process and might, therefore, have had access to a larger pool of potential spouses (Milevsky et al., 2011).

Marriage within the Orthodox Jewish community is unique, possessing characteristics that might not be shared by members of other cultural groups. One reason for these differences is the role of religion in everyday life. Orthodox Jews accept the divinity of the Bible and adhere closely to the laws detailed in the Talmud involving such aspects of life as diet, prayers, holidays, and family life. Their belief system centers on God and His commandments, and communities are organized around this religious ideology. Given the religious nature of these communities, they might experience little contact with others outside of their cultural group (Maybruch, Pirutinsky, & Pelcovitz, 2014).

The laws of family purity are an important component of married life within the Orthodox community. These laws dictate the types of behaviors related to physical intimacy that are permitted or should be avoided. For example, when a wife is menstruating, the couple should avoid physical contact. Maybruch et al. (2014) noted that even contact as minimal as placing a set of keys in the spouse's hands during this time is avoided so that the couple do not physically touch. When the menstruation period ends, the couple once again may engage in physical contact, which might confer a sense of renewal to the relationship and lead to improved marital quality (Maybruch et al., 2014). This period of sexual abstinence and lack of physical contact also might force the husband and wife to learn new ways to communicate with and relate to each other (Schnall et al., 2013).

Other Jewish laws that help to shape the behavior of spouses who adhere to the Orthodox tradition exist. A husband is required to be attentive to his wife and meet her needs sexually. In addition, when a husband and wife are intimate, they are prohibited from thinking about other individuals. Spouses may not engage in intimate behavior when intoxicated, unless mutual consent for the behavior exists. These laws underscore the idea that intimacy is not an act designed to meet the needs of the individual, but rather an act to foster a strong emotional bond between husband and wife (Maybruch et al., 2014).

This type of intimacy and emotional connection might lead to increased marital satisfaction. Schnall et al. (2013) investigated the marital satisfaction of 3,002 married Orthodox Jewish individuals residing primarily within the northeastern United States. Results indicated that 73.3% of the men and 74.2% of the women rated their marriages as mostly or extremely satisfying. Seventy-seven percent of the overall sample indicated that their spouses did meet their marital expectations. In addition, if given the chance to turn back time and marry the same spouses again, 73.8% of respondents indicated that they would remarry their husbands or wives (Schnall et al., 2013). These findings suggest that the majority of married Orthodox Jews in the United States are satisfied with their marriages.

Despite the high levels of marital satisfaction in the Orthodox Jewish community, a small but notable percentage of couples divorce. Divorce can be a stressful life event for individuals of all religious and cultural backgrounds. Spouses who divorce experience

significant changes to their lives, such as changes in financial situation, the loss of friends, and relocation, all of which can lead to stress (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Divorce also might increase the risk of depressive symptoms. Monden, Metsä-Simola, Saarioja, and Martikainen (2015) investigated the use of antidepressants by couples both leading up to and postdivorce. Results of this 5-year longitudinal study, which involved a comparison of divorcing couples to continuously married couples, indicated that the use of antidepressant medications increased in divorcing spouses beginning 3 years prior to the divorce and that member of the Jewish Orthodox community are in a unique situation because of their religious beliefs concerning marriage (Monden et al., 2015). Divorce is viewed as a failure and a disappointment, particularly with respect to women, who are expected to serve as wives and mothers. Divorce also can lead to social exclusion, such as being forced to leave a community or a job (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). Men do not necessarily fare any better: Orthodox men might feel persecuted or humiliated by their wives for wanting to divorce (Walfisch, 2009), and they are viewed as defective and are shunned by the community (Fishman, 1994).

Members of the Orthodox Jewish community might employ a number of effective coping strategies to manage the negative consequences of divorce. These strategies include developing new romantic relationships (Kulik & Heine-Cohen, 2011); seeking social support from others; and securing financial help from family members (Shai, 2002). The development of these and other coping skills might be particularly important, given the stigma associated with mental health issues in the Orthodox Jewish community

and the related unwillingness to seek counseling or treatment for such issues (Weiss, Shor, & Hadas-Lidor, 2013).

Overall, information and research directly relevant to the issue of postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox community have been limited. The result has been a gap in the literature with respect to the stressors that Orthodox Jewish individuals experience because of divorce and the coping skills or other factors that promote subsequent adjustment. The researcher sought to identify the factors related to successful postdivorce adjustment to aid in the creation of appropriate counseling approaches to improve the mental health of divorced individuals in this cultural group.

Problem Statement

Postdivorce adjustment may be difficult for many adults. Often, divorce may necessitate major lifestyle changes, such as changes in residence, family living situations, and social networks. A variety of factors may influence the ability of adults to adjust to the changes precipitated by divorce, including employment status, job satisfaction, perceived degree of economic hardship, social network size, and new and intimate relationships (Wang & Amato, 2000). Low income prior to divorce or a reduction in income postdivorce is associated with mood disturbances, depression, and difficulties with social adjustment, particularly among men (Wang & Amato). Conflict between former spouses, especially when children are involved, may lead to difficulties with social adjustment, especially among women (Wang & Amato).

The parent-child relationship also may increase the difficulty adjusting to life postdivorce. Parents may experience a difficult time communicating with their children

postdivorce and may demonstrate a reduced capacity for parenting. These factors may lead to mood disturbances and problems with social adjustment in parents and anxiety and anger in children (Tschann, Johnston, & Wallerstein, 1989).

Individuals who are Orthodox Jewish and who are in the midst of being granted a divorce under their religious doctrine might experience stressors or situations that impact postdivorce adjustment and which are relatively unique when compared to the general population. Members of the Orthodox Jewish community view the family as a central component of society, so they consequently view divorce as a threat. This community adheres to a patriarchal family structure in which the husband is the head of the household (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). The men might focus on religious education, and the women are expected to manage the household, raise the children, and be submissive to their husbands. Many Orthodox women who divorce face stigma, becoming outcasts in their communities (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). In comparing the postdivorce experiences of Orthodox Jewish men and women, a prominent concern is that women typically receive less social support and men are less likely to seek rabbinical counseling because they are less likely to display emotional vulnerability (Bayme & Rosen, 1994).

Given the unique nature of the Orthodox Jewish community in comparison to the general U.S. population, including its emphasis on the family unit and its disapproval of divorce, individuals may experience a particularly difficult postdivorce recovery. In addition, a number of factors related to this phenomenon may be unknown. Although some factors, such as perceived stress or coherence, may affect Jewish men and women differently, it is not known whether those same factors affect those who participate in the

Orthodox tradition. Aside from social support, it also is unclear whether other factors that influence postdivorce adjustment in the general Jewish population or the general population, including non-Jewish individuals, affect men who adhere to the Orthodox tradition. It also remains unknown how, or if, factors associated with the refusal by Orthodox men to grant a divorce to their wives, including a sense of victimization or egocentrism, may affect the adjustment process.

These questions underscore the paucity of psychological research pertaining to the Orthodox Jewish population. Because members of the Orthodox Jewish culture have not been considered a distinct cultural group within the counseling and psychology literature, issues affecting this group have not been addressed adequately. Counselors might have difficulty locating empirical evidence addressing the stressors and coping strategies related to divorce in this community in a culturally competent manner (Schnall et al., 2013). The researcher sought to contribute knowledge pertaining to culturally relevant factors associated with postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish community.

Purpose of the Study

The intention of the study was to fill the gap in the scholarly literature pertaining to the experience of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish community. As such, the purpose of this quantitative, multiple-regression study was to expand current understanding of the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population. These factors, which served as the study's independent variables (IVs), included active involvement in one's religious community prior to or postdivorce, formation or maintenance of positive social support networks, upholding of financial

security, and involvement in new and intimate relationships. The sample comprised archival data from 310 divorced Orthodox Jewish community members previously surveyed by the Institute for Applied Research and Community Collaboration (ARCC) in Spring Valley, New York, regarding postdivorce adjustment. Having an increased understanding of the factors related to adjustment in this community might lead to more effective therapeutic approaches in assisting members of the Orthodox Jewish community to cope with divorce.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Because there have not been sufficient systematic efforts to study the phenomenon of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish community, limited overarching and integrative data exist for stakeholders currently affected by this process within this particular community. Through the integration of limited research and limited data, the study was an attempt to facilitate the informed decision-making capabilities of those affected. Informed by a literature review and a quantitative data analysis, the aim of this study was to answer one RQ and its corresponding hypotheses:

RQ: Do religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships affect the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community?

H_{01}: There is no relationship between religious involvement postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between religious involvement postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{02}: There is no relationship between social support postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a2}: There is a relationship between social support postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{03}: There is no relationship between financial well-being postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a3}: There is a relationship between financial well-being postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{04}: There is no relationship between the formation of new and intimate relationships postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in

the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and financial well-being.

H_{a4}: There is a relationship between the formation of new and intimate relationships postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and financial well-being.

Theoretical Framework

The family stress and coping theory served as the guiding framework of the study. This framework explains that adjustment to divorce, just as with other stressful family incidents, depends upon "the accumulation of stressors, resources for coping with stress, and definitions of the stressor event" (Wang & Amato, 2000, p. 656). A number of stressors can accumulate as the result of divorce, including changes in financial status for one or both partners, subsequent changes in standard of living, loss of friends, or relocation, all of which might overwhelm or impair the individuals' ability to cope. Personal resources that may promote coping include education, employment, income, social support, and the establishment of new and intimate relationships (Wang & Amato, 2000).

The family stress and coping theory has served as the framework for a number of other studies. K. Sullivan (2015) applied this framework to develop social work interventions for military families experiencing deployment and difficulty with family functioning. Similarly, Everson, Herzog, Figley, and Whitworth (2014) investigated the parental, familial, and personal stress experienced by wives of deployed soldiers within

the context of this theory. Other applications of this theory have included stress and coping in families dealing with traumatic brain injury (Verhaeghe, Defloor, & Grypdonck, 2005); marital satisfaction among Chinese couples (Peilian et al., 2011); the impact of family support for mothers who experience stillborn births (Cacciatore, Schnebly, & Froen, 2009); and the factors that promote family resilience (Patterson, 2002). This theory was the basis for understanding the factors unique to members of the Orthodox tradition that contribute to stress and coping in the postdivorce period.

Nature of the Study

To address the gap in the literature, the researcher instituted a quantitative hierarchical multiple logistic regression. Through an analysis of extant survey data pertaining to this topic within this population and a large body of literature, factors affecting postdivorce adjustment that could be used to design effective counseling programs for use in this community were identified. A hierarchical multiple logistic regression allows researchers to determine any relationships between and among the variables (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). The primary variables of interest were involvement in religious life postdivorce, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships. This type of study design possesses the strengths of being nonintrusive, facilitating the examination of extant data rather than the collection of new data, and containing a high degree of external validity (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012).

Definitions

Financial well-being: “feelings of personal financial confidence and security” (Chan, Chau, & Chan, 2012, p. 118).

New and intimate relationship: a new romantic relationship within or outside of the context of marriage (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Orthodox Jews: a religious and cultural group united by the belief that the Torah, or the first five books of the Bible, are the Word of God. Kanarfogel et al. (2014) described three subgroups of Orthodox Jews. The Modern Orthodox subgroup manifests the greatest level of acculturation within American society. The Yeshivish Orthodox group is organized around religious schools, ranging from elementary schools to postsecondary institutions, as well as religious leaders. Members of the Chassidic subgroup adhere to traditional communal structures, demonstrating the highest level of collectivism of the three subtypes. In addition, the Chassidic subgroup is organized around rabbis, and members of this group tend to have the lowest educational attainment of the three groups (Kanarfogel et al., 2014).

Postdivorce adjustment: "the process of adapting to the life changes that result from divorce and achieving psychological and emotional well-being following the divorce" (Krumrei, Colt, Martin, Fogo, & Mahoney, 2007, p. 147).

Religious involvement: participation in religious ceremonies and/or religious education.

Social support: the presence of individuals who are emotionally and socially supportive after the divorce process (Kulik & Heine-Cohen, 2011).

Assumptions

The study was based on several assumptions. Two of these assumptions related directly to the survey administered by Kanarfogel et al. (2014). First, it was assumed that

the survey instrument used by ARCC to collect data from the Orthodox Jewish population in the northeastern United States was valid and reliable. Second, it was assumed that all participants answered the survey questions honestly and accurately and that they possessed adequate insight into their personal financial and social situations.

It also was assumed that the Orthodox Jewish population view divorce from a perspective different from that of the general population. This assumption was based on the characteristics of this population, which include a patriarchal family structure, a strong emphasis on family, gendered roles for men and women, and potential hardships for women attempting to divorce their husbands by the husbands and religious authorities (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). The decision to study the Orthodox Jewish community limited the generalizability of the results to other population groups.

Divorce is viewed as failure within the Orthodox community. The strong emphasis on marriage and the family renders divorce socially unacceptable. Although divorced individuals within the non-Jewish population might not experience social stigma and might be able to seek other partners freely, women in the Orthodox tradition often are excluded or discarded and might have difficulty entering into new relationships (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

A similar assumption was that the data pertaining to all three subgroups of Orthodox Jews were reasonably consistent. Differences exist within these three groups, primarily centered on education and religious leadership. Given that marriage and divorce are significant religious issues, it was possible that a subgroup that placed greater

emphasis on religion and adherence to law might have held a slightly different view of divorce than more "liberal" Modern Orthodox Jews.

Scope and Delimitations

The researcher examined the phenomenon of divorce solely within three categories of the Orthodox Jewish community: Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish Orthodox, and Chassidic Orthodox. Modern Orthodox individuals are the most integrated into society. Yeshivish Orthodox individuals possess lower levels of acculturation, and such communities often are organized around religious leaders. Chassidic Orthodox individuals strongly adhere to traditional values and structures, and they receive the least amount of education of the three groups (Kanarfogel et al., 2014). Results of the study might not apply to the general population or other subgroups within the Orthodox Jewish community. One additional factor is that the participants resided only in the northeastern United States.

Limitations

The use of an extant data set for this study was associated with some limitations. The data might not have included information for all subgroups within the Orthodox population, which could have skewed the results. The aforementioned point is important because different subgroups might hold different perceptions about divorce and different levels of acculturation, factors that could have affected the results. In addition, because the researcher analyzing the data was not involved in the data collection process, the researcher might have been unaware of issues or nuances in the data collection process that could have been important when interpreting the results (Cheng & Phillips, 2014).

Finally, given that the data were self-reported by the participants, it is possible that the information provided was inaccurate, exaggerated, or understated. Similarly, the participants might have been motivated by the desire for social acceptance to answer the questions in particular ways.

Significance

The current body of literature has addressed factors impacting the general population as well as the Jewish population in the United States with respect to postdivorce adjustment, such as the roles of perceived stress, coherence, and social support. However, the literature has been unclear whether these same factors are relevant to the subset of the Jewish population adhering to the Orthodox tradition. Furthermore, there has been a paucity of mental health literature pertaining to the Orthodox population. Results of this study might be used to develop culturally responsive intervention programs aimed at assisting members of the Orthodox community to adjust to divorce. These interventions would seek to promote resilience, improved well-being, and improved functioning.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative, hierarchical multiple logistic regression study was to assess the degree to which religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships affected postdivorce adjustment among members of the Orthodox Jewish community residing in the northeastern United States. This particular community is unique in that marriage and family represent a central component of life. Many Orthodox Jewish individuals engage

in dating solely for the purpose of finding husbands or wives. Often times, the two individuals have little time to become closely acquainted before marriage occurs. Thus, marriage might not necessarily be for the purpose of love but more for the purpose of community stability and procreation.

Once spouses are married, a variety of laws shape their interactions. Laws pertaining to physical contact during certain times of the month, along with those demanding mutual consent before intimacy, might help to create stronger emotional bonds. These bonds, in turn, might lead to increased marital satisfaction. Indeed, more than three quarters of married Orthodox Jewish individuals have expressed being satisfied or very satisfied with their marriages (Schnall et al., 2013). However, despite the high degree of marital satisfaction, divorce occurs within this community. This act is followed by a number of negative consequences, including financial, social, and emotional. Women who divorce might be socially excluded from the community or might lose their employment, resulting in an additional threat to financial security.

The researcher addressed a gap in the literature pertaining to whether the factors affecting postdivorce adjustment in the general population also affect individuals within this community. The researcher also sought to contribute to reducing the dearth of empirical research using the Orthodox Jewish population, which often has not been considered a unique cultural group in the research arena.

The data for this study originated from an extant data set pertaining to divorced members of the Jewish Orthodox community in the northeastern United States, including perceived postdivorce adjustment and various measures of well-being. More specifically,

the researcher investigated the association of the variables of involvement in a religious community, formation and maintenance of social networks, financial security, and involvement in new and intimate relationships to postdivorce adjustment. Study limitations included the inclusion of a heterogeneous Orthodox sample consisting of three subgroups, each of which might hold slightly different views regarding the study variables, and the inability to determine if any issues or nuances existed with the data, which were collected by researchers other than the present researcher. Finally, self-report data such as those used in this study are subject to bias and inaccuracies.

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study, including the problem, purpose, theoretical framework, and RQ and hypotheses. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature to establish the background and significance of the topic. Chapter 3 presents details about the research methodology used in this study, followed by the results in Chapter 4 and a discussion of those results and their implications in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The differences in values and beliefs between the Orthodox Jewish community and other non-Jewish communities, including its emphasis on the patriarchal family unit and disapproval of divorce, might lead to unique difficulties in adjusting to divorce. Although a number of factors, such as increased involvement in religion, new social relationships, and adequate income levels, are associated with postdivorce adjustment in the general population, it is not known whether these same factors impact individuals who participate in the Orthodox tradition (Krumrei et al., 2007; Quinney & Fouts, 2003; Wang & Amato, 2000). The lack of research represents a gap in knowledge.

The purpose of this study was to broaden current understanding of the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population. The researcher investigated the following specific factors: active involvement in the religious community, formation of positive social support networks, financial security, and involvement in new and intimate relationships. Having an increased understanding of these factors might lead to more effective therapeutic approaches in helping members of the Orthodox Jewish community to cope with divorce. Presented in this chapter are details about the family stress and coping theory, the theoretical foundation to the study, and a review the literature pertaining to divorce-related stressors and coping strategies related to postdivorce adjustment among the general and Orthodox Jewish populations.

Literature Search Strategy

The researcher reviewed the extant literature to gain insight into the issue of postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population and identify any gaps in

knowledge. Several databases were searched, including Google Scholar, Academic Search Complete, PsycARTICLES, SocINDEX, and the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection. The following search combinations were used to locate relevant information: (*Jewish* OR *Orthodox Jewish* OR *Judaism* OR *Israel*) AND (*divorce* OR *postdivorce adjustment*) AND *(impacts* OR *effects* OR *consequences* OR *outcomes*), but NOT (children OR adolescents OR youth OR child OR teenager). The insufficient numbers of recent studies published within the last 10 years pertaining to the topic of divorce in the Jewish Orthodox community required extending the time frame under which this search occurred to a 35-year time period.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical basis of the study was the family stress and coping theory. This particular theory originated from studies of coping behaviors among wives separated from their husbands as the result of military deployment in World War II (Hill, as cited in McCubbin, 1979). Initially named the family stress theory, this framework explains that a family crisis is created through the interactions of hardships or stressful events, the family's resources to deal with the crisis, and the meaning attributed to the crisis. The adjustment of the family to the crisis occurs through an initial period of disorganization, followed by recovery and a new level of organization (McCubbin et al., 1980).

McCubbin (1979) examined several similar studies to better understand how women in this situation coped with various levels of stress, thus integrating coping skills with early family stress theory. Basic coping strategies independent of the level of stress included establishing independence and self-sufficiency, such as through the management

of finances, education, or experiences that promoted skills related to self-sufficiency. Military wives coped with mild levels of stress by developing supportive personal relationships outside of the family that served to foster increased self-esteem (McCubbin, 1979).

In addition, military wives manifested behaviors indicating that they accepted the expectations placed upon them by the military (McCubbin, 1979). Those behaviors were associated with reduced stress levels. Military wives who experienced moderate to severe stress coped by maintaining the unity and stability of the family, relying on religious beliefs, maintaining connections with extended family members, and developing close relationships with wives in similar situations for support and emotional expression (McCubbin, 1979).

The family stress and coping theory focuses in part on the role of social support in coping with family stress. McCubbin et al. (1980) defined social support as the interpersonal exchange of information that provides emotional support and support for self-esteem and problem solving. Sources of social support can include neighborhoods, families, and mutual self-help groups. The family stress and coping theory explains that families engage in processes to balance demands with resources that interact with meanings placed on events by the family to adapt to particular stressors. Family demands might include events of change, unresolved family tensions, or the stressors of everyday life. Family resources include psychological and material resources as well as coping strategies, all of which serve as protective factors against stress. The meaning that a family ties to a particular event might be situational, linked to family identity, or

associated with how the family relationship is perceived within the larger context of society. When family demands exceed their resources, a crisis occurs that can lead to negative outcomes (Patterson, 2002).

Wang and Amato (2000) used the family stress and coping theory to examine the factors facilitating postdivorce adjustment. The researchers noted that adjustment to divorce, just as with other stressful family incidents, depends on the presence of stressors, the ability to cope with them, and the meanings attached to the stressful events. Stressors that might result from divorce include changes in financial status for one or both partners, subsequent changes in standard of living, loss of friends, or relocation to new homes, all of which might overwhelm or impair the individuals' ability to cope (Wang & Amato, 2000). Factors associated with postdivorce adjustment include desiring a divorce, remarriage, and a stable and adequate income, and factors associated with a positive life appraisal include adequate income, the formation of new relationships, and children living in the household (Wang & Amato, 2000).

The family stress and coping theory provided the basis for understanding the factors unique to members of the Orthodox tradition that may contribute to stress and coping in the postdivorce period. In this study, the stressor was divorce. Members of the Orthodox Jewish community view the family as a central component of society and consider divorce a threat. Women might have a difficult time obtaining divorces and might face stigma in their communities (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). Orthodox men might feel persecuted and humiliated by their wives, and they also fear abandonment (Walfisch, 2009). In addition, these men often find little social support postdivorce within the

community (Bayme & Rosen, 1994). Given these stressors, I sought to identify the psychological and material factors that helped individuals to cope with stress. Psychological factors included participation in new relationships (Kanarfogel et al., 2014; Wang & Amato, 2000); social support (McCubbin et al., 1980); and financial well-being (Kanarfogel et al., 2014; Wang & Amato, 2000).

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

The General Population

Divorce in the United States. A significant number of marriages in the United States result in divorce. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2016), there were 2,245,404 marriages in the United States in 2016. That same year, there were at least 827,261 divorces, although this figure excluded divorces from six states, including California (CDC, 2016). The divorce rate for the population is approximately 46% of the marriage rate, suggesting that almost half of marriages end in divorce (CDC, 2016).

Stressors associated with divorce. A number of stressors exist that can impact the ability of the spouses to adjust to the crisis of divorce. One spouse might struggle to adjust while still holding an emotional attachment to the estranged spouse, leading to feelings of preoccupation and hostility. Control over the divorce process also impacts stress because the spouse who initiates the divorce typically experiences less stress (Lloyd, Sailor, & Carney, 2014; Wang & Amato, 2000). Other relevant stressors include negative changes to financial situations, loss of friends, and relocation; in addition, the perception of the divorce might impact stress levels because individuals who hold more

conservative views about divorce while still married experience more depressive symptoms than individuals who hold more liberal and accepting views (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Along with uncovering sources of stress related to divorce, Wang and Amato (2000) examined the interactions between stress and a number of demographic factors. Data from this longitudinal study of 208 divorced individuals indicated that current employment interacted with stress to influence life appraisal, that is, how well the participants perceived their lives to be. For the individuals who were unemployed, stress was negatively associated with life appraisal; however, this same relationship did not hold true for the individuals who were currently employed. Similar negative relationships were observed between stress and a reduction in income, loss of friends, and relocation. These findings suggest that employment might help to protect against stressors, perhaps because of financial stability and the presence of a predictable routine (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Coping strategies. To cope with the stressors associated with divorce, individuals might rely on a number of strategies. Employment and current income are two factors that could mitigate a declining financial situation resulting from divorce and lead to improved postdivorce adjustment. Wang and Amato (2000) reported that postdivorce per capita income was moderately correlated with adjustment. The researchers also found that individuals who had new romantic partners reported greater adjustment than those with no current partners. The spouse who initially wanted the divorce demonstrated a greater sense of postdivorce adjustment than the other spouse did, although this

adjustment negatively correlated with age. Thus, older individuals reported less effective adjustment than younger individuals, even if they had initiated their divorces. Similarly, Wang and Amato found that the length of the marriage negatively correlated with adjustment, but gender did not.

Another key strategy related to adjustment is social support. Group therapy is one way to promote social support. Lee and Hett (1990) conducted group therapy in an effort to help individuals to cope with postdivorce distress. Their sample comprised 24 adults, primarily women, living in an urban Canadian community. The participants were randomized to either an experimental group or a control group. The experimental group participated in eight sessions, each made up of different activities designed to foster postdivorce adjustment. The first session enabled members to become familiar with each other and explore expectations and rules. Subsequent sessions included discussions about the stages of divorce, practice in expressing personal needs, perceptions and experiences of divorce, ways to maintain family relationships, effect on children and associated legal issues, and dating and sexual issues. Members of the control group were waitlisted for the group sessions for 6 weeks.

Results indicated that this type of social connection facilitated an improved ability to form new relationships, increased independence, and reduced depression and anxiety. Participants in the experimental group also demonstrated an improved ability to live in the present, find meaning in the past, and express autonomy and spontaneity. Lett and Hett (1990) concluded that group interventions that include psychoeducation, communication skills, the expression of feelings, and cognitive behavioral techniques

such as relaxation and goal setting are effective in promoting the ability to cope with divorce.

Similar to Lee and Hett (1990), Krumrei et al. (2007) examined the role of social relationships in postdivorce adjustment. Krumrei et al. conducted a meta-analysis of a final sample of 21 studies that involved 3,189 participants pertaining to this topic. The researchers reported that strong social relationships postdivorce were associated with greater adjustment. However, it should be noted that the effect size, though significant, was low ($z = 0.14$). Furthermore, a significant amount of heterogeneity existed among the studies used to support this finding, suggesting that a moderating variable might have existed. Further subanalysis suggested that the specific type of social relationship, whether with an individual or a network of people, moderated the impact of social relationships on postdivorce adjustment. Krumrei et al. concluded that although networked relationships such as membership in a church or a support group could promote positive adjustment, individual relationships could protect against maladjustment.

Religious involvement or spirituality also might contribute to positive adjustment. Quinney and Fouts (2003) also used a group approach to facilitating postdivorce coping. They reported on the results of a divorce recovery workshop designed to promote resiliency. Participants included 75 adults recently involved in intimate relationships that had ended. Quinney and Fouts were particularly interested in the concept of resilience, that is, the ability to adjust positively when faced with adversity and its contribution to postdivorce adjustment. Results indicated that participation in the workshop led to a 70%

increase in adjustment over the course of the group. Further analysis indicated that the degree of resilience that the participants possessed at the start of the workshop contributed to the degree of adjustment at the end of the workshop. Thus, the workshop was effective in promoting postdivorce adjustment and explaining the adjustment outcomes of individuals who had increased resilience at the start (Quinney &Fouts, 2003).

Quinney and Fouts (2003) noted that seven dimensions of resilience, including "attunement, support, spirituality, self-awareness, core strength, empathy, and meaning of life" (p. 62), were associated with adjustment at the end of the workshop. Spirituality and meaning of life, both associated with religiosity, demonstrated low to moderate associations with adjustment. The levels of adjustment associated with these two variables increased over time (Quinney &Fouts, 2003).

Summary. Divorce rates in the United States are significant, with almost half of all marriages ending in divorce. The experience of divorce is related to a number of stressors that can influence the ability of individuals to cope successfully with the associated changes. Factors related to the prior relationship between the two spouses, including their level of attachment to each other and which spouse initiated the divorce, can impact postdivorce adjustment. Demographic factors such as level of employment, income, and relocation might create stress. After a divorce, one or both spouses might experience a decline in income that can contribute additional stress because of the ensuing financial instability. This issue might be exacerbated if the spouse is unemployed.

In general, individuals who divorce might possess a number of coping strategies that affect the level of adjustment after the event. As discussed previously, employment and income can protect against maladjustment; however, social interactions and relationships appear to be particularly important. Individuals who become involved in other romantic relationships postdivorce tend to cope more effectively with divorce-related stressors. In a similar manner, group therapy or attendance at group workshops seems to promote adjustment. Therapy with a cognitive behavioral approach, such as an approach that includes psychoeducation, relaxation, and goal setting, facilitates coping. Resilience is another key factor in postdivorce adjustment: The greater the individual resilience is after the divorce, the greater the adjustment will be at future time points. Taken together, these findings suggest that therapies that incorporate cognitive behavioral techniques as well as strategies to promote resilience might foster greater adjustment.

One additional factor related to coping warrants attention, particularly given the religious nature of the Orthodox Jewish community. Quinney and Fouts (2003) reported that two elements associated with religiosity, spirituality and meaning of life, were associated with postdivorce adjustment. Members of the Orthodox community might benefit from approaches that incorporate religious values. The next section in this literature review narrows the scope of the discussion from the general population to the Jewish segment. Research findings relevant to Orthodox as well as non-Orthodox Jewish individuals are presented.

The Jewish Population

Stressors associated with married life and divorce. The researchers of a number of studies in the literature have examined the impact of divorce on Jewish women, although not all of them from the Orthodox tradition. Barth and Ben-Ari (2014) conducted a qualitative study of divorced men and women, daughters of divorced parents, and professionals who worked with members of the Orthodox Jewish community who were undergoing divorce. The purpose of their phenomenological study was to understand how divorced women in this ultra-Orthodox community underwent change as a result of the experience. Barth and Ben-Ari identified a number of social and emotional consequences of divorce that led to the development of a model describing the dual process of individuation and acceptance.

A significant issue within the ultra-Orthodox community is that divorce is viewed as a failure. Ultra-Orthodox women are instilled with the value of serving as wives and mothers. Divorce not only is viewed as a failure and a disappointment but also can lead to social exclusion. For example, a divorcee might be forced to physically leave the geographic community or might be fired from a job. Furthermore, women who divorce are perceived by others in the community as undermining religious authority (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

The model developed by Barth and Ben-Ari (2014) described a pathway from social rejection to empowerment and acceptance. At the top of the model stands the social rejection of divorce. In the ultra-Orthodox tradition, divorce is undesirable. This unfavorable view of marital separation arises from the collectivist nature of the culture as

well as the religious emphasis on marriage and the family. The social rejection of divorce leads to emotional and instrumental consequences (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

From an emotional standpoint, the act of divorce is associated with failure. Women in the ultra-Orthodox tradition are raised to serve as wives and mothers. The community expects women to exercise self-restraint, adhere to social values, and demonstrate moral values consistent with religious beliefs. Divorce contradicts these expectations and is thus viewed as a failure and a social disappointment. In cases where divorce does occur in the ultra-Orthodox community, it often is done secretly and remains hidden from the community (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

In addition to the emotional consequences, divorced individuals also might face instrumental consequences. In other words, individuals who divorce might face punishment. The most extreme consequence is removal from the geographic community. This removal might be accomplished thought direct means or more subtly through harassment from others in the community. Given that the Orthodox community is already segregated from the rest of the population, this banishment can compound an already extant sense of isolation.

Social control also exists within the labor market. Women are expected to support their families financially, often working as educators or within the Orthodox service sector. Women who divorce might be dismissed from their jobs or reassigned to other roles that are less desirable. Another perhaps more severe consequence of divorce is the decreased chance for remarriage. Marriage itself is well controlled by community members, who engage in matchmaking and leave little room for divorced men or women

to make autonomous decisions. People who divorce are considered low class and thus might have difficulty finding other suitors (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

In spite of the dire consequences of divorce, personal healing is possible. Barth and Ben-Ari (2014) described a dual internal process occurring postdivorce in which divorced women desire to remain a part of the Orthodox community on one hand but desire empowerment and independence on the other hand. Despite the instrumental consequences and the social exclusion, most ultra-Orthodox women do remain a part of the community. They might accept the cultural stance on divorce and its association with failure while at the same time believing that divorce was necessary. Divorce might be accepted by the individual on a personal level, but not on a larger social level (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

Along with the acceptance of divorce and its consequences, divorced women might also gain a sense of empowerment and individuation. On an emotional level, this sense refers to increased self-awareness and self-worth. However, to reach this goal, women must first reconcile their new role with the expectations of humility and obedience with which they were raised. On a spiritual level, ultra-Orthodox women who divorce might experience a type of role reversal, meaning that in place of men, they seek out knowledge from the Scriptures. The lack of husbands with whom to interact also might bring the women closer to God, thus strengthening their prayer lives (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014).

Like Barth and Ben-Ari (2014), Fishman (1994) also focused on the experiences of Jewish women, providing an overview of the role of Jewish women in the divorce

process, the feelings that both spouses might have as they proceed through the divorce process, and the problems encountered during postdivorce counseling. Traditionally, Jewish women played little role in the divorce process because the men were the initiators. Within the Orthodox community, men provide women with a *get*, or permission to divorce (Bayme & Rosen, 1994; Fishman, 1994). Some husbands who felt persecuted or humiliated by their wives for wanting to divorce believed that others "owed" them, so fearing abandonment, they would refuse to grant a *get* (Walfisch, 2009). Like Barth and Ben-Ari, Fishman noted the negative emotional and social consequences of divorce for women and men, with the community viewing them as defective and shunning them.

Schnall et al. (2013) conducted an Internet-based survey of more than 3,000 Orthodox Jewish individuals in the United States, gathering data on marriage satisfaction and marital stressors, not on divorce. The researchers compared couples married for 5 years or less with those married for more than 30 years. In addition, Schnall et al. compared individuals new to the Orthodox faith with those who had practiced the faith for a significant amount of time.

Results indicated that financial issues or birth control represented significant stressors for these men and women (Schnall et al., 2013). Generally, relationship and financial issues appeared to worsen the longer the couples were married. For example, couples married for more than 30 years, versus husbands and wives married for less than 5 years, reported greater stress associated with a lack of communication, problems with physical intimacy, and time spent alone as a couple. Similarly, couples married for longer

periods reported greater financial stress than newer couples did. One stressor that affected newer couples more than experienced couples was one spouse spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet (Schnall et al., 2013). Other factors that have had an impact on divorce among non-Orthodox couples, but not on the marriages of Orthodox couples, have included divorce laws, well-defined roles, and the desire to share faith-based holidays (Wieselberg, 1992).

Divorce in the Orthodox Jewish population affects the men and women seeking to separate, but it does not seem to affect the futures of their children. Melen (2017) investigated the effect of divorce on the adult children of Orthodox Jewish parents and the impact of gender and attitudes toward divorce on those effects. After analyzing the results from the surveys completed by 162 adult participants, Melen reported that the adult children of divorce, as well as the adult children of intact marriages, did not manifest differences in their own marital commitment or satisfaction. In spite of the stigma surrounding divorce in this community, Melen found that such attitudes did not appear to impact the children of divorced parents negatively.

Adjustment and coping strategies. The adjustment of women in the Jewish community who do divorce is influenced by several factors, including socioeconomic, cognitive, and emotional resources. Factors that contribute to postdivorce adjustment include a sense of coherence and the development of new romantic relationships. Coherence involves comprehensibility, or the degree to which the women perceive their environment to be orderly and consistent; manageability, or the perception that one possesses the necessary resources to cope with a problem; and meaningfulness, or the

perception that one possesses enough resources to deal with different situations in life (Kulik & Heine-Cohen, 2011). However, it is important to note that these results apply to Jewish women in general; the sample from which the results were gleaned did not include members of the Orthodox community.

Jewish women in general, including women who adhere to the Orthodox tradition, cope with stressors in a number of ways. To cope with the demands of married life and their roles as wives and mothers, they seek social support from other women, accept financial help from family members, become more organized, and participate in hobbies such as reading or exercise (Shai, 2002). Although Shai (2002) did not address divorce, the researcher did provide insight into the coping resources of Orthodox Jewish women to deal with stress.

Kanarfogel et al. (2014), the researchers from whom the data for this study were obtained, reported preliminary findings related to postdivorce adjustment. Overall, most of the divorced Orthodox men and women in their study reported positive feelings of adjustment postdivorce. Results indicated that 85% of the male respondents reported feeling a little or much better off postdivorce and that 93% of the female respondents reported the same feelings. Kanarfogel et al. specifically investigated the link between postdivorce adjustment and wellness in the areas of personal finances, religious lives, professional lives, interpersonal and social interactions, and personal well-being. The participants in their study were members of three subgroups of Orthodox Jews: Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish, and Chassidic.

Results indicated that wellness scores were different in some respects among the three subgroups of Orthodoxy. For example, although the majority of members of all three groups reported feeling better off postdivorce, a slightly greater number of participants who identified as Modern Orthodox reported such feelings than the Yeshivish and Chassidic individuals did, at 97%, 89%, and 90%, respectively. However, female members of the more conservative Yeshivish community reported greater religious well-being postdivorce than the women in the other two subgroups did. This result did not hold true for Yeshivish male participants, who reported the lowest levels of religious well-being of the three subgroups (Kanarfogel et al., 2014).

Differences in wellness also existed according to gender. In all areas except financial well-being, the female participants in Kanarfogel et al.'s (2014) study reported greater well-being postdivorce than the male participants did. The greatest difference between the genders existed for religious well-being, with 90% of female and 75% of male respondents reporting a sense of well-being in this area. The converse appeared to be true regarding financial well-being, with 75% of male and 70% of female respondents reporting a sense of well-being in this area. This difference could have been the result in part to the stigma and social pressures exerted on women postdivorce, such as the loss of employment, which could have contributed to a decline in financial stability. This difference was the most pronounced in the Chassidic subgroup, with 73% of the men and only 50% of the women reporting financial well-being (Kanarfogel et al., 2014).

One additional consideration was the relationship between the amount of time passed since the divorce and the different wellness scores. Overall, the cumulative

wellness scores increased slightly between 2 and 3 years postdivorce and then leveled off. Wellness scores for religious well-being followed a similar trend, whereas personal well-being peaked and then remained constant at about 1 year postdivorce. Financial wellness increased over the first 3 to 4 years postdivorce and then declined slightly after 4 years. Finally, wellness associated with work and professional life remained high and constant during the first 4 years postdivorce and then declined. Based on these findings, Kanarfogel et al. (2014) recommended that mental health practitioners who treat members of the Orthodox community who have experienced divorce include elements targeting financial issues, particularly for Chassidic women, and religious well-being for men in the Modern Orthodox and Yeshivish subgroups.

Attitudes toward mental health treatment. Given that one potential application of the results of the study is the design of effective mental health therapies to help individuals to cope with divorce, it was important to understand how members of the Orthodox community and Jewish people in general perceived the issue of mental health. Within this community, the stigma associated with mental health disorders has been linked to negative attitudes toward seeking help (Bineth, 2017).

Bineth (2017) investigated the factors that could predict attitudes toward mental health treatment in the Jewish Orthodox community. Like other minority communities, members of the Jewish Orthodox community hesitate to seek assistance partly because of discrimination, poor access to mental health care, poor quality of care, stigma, and lack of knowledge about mental health issues. Bineth particularly emphasized the role of stigma in mental health not only in decreasing help-seeking efforts but also in reducing treatment

adherence. Individuals who do seek treatment often do so in secrecy and only after exhausting all other possibilities. In fact, given the extreme importance of religion to this community, members are likely to seek help from religious leaders before contacting mental health practitioners (Bineth, 2017).

Results of the survey of 83 Orthodox Jews identified several factors that could predict negative attitudes toward seeking mental health treatment (Bineth, 2017). One of the most significant factors was stigma; marriage structure remained a slightly significant predictor. Age, gender, family, and geographic area did not significantly predict attitudes toward mental health treatment. With respect to family, Bineth initially hypothesized that the family-centric system within this cultural group could contribute to greater shame and family stress in response to individuals seeking mental health treatment; however, the results did not support this particular hypothesis. Schnall et al. (2014) discussed similar barriers to obtaining mental health treatment in the Orthodox community.

In addition to the affordability of health care, Weiss et al. (2013) implicated feelings of shame; an unwillingness to discuss a family member's mental illness outside of the home; and the belief that mentally ill individuals cannot participate in important religious practices, which compromises their worth to the community. Weiss et al. examined the role of religious and cultural norms in the perceptions related to mental illness within the ultra-Orthodox community. This particular component of the Orthodox faith strictly adheres to the laws set forth in the Torah that dictate the day-to-day behaviors of individuals. The lives of the members of this community center on values and traditions, such as dressing in certain manners or maintaining geographic separation

from outsiders. Although these characteristics could potentially strengthen the ability of individuals to care for family members who are mentally ill, conflict also can result. The primary source of this conflict might be feelings of prejudice toward the individuals who suffer from such illnesses. These individuals are unable to adhere to religious commandments and fulfill their religious duties. Ultimately, this inability conflicts with biblical teachings related to expressions of compassion (Weiss et al., 2013).

To further investigate these phenomena, Weiss et al. (2013) conducted a qualitative study involving 24 ultra-Orthodox mothers or wives with either children or spouses who had been diagnosed with severe mental illness. Study participants were required to record in personal journals meaningful interactional life episodes or authentic verbal interactions between themselves and the family members who were ill. Analysis of these journals identified the themes of conflict between religious norms and the mental health disorder and conflicts related to attempts to maintain the secrecy of the issue (Weiss et al., 2013).

The ultra-Orthodox women in Weiss et al.'s (2013) study indicated that conflict arose because of discrepancies between Orthodox religious values and the nature of the mental health disability. Family members with mental illness often are exempted from participating in religious practices, which leads to conflict. These issues are the most prominent during the Jewish holidays. Conflict also might arise because of the pressure to conform to social norms. Expectations exist that all family members will participate in community activities, so when a family member fails to comply, perhaps because of anxiety or depression, both the individual and family members may experience stress.

Other conflicts arise between the mental disability and the need for the mothers or wives in the families to fulfill their traditional Orthodox role. This role, in and of itself, may be stressful, particularly during holiday times that confer additional responsibilities. The added responsibility of caring for family members who are mentally ill may increase feelings of stress for women (Weiss et al., 2013).

The perceived need to maintain secrecy is an additional source of stress and conflict. Although members of other cultural or ethnic groups also might desire secrecy, this issue is particularly problematic in the Orthodox community because of the practice of arranged marriages. For example, it might be difficult to arrange marriages not only for individuals who are mentally ill but also for the siblings of such individuals, who by association might experience difficulties (Weiss et al., 2013).

To summarize, as with the general population, members of the Orthodox Jewish community experience stressors related to marriage and divorce. One of the most significant stressors is the perception that divorce equates to failure and the subsequent emotional and instrumental consequences that may occur. Women who experience divorce might be socially rejected, even to the point of losing employment and being banished from the Orthodox community.

In addition to the stressors associated with divorce, stressors related to marriage include financial problems, disagreements about birth control, lack of communication, problems with physical intimacy, and lack of time spent alone as a couple. In spite of these problems between the spouses, the children might remain largely unaffected. Members of the Jewish community employ a number of coping strategies to facilitate

postdivorce adjustment. The development of new romantic relationships and the perception that one possesses an orderly environment and the coping skills needed to thrive can enhance the adjustment process.

Individuals experiencing divorce, regardless of extant coping skills, could benefit from counseling interventions that foster adjustment. However, barriers exist within this population to obtaining mental health treatment. A significant amount of stigma is associated with a mental health diagnosis, particularly when the illness prevents the individuals from participating fully in religious life. In addition, families feel pressured to maintain secrecy regarding the mental illness issues of family members because these individual could hurt opportunities to arrange marriages for siblings. Families also might experience conflict over the desire to express compassion and the desire to adhere to strict religious principles. Internal conflict could arise when the mental illness of family members prevents them from participating in religious holidays and observances, both of which are paramount to the Orthodox faith. Effective mental health interventions should address ways to cope with stigma and resolve conflicts between expectations and realities.

Summary and Conclusions

The literature addressed the stressors related to divorce and the factors associated with postdivorce adjustment in the general and Jewish Orthodox populations. Within the general population, individuals who divorce might experience stress because of the lack of control over the divorce process as well as feelings of anger and hostility that are the result of unresolved attachment to the former spouses (Lloyd et al., 2014; Wang &

Amato, 2000). Other issues include financial strain, loss of friends, and relocation (Wang & Amato, 2000). Members of the Orthodox community might experience these same issues, but they often also must deal with stigma and social exclusion (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). Factors that might impact postdivorce adjustment positively include adequate income, formation of new relationships, and children living in the household (Wang & Amato, 2000); the formation of new social or intimate relationships (Krumrei et al., 2007); and spirituality or religiosity (Quinney & Fouts, 2003).

However, it is not known which of these factors and what other potential factors might lead to positive adjustment postdivorce in the Jewish Orthodox community. The researcher sought to address this gap by examining the relationship between postdivorce adjustment and the factors of religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships. A description of how this goal was accomplished is presented in the next chapter, including the research design and rationale, the methodology, threats to validity, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population. These factors included active involvement in the religious community prior to or postdivorce, formation or maintenance of positive social support networks, upholding of financial security, and involvement in new and intimate relationships. Having an increased understanding of these factors might lead to more effective therapeutic approaches in helping members of the Orthodox Jewish community to cope with divorce. In Chapter 3 is an explanation of the methodology that the researcher used to gain greater insight into the factors influencing postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population. The chapter presents a description of the research design and rationale; an overview of the methodology, including sampling selection and size, data analysis, and potential threats to validity; and an overview of ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

The researcher investigated the relationships of several IVs to a single dependent variable (DV). The IVs were religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships. The DV was postdivorce adjustment. Therefore, I used a quantitative approach featuring hierarchical multiple logistic regression. A quantitative methodology was appropriate for this study because I was investigating the relationship of postdivorce adjustment to religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships. Use of a quantitative methodology allowed the researcher to measure the phenomenon objectively through statistical and

mathematical analysis and computational techniques (Wrench, 2017). The researcher could have used a qualitative methodology to explore the phenomenon. Qualitative researchers explore the study participants' perceptions, thoughts, and experiences to ascertain their reasons, opinions, and motivations (Glesne, 2016). The researcher considered but rejected a qualitative methodology because the purpose of this study was to investigate the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population.

Moreover, using a hierarchical multiple logistic regression design allows researchers to learn more about the relationships between and among several IVs (Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2014). There are many benefits of following a regression design, such as the ability to include all predictors into one model. For example, a regression design can lead to a more accurate and precise understanding of the relationships between and among the individual predictors in conjunction with the outcomes (Daoud, 2017).

Researchers investigating the variables used in this study have employed a variety of design strategies. For example, Melen (2017) investigated the impact of divorce on the children of Orthodox Jewish parents using a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive survey design, which was similar to the design used by Bineth (2017) to investigate attitudes within this community toward mental health. This approach appears to be the predominant strategy in quantitative studies pertaining to divorce among members of this particular population; however, the researcher opted against using a cross-sectional design because it would have allowed only a snapshot of the current state of the phenomenon.

Some researchers have used qualitative approaches to study postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox Jewish population. Barth and Ben-Ari (2014), Shai (2002), and Shalev et al. (2015) used a phenomenological approach to gain insight into the meanings of the phenomenon from the perspectives of their study participants. The researcher opted not to use a qualitative phenomenological approach because the focus was less on exploring the study phenomenon than on understanding the statistical relationships between and among the different variables.

This archival study followed a quantitative, hierarchical multiple logistic regression design to determine the relationships between four IVs and the corresponding DV (see Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). Using a hierarchical multiple logistic regression design facilitated the identification of any statistically significant relationships between the DV and the four IVs. It is important to note that although regression studies might uncover directional relationships between and among the variables, they do not provide information regarding causation (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). This design choice was consistent with other research designs (e.g., Kulik & Heine-Cohen, 2011; Quinney & Fouts, 2003) needed to advance knowledge in psychology in situations where researchers cannot manipulate the IVs (Long, 1997; Peduzzi, Concato, Kemper, Holford, & Feinstein, 1996). The variables investigated in this study that might have been related to postdivorce adjustment represented factors that already existed in the personal lives of the participants, not factors that could have been influenced by the researcher.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The researcher used hierarchical multiple logistic regression to investigate the RQ and its corresponding hypotheses.

RQ: Do religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships affect the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community?

Model 1 Hypothesis

H_{01}: Gender does not predict postdivorce adjustment in the Jewish Orthodox community.

H_{a1}: Gender does predict postdivorce adjustment in the Jewish Orthodox community.

Model 2 Omnibus Hypothesis

H_{01}: Religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships do not predict the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, after controlling for gender differences.

H_{a1}: At least one of the IVs will predict the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, after controlling for gender differences.

Model 2 Individual Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no relationship between religious involvement postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community,

adjusting for social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a1}: There is a relationship between religious involvement postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{02}: There is no relationship between social support postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a2}: There is a relationship between social support postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{03}: There is no relationship between financial well-being postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{a3}: There is a relationship between financial well-being postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and new and intimate relationships.

H_{04}: There is no relationship between the formation of new and intimate relationships postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and financial well-being.

H_{a4}: There is a relationship between the formation of new and intimate relationships postdivorce and the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community, adjusting for religious involvement, social support, and financial well-being.

Methodology

Population

The target population comprised divorced members of the Orthodox Jewish community. A total of 5.3 million Jewish individuals live in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2015). Of these individuals, 10%, or approximately 530,000 individuals, identify as Orthodox (Pew Research Center, 2015). About 9% of marriages within the overall Jewish population in the United States end in divorce (Pew Research Center, 2013), a statistic that compares closely with the estimated 10% of Orthodox Jewish marriages ending in divorce ("Data on Divorce," 2017).

The Jewish Orthodox population comprise a distinct cultural group with unique characteristics. The average age of adherents to this tradition is younger than the average age of the overall Jewish population in the United States, and members of the Orthodox faith tend to have more children than the overall Jewish population, at 4.1 and 1.9 per Jewish adult, respectively. Orthodox Jews also place greater emphasis on adhering to

Jewish law. Almost 80% of Orthodox Jews, versus 19% of the overall Jewish population, have reported that observing Jewish law is central to their identity. Three quarters of Orthodox Jews attend synagogue at least once each month, and more than 90% of Orthodox Jews live in kosher homes and fast on Yom Kippur. Differences also exist in the political realm: Orthodox Jews are more conservative than non-Orthodox Jews, with more than half identifying with conservative political parties (Cooperman & Smith, 2013).

One other distinction exists within the Orthodox Jewish population. As described previously, the data collected by ARCC included information from individuals who self-identified as Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish, and Chassidic. Individuals who describe themselves as Modern Orthodox may be more likely to pursue a college or university degree. According to Cooperman and Smith (2013), 65% of Modern Orthodox Jews but only 25% as Yeshivish Jews have completed a college degree. The latter group might prefer to seek an education from a religious school rather than a public institution.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The archival data used in the study were collected initially from a survey completed by 310 divorced Orthodox Jewish community members. The survey was administered by ARCC, an institute located in Spring Valley, New York. ARCC is a nonprofit organization that has conducted research on the Orthodox Jewish community to improve the physical, spiritual, and psychological well-being of members of this community (Kanarfogel et al., 2014). Data were obtained from 231 women and 79 men. The inclusion criteria stipulated that the respondents had to be divorced members of the

Orthodox community, including the Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish, and Chassidic communities. Preliminary permission was obtained from ARCC to use these data in the study (see Appendix A). The data were deidentified according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act's privacy rules and regulations. The data were delivered to the researcher via a trusted currier. In addition, the data were sent in a sealed envelope to ensure integrity and confidentiality.

Given that the original data had been obtained by another research group, the researcher conducted a secondary analysis of the data. This approach had advantages and disadvantages. A notable advantage involved the low financial resources and time needed to conduct the study. Although some secondary analysis efforts require payment to access the data, the amount of the fee is typically far less than the cost of conducting the experiment to capture new data. In the case of the data set from ARCC, no fee was involved (Cheng & Phillips, 2014).

Despite this important advantage, limitations regarding the use of secondary data do exist. Often, the data have not been collected to address specific RQs; therefore, information about important variables might be missing. In addition, the data might have been limited to a specific subset of a target population, thus limiting the generalizability of the results. Lastly, because the individuals analyzing the data might not be the same individuals as those who initially collected them, researchers may be unaware of specific nuances in the data that could influence their interpretations of the results (Cheng & Phillips, 2014).

The data provided by ARCC had some of these advantages and disadvantages. Because the data were already available, the cost and time commitments were significantly reduced for this researcher. In addition, the data were relevant to the sample in this study. The variables in the data also aligned well with the RQ and hypotheses. Limitations relevant to the use of these archival data were the inability of the researcher to contact the survey respondents for clarification because this information had been redacted from the data and the inability to identify factors related to postdivorce adjustment other than what were presented in the data.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The survey used to collect the data was created by ARCC (see Appendix B). This survey houses 110 items, including a number of demographic questions and questions about religious background, family history, mental health history, dating history with spouse, marriage, divorce, and life postdivorce. Based upon the survey results, Kanarfogel et al. (2014), the developers of the survey, established a current wellness score ranging from 1 to 100 across six categories: Overall, Personal Finance, Religious Life, Work/Professional Life, Interpersonal-Social, and Personal Well-Being.

Evidence exists to support the validity of this research instrument. The design of the survey by experts in conducting research among the Jewish population strengthened its content validity (G. M. Sullivan, 2011). The survey was initiated and overseen by Dr. Issac Schechter, a clinical psychologist and director at a leading mental health provider for the Orthodox community in New York (“Data on Divorce,” 2017), and a team of professional researchers who were familiar with that target population. Additional

support for content validity meant that the survey items accurately represented the characteristics and beliefs that they were intended to measure (Fink, 2009). The survey was intended to measure the experiences and outcomes of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish community. Items in the survey directly asked the respondents if they were divorced, what their specific religious affiliations were, who initiated the divorce, and specific factors that precipitated the divorce.

Several factors may affect the reliability of online surveys. For example, surveys that use scales that require the respondents to rank their level of agreement or choose among degrees of a response demonstrate higher reliability when the scales include more verbal labels (Vannette & Krosnick, 2018). Included in the ARCC survey are a number of items that use scales that require verbal descriptions. For example, when asked to indicate the level of agreement between the respondents and their partners on a number of items, participants are asked to complete the survey using a 5-point Likert scale of responses that ranged from 1 (*always disagreed*) to 5 (*always agreed*). Another scale in the survey specifies a range of times, such as "4-6 months or still waiting." The use of expanded and more detailed verbal descriptions in conjunction with the Likert scale of responses strengthened the survey's reliability.

Additional factors related to the reliability of a survey include the length of the instrument, sufficiency and comprehensibility of the survey items, and the possible imposition of time limits in completing the survey. Longer surveys are typically associated with smaller measurement error because the constructs of interest are addressed more thoroughly (Ercan, Yazici, Ocakoglu, Sigirli, & Kan, 2007). In contrast,

the ARCC survey holds 110 items. To ensure reliability, the survey items also must provide sufficient descriptions so that the respondents can comprehend their meaning clearly (Ercan et al., 2007). The items in the ARCC survey are specific and clear in meaning. For example, questions such as "How many children did you have together?" and "Were you or your spouse diagnosed with a mental illness before your marriage?" are clear in meaning and elicit specific responses.

Time limits imposed on survey completion can negatively affect a survey's reliability. If the respondents have insufficient time to complete the survey, they may not answer all of the questions, or they may answer them in haste, increasing the risk of inaccurate answers (Ercan et al., 2007). This online survey had no time limit, and the respondents were allowed to complete the items at their leisure and in a comfortable environment free of distractions.

Operationalization of constructs. The IVs were religious involvement, social support, personal well-being, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships.

Religious involvement. Religious involvement refers to participation in either religious ceremonies or religious education. In this study, religious involvement was limited to participation in the Jewish Orthodox faith. ARCC described three groups of Orthodox Jewish individuals, namely, Modern Orthodox, Yeshivish, and Chassidic, all of which were included in the data set. For the purposes of this study, religious involvement was based on the current wellness score on a scale of 0 to 100 found in the category of Religious Life.

Social support. In this study, social support referred to the presence of emotionally and socially supportive individuals in the participants' lives postdivorce (Kulik & Heine-Cohen, 2011). Social support included elements associated with individuals or groups. Individual social relationships are associated with one-on-one interactions, whereas group or network relationships involve support groups or close groups of friends (Krumrei et al., 2007). In this study, social support was based on the current wellness score on a scale of 0 to 100 in the category of Social Support and the aforementioned definition of social support indicated on the ARCC survey.

Personal well-being. Research involving the Jewish population has suggested that social support and well-being are related. Lazar and Bjorck (2016) investigated the relationship among social support, religious support, anxiety, and life satisfaction. They assessed social support using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, a 12-item tool that uses a Likert-type scale to indicate perceived support. Lazar and Bjorck assessed well-being using the Satisfaction With Life Scale, a five-item tool that uses a Likert-type scale to indicate subjective well-being. Results of their study indicated that social support was moderately positively and significantly correlated to life satisfaction ($p < .01$). This result supported the use of ARCC's Personal Well-Being category as an indicator of perceived social support, which is how this IV was defined in the study.

Financial well-being. This IV relates to financial confidence and security (Chan et al., 2012). In this study, financial well-being was defined as current money management-related stress and security regarding achievement of future money goals, assessed by the amount of cash on hand, amount of debt, positive financial behaviors,

perceived financial self-efficacy, willingness to take risks when investing, and planning for the long-term future (Netemeyer, Warmath, Fernandes, & Lynch, 2018). Although this level of operationalization would have provided greater insight into financial well-being, the operationalization of this IV was limited by the ARCC survey data. Thus, financial well-being was based on the current wellness score on a scale of 0 to 100 in the category of Personal Finance.

New and intimate relationships. This IV describes new romantic relationships within or outside of the context of marriage (Wang & Amato, 2000). The formation of new and intimate relationships was based on current marital status (Survey Question 97) and what was important in a future spouse for those who had dated or were dating (Survey Question 105). In addition, any written comments from the participants were screened to identify those who were in new relationships.

Dependent variable. Postdivorce adjustment, the DV, was defined as the process of adapting to the changes that occur as the result of divorce and lead to a sense of well-being (Krumrei et al., 2007). Kulik and Heine-Cohen (2011) operationalized this DV using the 60-item Fisher's Questionnaire. Using a 5-point Likert scale of responses, the participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements related to the acceptance of divorce, symptoms of grief, prior love relationships, and perception of self. These four survey dimensions demonstrated Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.60 to 0.90, indicating moderate to high levels of reliability.

Unlike Kulik and Heine-Cohen's (2011) study, the operationalization of postdivorce adjustment in this study referred to the degree to which the participants

perceived that their lives had changed as the result of divorce. This perception was indicated in one Likert scale survey question: “How are you doing after divorce?” Other question and possible answers included “better off,” “much better off,” “a little better off,” “not better off,” “same,” “a little worse off,’ and “much worse off.”

Data Analysis Plan

The researcher used SPSS v.25 to analyze the data. The first part of the data analysis plan involved the use of descriptive statistics to highlight the different frequencies and percentages that the researcher calculated for nominal and ordinal variables. Normality of continuous-, interval-, and ratio-level variables were assessed by way of measures of central tendency (mean [*M*]) and dispersion (standard deviation [SD]), as well as skewness and kurtosis. Distributions of continuous-, interval-, and ratio-level variables were visually assessed with histograms. A review of descriptive statistics was conducted to screen for any missing data, outliers, or potential data entry errors. There were missing or incomplete data, given the extensive length of the survey. Any data missing from the survey responses were automatically recognized in SPSS as missing data.

Hierarchical multiple logistic regression was used to determine if any relationships existed between the DV and any of the IVs. Therefore, hierarchical multiple logistic regression was used to determine if religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships significantly predicted postdivorce adjustment in the Jewish Orthodox community. Gender was included in the first step of the model to control for its effect. The main predictors were

added in the second step of the model. An alpha (α) significance level of $p < .05$ was selected.

The outcome variable was a 5-point Likert scale item. Scales with more than 5 points may be treated as continuous, given the right conditions (Glass, Peckham, & Sanders, 1972). However, the distribution of the data on the outcome variable was not considered normal. The distribution could have been positively skewed if the majority of respondents had indicated that they were better off postdivorce (see Figure 1; Kanarfogel et al., 2014). Given this skew and unbalance in the data, the outcome variable was recoded into a binary variable comparing those who had indicated that they were better off to those who had indicated that they were not better off.

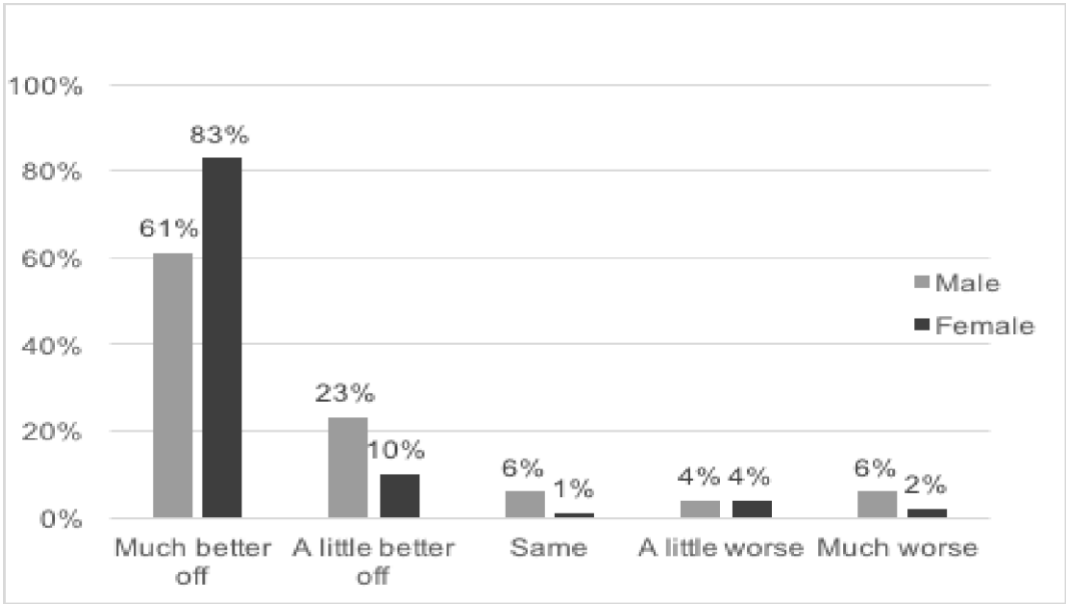

Figure 1. Postdivorce adjustment by gender.

Hierarchical multiple logistic regression allowed the researcher to predict the impact of each variable on the odds of being better off postdivorce when controlling for other variables in the model. Pampel (2000) explained that there is no single best measure

for model evaluation. Hence, models were evaluated in a number of ways. First, the model -2 log likelihood (-2LL) statistics were compared among the model with no predictors, the model with only gender, and the final model. Pseudovariance was explained and was reviewed using Nagelkerke R^2. Finally, predicted group membership was used to assess the sensitivity and specificity of the model. Sensitivity refers to correctly classifying an individual as a true positive (Field, 2013), in this case, as having reported being better off postdivorce (y = 1). Specificity refers to correctly classifying an individual as a true negative (Field, 2013), in this case, as having reported being the same or worse off postdivorce (y = 0).

When completing this analysis, the researcher followed 12 specific steps:

1. Conduct a preliminary analysis that examines any descriptive statistics of the continuous variables.
2. Check the normality assumption by examining histograms of the variables.
3. Check the linearity assumption by examining correlations and scatter diagrams of the variables.
4. Conduct a hierarchical multiple logistic regression by running a model with the variables.
5. Check the model (check for multicollinearity, examine normality and homogeneity of variance).
6. Check for outliers.
7. Examine significance of coefficient estimates to trim the model.
8. Revise the model.

9. Write the final equation and interpret the coefficient estimates.
10. Assess the Wald test from the logistic regression and determine the p-value.
11. If *p*-value < .05, significance is determined.
12. If *p*-value > .05, no significance is determined. (Stockemer, 2019, p. 165)

Sample size adequacy. Long (1997) proposed that logistic regression should not be conducted on samples smaller than 100 cases. Peduzzi et al. (1996) set the following guidelines for determining minimum sample size: $N = 10\ k/p$, where k is the number of predictor variables, 10 is the number of events per variable (EPV), and p is the smallest of the proportions of negative or positive cases in the population. However, more recent research by Vittinghoff and McCulloch (2007) has suggested that the number of EPV can be loosened. Vittinghoff and McCulloch conducted a simulation study on the number of EPV and assessed various problems such as Type 1 error, confidence interval (CI) coverage, and bias. The researchers reported that problems were relatively uncommon with five to nine EVP.

Using the descriptive statistics reported in Kanarfogel et al. (2014) and the proportions in Figure 1, the researcher determined that the number of respondents who reported being better off (y = 1) was approximately 282 and the number of those who reported being the same or worse off (y = 0) was approximately 28. Therefore, $p(y = 1) = 0.91$, or 91%. Likewise, $p(y = 0) = .09$, or 9%. Minimum sample size estimates are presented in Table 1. Using five EPV, a sample of 333 participants was required to test all five IVs and gender as a control variable. Using five EPV, a sample of 278 participants was required to test all five IVs.

Table 1

Sample Size Adequacy Estimate

No. of predictors	*k*	*p*	EVP		Minimum *N*	
			10	5	10 *k/p*	5 *k/p*
6	6	.09	60	30	666.67	333.33
5	5	.09	50	25	555.56	277.78

Threats to Validity

Threats to internal validity in survey research, such as the survey from which the data for this study were derived, include selection, maturation, history, and attrition (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Selection threat refers to differences in the characteristics of the participants that could have an effect on the data (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). For example, it is possible that a particular subgroup of Orthodox Jewish individuals might routinely demonstrate greater religious involvement than other subgroups. Because the data were obtained from three distinct groups of Orthodox Jews, selection threat was a possibility. To determine whether a threat to internal validity existed, the data were analyzed collectively and by subgroup to determine if any differences existed with respect to the IVs.

Maturation refers to changes in an IV that occur with time that could interfere or be confused with an effect on the DV (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). The survey provided data on the length of time that all respondents had been divorced, a factor that could have influenced their well-being in a number of areas. This threat was a possibility in the study because the survey respondents had been divorced for different lengths of time. According to Kanarfogel et al. (2014), results of the analysis of their data indicated that financial wellness scores increased with the increasing time since divorce up until 5

years, after which time financial wellness scores decreased. Thus, at least in terms of financial wellness, the amount of time since divorce might have been a contributing factor. With respect to social and religious wellness scores, both variables demonstrated a short decline between 1 and 2 years postdivorce, followed by an increase up through 5 or more years. The variability in the data regarding different amounts of time since divorce might have been, but was not, a threat to the internal validity of the study.

History refers to events that occur during the data collection process that could affect the results. One example is an economic recession, which could impact financial well-being (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Alternatively, the respondents in the current study could have had prior negative experiences that impacted their ability to complete the survey, such as ongoing conflicts with the prior spouses or negative experiences with mental health care providers (Bineth, 2017). Because the data had already been collected by ARCC, it was not possible to determine if this particular threat was applicable. Attrition refers to the loss of participants from the study, a factor that could skew the results in a particular direction (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). However, in the current study, the archival data were collected at a single point in time, and no follow-up with the participants occurred, thus eliminating the threat to validity resulting from attrition.

External validity describes the extent to which the results can be applied to other groups of individuals, settings, or variables. Because the data were obtained from Orthodox Jewish individuals, the results might not apply to non-Orthodox individuals. Similarly, given that three subgroups of Orthodox Jews completed the ARCC survey, it is possible that the results applicable to one subgroup might not have been fully applicable

to another subgroup because of differences in religious views or practices. In addition, given that all participants lived in New York State, the results might not be applicable to individuals living in other locations (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014).

Two additional threats to external validity are racial or cultural bias and group power (Bineth, 2017). Because the study focused on a specific cultural group, racial or cultural biases were not issues. Group power refers to the influence of one participant over another, which also was not an issue because the participants completed the survey on an individual and private basis.

Ethical Procedures

Because the data came from an extant data set, several ethical considerations were pertinent to the study. Data should originate from a valid and reliable source, and they also should be accurate and credible. This was the case because the respondents involved in the initial research project were experienced researchers. Several other relevant ethical considerations included privacy and confidentiality, informed consent, risk to the participants, and treatment of the data (see Appendix C).

Privacy and confidentiality. An important component of research includes the protection of private information relevant to study participants. In this study, the data did not contain any identifying information that could have posed a threat to the confidentiality of the participants' survey responses and the privacy of their identities. The ARCC survey collected the data from anonymous respondents. The survey was administered online, and Kanarfogel et al. (2014) did not collect any data in their initial survey that could have identified any of the respondents. Therefore, when completing this

study, the researcher checked the data before analysis to ensure that there was no identifying information. If such information was found, it was deleted to ensure that the participants' privacy and confidentiality were maintained.

Informed consent. Prior to completing the initial web-based survey, the participants electronically signed the informed consent, indicating their agreement to join the study. This form included details about the purpose of the study, the benefits and risks of participating, how the data would be used, and the researchers' contact information. The participants also were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason and with no repercussions. For the current study, no informed consent was necessary because the researcher used precollected archival data and had received consent from the previous researchers to use the data set. The researcher also had received approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board to conduct the study (IRB approval #05-18-20-0304742).

Risk to participants. Any risks involved in being in the initial study likely centered on the emotional distress associated with the study variables. Participants in the previous study from which the data set was collected were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study if they experienced such distress. Given that this study used archival data from the previous study, any further risks associated with participating in this study were not applicable.

Treatment of data. Regarding treatment of the data, the researcher stored all data in a locked filing cabinet or on a password-protected computer file to which only the researcher has access. The password-protected computer file was stored in a locked filing

cabinet located in the researcher's office in his personal residence. After completing the data analysis, the researcher will store all data for 5 years before destroying them. The researcher will destroy all electronic files by deleting them from the file folder as well as the computer hard drive. The researcher will shred any physical or paper copies used in this study.

Summary

This quantitative hierarchical multiple logistic regression study was an investigation into the relationships of different personal factors (IVs of religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships) on the DV of postdivorce adjustment of members of the Orthodox Jewish community in the northeastern United States. The archival data originated from a prior study conducted by ARCC with 310 divorced Orthodox Jewish individuals.

This study will help to extend prior research pertaining to divorce in the Orthodox community by describing the factors that might affect postdivorce adjustment and well-being. In addition, this information might be used to develop effective therapeutic interventions to improve coping and resilience postdivorce. In Chapter 4, the results of the data analysis are presented, followed by a discussion of these results in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

The researcher used SPSS v.25 to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were calculated for nominal and ordinal variables. Normality of continuous-, interval-, and ratio-level explanatory variables was assessed by way of measures of central tendency (*M*) and dispersion (*SD*) as well as skewness and kurtosis. The researcher visually assessed distributions of continuous-, interval-, and ratio-level explanatory variables with histograms.

The researcher reviewed descriptive statistics to screen for any missing data, outliers, and potential data entry errors. Data entry errors were infrequent and corrected. If an error could not be corrected, it was recoded as missing. SPSS automatically recognizes blank cells as missing data. The original data set contained data obtained from 321 participants. There was a great deal of missing data, given the length of the survey (110 questions). More than 100 individuals had missing data on most of the variables included in the model.

The researcher also recoded variables for the purposes of the bivariate and logistic regression analyses. Current relationship status was dichotomized to single versus engaged or remarried for the purposes of the logistic regression analysis. Upon closer examination, it became clear that participants who reported being engaged had missing data on the explanatory variable of financial well-being. Hence, the logistic regression analysis only compared single to remarried individuals. The outcome variable (i.e., postdivorce adjustment) was a 5-point Likert scale item. Scales with more than 5 points may be treated as continuous (Glass et al., 1972), given the right conditions. However,

the distribution of the data on the outcome variable was not normal. The distribution was positively skewed, with the majority of respondents indicating that they were much better off postdivorce (see Figure 1). Given this skew and unbalance in the data, the outcome variable was recoded into a binary variable comparing participants who had indicated that they were much better off (78.2%) to all others (21.82%).

The log odds of the outcome were generated by estimating a preliminary model with the selected explanatory variables in the model. Specification of this preliminary model and subsequent models is discussed at greater length following discussion of the bivariate analysis. The logistic regression model generated a predicted probability. The log of the predicted probability was calculated to create the log odds of the outcome. Bivariate Pearson product-moment correlations were used to explore associations and multicollinearity between the explanatory variables as well as associations with the log odds of the outcome. Likewise, the assumption of linearity as part of the generalized linear model was assessed by examining the scatterplots with estimated regression lines between the log odds of the outcome and the continuous IVs. Two *t* tests were conducted to examine differences in the outcome based on gender and relationship status.

An alpha (α) significance level of $p < .05$ was selected. Hierarchical multiple logistic regression was used to determine if the IVs of religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships significantly predicted the DV of postdivorce adjustment in the Jewish Orthodox community. Additional explanatory variables were explored: age, gender, and personal well-being. The survey queried the participants as to how they were doing in various

areas of life. Respondents were asked to rate their well-being on a scale of 0 (*doing terribly*) to 100 (*doing perfectly*). Religious involvement was defined as "religious life (e.g. observance, Torah learning, faith)" well-being. Social support was defined as "interpersonal/social relationships (e.g. family, friends, others)" well-being. Financial well-being was defined as "personal finance" well-being. Background variables (e.g., gender, relationship status, etc.) were included in the first step of the model to control for their effect. The main predictors of well-being were added in the second step of the model.

In addition to linearity, other assumptions of the generalized linear model were evaluated. The normality of the residuals was reviewed by examining the histogram of the residual distribution. Likewise, influence and leverage were assessed by reviewing Cook's distance, leverage values, and degrees of freedom (*df*) beta values for the explanatory variables. Any violations of assumptions were corrected as appropriate. The model results after respecification and corrections are discussed.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Participants' secular backgrounds are presented in Table 2. Ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 64 years (M = 36.74, SD = 10). Age was approximately normally distributed upon review of the histogram. Most of the respondents were women (74.1%); the rest were men (25.9%). The majority of the participants (58.6%) had obtained a college degree (19.8%), a master's degree (33.8%), or a terminal doctoral degree (5%). About a quarter (23%) had attended some college, and about 10% had

obtained a high school diploma. Fewer participants had attended only some high school (5.4%) or elementary school (2.3%). The majority of the participants (64.5%) reported an income of $75,000 per year or less, and 14% reported earning between $75,000 and $100,000 per year. Around one fifth of the sample (21.5%) reported earning more than $100,000 per year.

Table 2

Participants' Secular Backgrounds

Secular backgrounds	*N*	%	*M*	*SD*
Age	310	-	36.74	10.00
Gender				
Female	238	74.1		
Male	83	25.9		
Education (*n* = 222)				
Elementary school	5	2.3		
Some high school	12	5.4		
HS grad or equivalency	24	10.8		
Some college	51	23.0		
College degree	44	19.8		
Master's or advanced professional degree	75	33.8		
Doctoral or terminal degree	11	5.0		
Income (*n* = 222)				
25,001-50K	53	23.9		
25K or less	45	20.3		
50,001-75K	45	20.3		
75,001-100K	31	14.0		
100,001-130K	19	8.6		
130,001-175K	14	6.3		
175,001-200K	2	0.9		
200,001-250K	5	2.3		
> 250K	8	3.6		

Note. $N = 321$

Participants' religious backgrounds are presented in Table 3. Similar percentages of respondents reported membership in the Yeshivish and Modern Orthodox communities, at 36% and 35%, respectively. Fewer respondents reported being part of the Chassidic (22.7%), Chabad Lubavitch (4.6%), and non-Orthodox (1.6%) communities. The majority (89.3%) reported Ashkenazi origin, 7% reported Sephardic

origin, and about 3% reported both. Approximately one third of the respondents (33.4%) indicated being completely adherent with their Orthodox community ideals. Approximately 38% reported being somewhat less than completely adherent, and 18% selected the midpoint (3) between not at all and completely. About 9% reported very little adherence, and 2% reported not being adherent at all with their community ideals. Fifteen percent reported being Baal Teshuva. These participants reported being Baal Teshuva, giving an average of 5.98 (*SD* = 5.49) years. The majority of respondents reported attending Yeshiva (62.7%). Fewer participants attended a Jewish high school (20.3%), Kollel (9.7%), or a Jewish elementary school (0.9%). Around 7% reported no formal Jewish education.

Table 3

Participants' Religious Backgrounds

Religious backgrounds	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Yrs. Baal Teshuva before marriage	40	-	5.98	5.49
Community (*N* = 304)				
Yeshivish	110	36.2		
Modern Orthodox	106	34.9		
Chassidic	69	22.7		
Chabad Lubavitch	14	4.6		
Non-Orthodox*	5	1.6		
Origin (*n* = 299)				
Ashkenazi	267	89.3		
Sephardi	22	7.4		
Both	10	3.3		
Community ideals adherence (*n* = 302)				
1- Not at all	6	2.0		
2	27	8.9		
3	54	17.9		
4	114	37.7		
5- Completely	101	33.4		
Baal Teshuva (*n* = 287)				
No	243	84.7		
Yes	43	15.0		
Convert	1	0.3		

Table 2 Cont'd

Religious backgrounds	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Formal Jewish education (*n* = 217)				
Yeshiva - seminary	136	62.7		
Jewish HS	44	20.3		
Kollel	21	9.7		
None	14	6.5		
Jewish elementary	2	0.9		

Note. $N = 321$

*Community affiliation during marriage was noted to be Orthodox.

Participants' relationship backgrounds are presented in Table 4. Age at time of divorce ranged from 19 to 58 years ($M = 32.29$, $SD = 8.72$) years. Marriage length ranged from 0.17 to 33 years with a mean of 9.40 ($SD = 7.74$) years. The number of times a participant was divorced ranged from 0 to 5 ($M = 1.15$, $SD = 0.63$). The majority of respondents reported that their parents were still married (80.1%). About one fifth of the participants (19.9%) reported that their parents were no longer married; of these individuals, approximately 56% reported that the marriage ending in divorce or separation, and 44% reported that the marriage ending in the death of a parent. Most of the participants reported being single (77.1%); however, about 10% reported being remarried, and 5.3% reported being engaged. Fewer participants reported being divorced or separated from a different spouse (2.6%). Another 5.3% reported their relationship status as Other. With respect to well-being postdivorce, 78.2% reported being much better off, and 13.2% reported being a little better off. A small minority of the sample reported being about the same postdivorce (2.3%), a little worse off (3.6%), or much worse off (2.7%).

Table 4

Participants' Relationship Backgrounds and Current Status

Relationship backgrounds and current status	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Age at divorce	305	-	32.29	8.72
Marriage length (years)	318	-	9.40	7.74
Number of times divorced	146	-	1.15	0.63
Respondents' parents' marital status (*n* = 306)				
Married	245	80.1		
Not married	61	19.9		
Reason Respondents' parents not married (*n* = 61)				
Divorced or separated	34	55.7		
Death	27	44.3		
Current relationship status (*n* = 227)				
Single	175	77.1		
Remarried	22	9.7		
Engaged	12	5.3		
Other	12	5.3		
Divorced from a different spouse	3	1.3		
Separated from a different spouse	3	1.3		
Postdivorce adjustment (*n* = 220)				
Much better off	172	78.2		
A little better off	29	13.2		
About the same	5	2.3		
A little worse off	8	3.6		
Much worse off	6	2.7		

Note. $N = 321$

The participants' self-reported well-being is presented in Table 5. Possible well-being responses ranged from 0 (*doing terribly*) to 100 (*doing perfectly*). Observed personal well-being responses ranged from 1 to 100 ($M = 82.50$, $SD = 18.73$). Overall, the responses on this item reflected higher personal well-being. Social well-being responses ranged from 5 to 100 ($M = 83.14$, $SD = 17.86$), which reflected higher social well-being overall. However, the range of item responses was somewhat truncated on the lower end. Professional well-being responses ranged from 0 to 100 ($M = 82.64$,

SD = 20.46), reflecting higher professional well-being. Religious life well-being responses ranged from 0 to 100 (*M* = 78.48, *SD* = 21.94), reflecting higher religious life well-being. Finally, personal finance well-being responses ranged from 0 to 100 (*M* = 63.16, *SD* = 28.40). Although the responses to this item reflected higher financial well-being overall, the mean was closer to the scale midpoint (50).

The distributions of personal well-being, social well-being, professional well-being, and religious well-being demonstrated a negative skew and leptokurtosis, as indicated by the skewness and kurtosis values. A review of the histograms confirmed this. The shape and symmetry of these distributions aligned with the mean of each item, reflecting higher well-being overall. However, the distribution of financial well-being was approximately normal. It demonstrated minor negative skew and was slightly mesokurtic. A review of the histogram confirmed this. Likewise, the approximate normality of the distribution aligned with the mean being closer to the scale midpoint (50).

Table 5

Participants' Self-Reported Well-Being

Self-reported well-being	*N*	*M*	*Mdn*	*SD*	Skew Z score	Kurtosis Z score	Min	Max
Personal well-being	219	82.50	87	18.73	-12.64	15.80	1	100
Social relationships well-being	218	83.14	90	17.86	-10.09	9.45	5	100
Professional life well-being	214	82.64	90	20.46	-11.07	11.01	0	100
Religious life well-being	218	78.48	85	21.94	-9.13	6.27	0	100
Personal finance well-being	148	63.16	70	28.40	-2.84	-1.79	0	100

Note. *N* = 321

Bivariate Analysis

The results of the Pearson correlations between the explanatory variables and the log odds of postdivorce adjustment are presented in Table 6. The log odds of postdivorce adjustment values ranged from -27.78 to 0 (M = -5.20, SD = 7.92), with values further away from 0 generally being associated with being much better off and values closer to 0 being associated with not being much better off. A review of the Pearson correlations reflected that there were likely no multicollinearity concerns. Likewise, all of the correlations were low to moderate. The log odds of being much better off postdivorce were negatively associated with financial well-being (r = -.24, p < .01). Religious life well-being had a positive association with social well-being (r = .51, p < .001); financial well-being (r = .36, p < .001); and personal well-being (r = .41, p < .001). Likewise, social well-being had a positive association with financial well-being (r = .35, p < .001) and personal well-being (r = .66, p < .001). Finally, financial well-being had a positive association with personal well-being (r = .31, p < .001). Age was not significantly associated with any of the other continuous explanatory variables (see Table 6). Likewise, it did not appear that the log odds of the being much better off postdivorce were significantly associated with any of the other predictors.

A review of the scatterplots (see Figures D1-D5 in Appendix D) revealed that the association between postdivorce adjustment and the continuous predictors was either quadratic or cubic. Hence, these variables were centered by subtracting the mean from each individual's response. Subsequently, the centered variables were used to create new quadratic and cubic transformed variables by multiplying the centered variable by itself.

Quadratic variables were created by squaring the centered variable (i.e., raising it to an exponential power of 2). Cubic variables were created by multiplying the variable by itself 3 times (i.e., raising it to an exponential power of 3).

Table 6

Correlations Between Postdivorce Adjustment and Explanatory Variables

Explanatory variables	Postdivorce adj. (log odds)			Age			Religious life well-being			Social relationships well-being			Personal finance well-being		
	R	*P*	*N*	*r*	*p*	*N*	*r*	*p*	*N*	*r*	*p*	*N*	*r*	*p*	*N*
Age	-0.03	.747	136	-	-	-	0.09	.204	215	0.01	.849	215	-0.15	.081	146
Religious life well-being	0.05	.542	137	0.09	.204	215	-	-	-	0.51	< .001	218	0.36	< .001	148
Social relationships well-being	-0.10	.262	137	0.01	.849	215	0.51	< .001	218	-	-	-	0.35	< .001	148
Personal finance well-being	-0.24	.004	137	-0.14	.081	146	0.36	< .001	148	0.35	< .001	148	-	-	-
Personal well-being	-0.11	.224	137	0.07	.313	216	0.41	< .001	218	0.66	< .001	218	0.31	< .001	148

The results of the two *t* tests used to determine differences in the log odds of postdivorce adjustment based on gender and relationship status are presented in Table 7. There was a significant difference in the log odds of being much better off postdivorce between single respondents (M = -2.08, SD = 1.18) and engaged or remarried participants (M = -24.58, SD = 2.08), $t(df = 19.91) = 45.91$, $p < .001$. Participants who were engaged or remarried tended to report being much better off because their values were further away from zero. There was not a significant difference in the log odds of being much better off postdivorce between genders, $t(df = 135) = 0.37$, $p = .714$.

Table 7

Group Mean Differences in the Log Odds of Postdivorce Adjustment

		M	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*
Relationship status*		-	-	45.91	19.91	< .001
Single	118	-2.08	1.18			
Engaged or remarried	19	-24.58	2.08			
Gender		-	-	0.37	135	.714
Male	35	-4.78	8.71			
Female	102	-5.35	7.66			

*Equal variances not assumed because Levene's test for equal variances was violated ($p < .05$)

Hierarchical Multiple Logistic Regression

Model specification. Model parameters such as the model chi squared (X^2), pseudo R^2 values, -2 log likelihood as well as sensitivity (true positive rate) and specificity (true negative rate), were used to determine model fit. As noted previously, a preliminary model was estimated with the originally proposed explanatory variables in the model: gender, religious involvement, social support, financial well-being, and the formation of new and intimate relationships (relationship status). Upon review of the model parameters (see Table 8), it was determined that the specificity was poor. Other

variables were targeted for inclusion in the model: age and personal well-being. The inclusion of these variables significantly improved specificity, increased the model X^2, increased the pseudo R^2 values, and decreased the -2 log likelihood. Hence, the researcher judged that this model was a better fit than the model without these variables. Other explanatory variables also were explored but were determined not to significantly improve the fit of the model (e.g., professional life well-being). Likewise, the goal was to not stray too far away from the original proposed model.

Explanatory variable transformation. Given the possible nonlinear associations between the outcome and continuous explanatory variables, the transformed explanatory variables were added to the model. The inclusion of these quadratic and cubic parameters in Model 3 significantly improved specificity, increased the model X^2, increased the pseudo R^2 values, and decreased the -2 log likelihood. Hence, the researcher judged that this model was a better fit than Model 2.

Model trimming. Some of the quadratic and cubic parameters in Model 3 were not significant in the model, so the model was trimmed of nonsignificant predictors one at a time and reestimated. These parameters were trimmed based on the highest *p* value. Trimming continued until the model classification became unacceptable. The final trimmed model had improved sensitivity and specificity and overall classification. The -2 log likelihood was slightly higher, and the X^2 and R^2 values decreased slightly.

Model diagnostics. Model diagnostics were assessed for extreme values (i.e., discrepancy, leverage, and influence). The distribution of the residuals prior to and after the diagnostic corrections was assessed by reviewing the histograms. Outliers existed on

the one end of the distribution. Two cases were removed in an effort to include as many of the original available data as possible. These cases had extreme *df* beta values for relationship status. The full model was run again without two outliers. The final trimmed model without outliers, Model 4, was improved from Model 3. The trimming improved specificity, increased the pseudo R^2 values, and decreased the -2 log likelihood, despite the fact that the X^2 value has not significantly changed. Hence, Model 4 was selected as the final model.

Table 8

Model Statistics for Hierarchical Multiple Logistic Regression Examining the Effect of the Models

	-2 LL	Model X^2	*df*	*N*	Pseudo R^2		Classification		
					Cox & Snell	Nagelkerke	Sensitivity	Specificity	Overall
Model 1*	106.45	28.66	5	135	0.191	0.302	94.4	29.6	81.5
Model 2	83.07	51.14	7	133	0.319	0.502	96.2	51.9	87.2
Model 3 (M2 transformed)	69.39	64.82	17	133	0.386	0.607	95.3	66.7	89.5
Model 3 trimmed	72.34	61.87	12	133	0.372	0.585	96.2	70.4	91.0
Model 4 (M3 trimmed, without outliers)	66.77	66.52	12	131	0.398	0.624	95.2	70.4	90.1

*without age and personal well-being

Model equation. The following equation can be used to describe Model 4: $logit(\pi_i) = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x^2_2 + B_3\gamma_3 + B_4\gamma_4 + B_5 x_5 + B_6 x^2_6 + B_7 x_7 + B_8 x^2_8 + B_9 x_9 + B_{10} x^2_{10} + B_{11} x^3_{11} + B_{12} x_{12} + e$. This equates to: $logit(\pi Post\text{-}Divorce\ Adjust_i) = \alpha + \beta_1 Age + \beta_2 Age^2 + B_3 Female + B_4 Rel.Status + B_5 Relig.WB + B_6 Relig.WB^2 + B_7 Soc.WB + B_8 Soc.WB^2 + B_9 Fin.WB + B_{10} Fin.WB^2 + B_{11} Fin.WB^3 + B_{12} Personal.WB + e$.

Model 4. Gender, financial well-being, and personal well-being were significant predictors of postdivorce adjustment (see Table 9). Personal financial well-being had the largest effect on the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce, controlling for the other predictors in the model. The linear term of financial well-being (odds ratio [*OR*] = 1.081, 95% CI [1.018-1.148[) suggested that each additional unit of financial well-being above the mean was associated with an 8% increase in the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce, controlling for the other explanatory variables in the model. The odds ratio for the quadratic term was not significant (*OR* = 0.999, CI [0.998 -1.001]), but it did reflect a nonsignificant decrease in the rate of change of the curve. The odds ratio for the cubic term was statistically significant (*OR* = 0.99996, CI [0.99992-0.99999]), which reflected a 0.004% decrease in the rate of change of the curve. In essence, the effect increased then decreased very slightly because of the quadratic term, and then slightly more because of the cubic term as financial well-being increased. Women were 0.08 times or about 92% less likely (*OR* = 0.081, 95% CI [0.049-0.401]) to report being much better off postdivorce than men, controlling for the other predictors in the model. Personal well-being ratings (*OR* = 0.878, 95% CI [0.814-0.947[) suggested

that each additional unit of personal well-being above the mean was associated with a 12% decrease in the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce, controlling for the other explanatory variables in the model. Relationship status, age, religious well-being, and social relationship well-being were not significant explanatory variables of postdivorce adjustment.

Table 9

Hierarchical Multiple Logistic Regression Examining the Effect of Gender, Relationship Status, Age, Religious Life Well-Being, Social Relationship Well-Being, Financial Well-Being, and Personal Well-Being on Postdivorce Adjustment

	B	*SE*	Wald	*df*	*p*	*OR*	95% CI for OR	
							Lower	Upper
Step 0								
Intercept	-1.35	0.22	38.98	1	< .001	0.260		
Step 1								
Intercept	-10.67	4493.75	0.00	1	.998	0.000		
Female = 1	-1.96	0.54	13.45	1	< .001	0.140	[0.049]	[0.401]
Engaged or remarried = 1	-20.26	8987.50	0.00	1	.998	0.000	[0.000]	
Age	0.05	0.03	2.87	1	.090	1.052	[0.992]	[1.116]
Age [(2)]	0.00	0.00	1.71	1	.190	0.997	[0.992]	[1.002]
Step 2								
Intercept	-10.84	4160.73	0.00	1	.998	0.000		
Female = 1	-2.51	0.83	9.15	1	.002	0.081	[0.016]	[0.413]
Engaged or remarried = 1	-20.78	8321.46	0.00	1	.998	0.000	[0.000]	
Age	0.06	0.04	1.96	1	.162	1.063	[0.976]	[1.158]
Age [(2)]	0.00	0.00	1.80	1	.179	0.996	[0.989]	[1.002]
Religious life well-being	-0.03	0.03	1.33	1	.249	0.966	[0.911]	[1.025]
Religious life well-being [(2)]	0.00	0.00	1.44	1	.230	0.999	[0.998]	[1.001]
Social relationships well-being	0.02	0.04	0.40	1	.526	1.025	[0.949]	[1.107]
Social relationships well-being [(2)]	0.00	0.00	1.99	1	.159	0.999	[0.997]	[1.000]
Personal finance well-being	0.08	0.03	6.49	1	.011	1.081	[1.018]	[1.148]
Personal finance well-being [(2)]	0.00	0.00	0.09	1	.761	0.999	[0.998]	[1.001]
Personal finance well-being [(3)]	0.00	0.00	5.50	1	.019	0.999	[0.999]	[0.999]
Personal well-being	-0.13	0.04	11.37	1	.001	0.878	[0.814]	[0.947]

Sensitivity and specificity. The area under the curve (AUC) was estimated to be 0.93, which was above the 0.70 threshold for classifying individuals. A receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve was plotted and is presented in Figure 2.

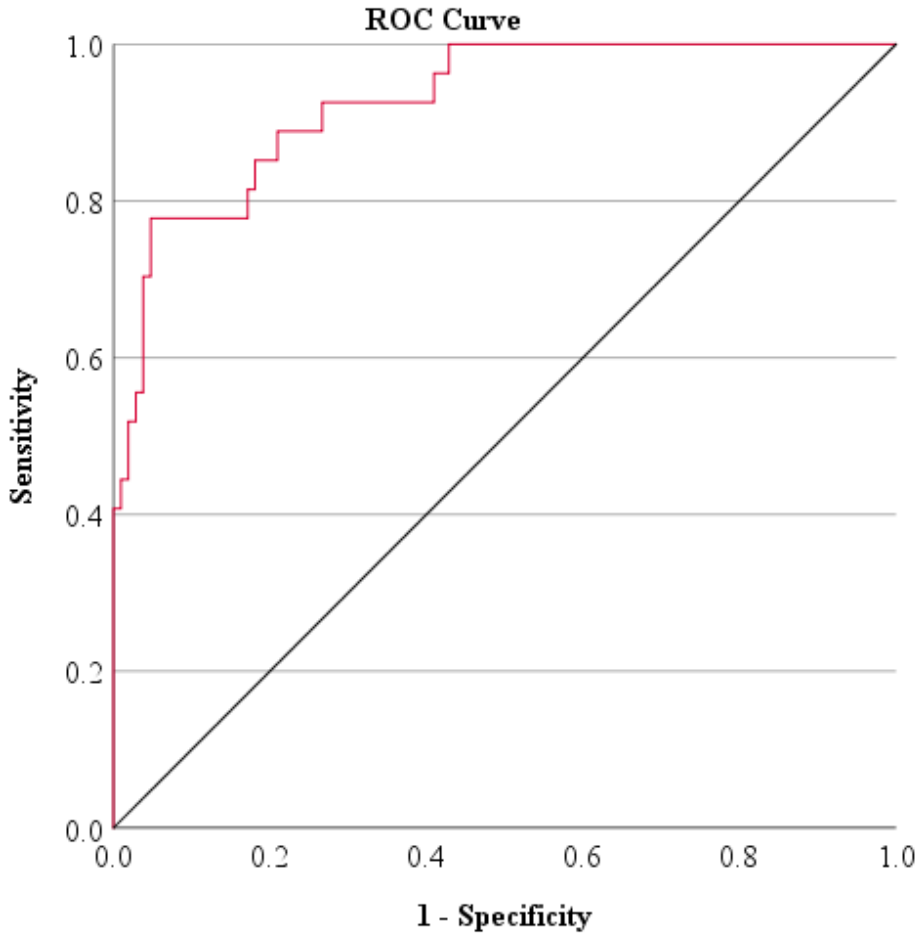

Figure 2. ROC curve, with AUC = .93, sensitivity = 95.2, and specificity = 70.4

Summary

Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the study sample. The majority of respondents were women (74.1%), possessed a college degree (58.6%), and earned less than $75,000 per year (64.5%). With respect to religious background, two thirds of the

respondents reported membership in the Yeshivish or Modern Orthodox community, and the majority (71.4%) reported adherence to Orthodox community ideals. The mean duration of marriage prior to divorce was 9.4 years, and the majority of respondents reported being single (77.1%). Overall, the respondents reported high levels of personal well-being, social well-being, professional well-being, and religious well-being, and moderate levels of personal financial well-being.

Bivariate analysis indicated a number of relationships among the variables. Religious life well-being was positively and moderately correlated with social well-being ($r = .51$, $p < .001$); financial well-being ($r = .36$, $p < .001$); and personal well-being ($r = .41$, $p < .001$). Social well-being was positively and moderately correlated with financial well-being ($r = .35$, $p < .001$) and personal well-being ($r = .66$, $p < .001$). In addition, financial well-being had a weak-to-moderate and positive correlation with personal well-being ($r = .31$, $p < .001$). Age did not significantly correlate with any of the continuous explanatory variables. The log odds of postdivorce adjustment were negatively and weakly associated with financial well-being ($r = -.24$, $p < .01$). In addition, results from the *t* tests indicated that engaged or remarried participants were more likely than single participants to report feeling much better off postdivorce ($p < .001$). No significant difference was reported in the log odds of being much better off postdivorce between male and female participants.

According to hierarchical multiple logistic regression analysis, financial well-being, gender, and personal well-being were significant predictors of postdivorce adjustment. Financial well-being was the largest predictor of the likelihood of being

much better off postdivorce. Each additional unit of financial well-being above the mean was associated with an 8% increase in the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce (OR = 1.081, 95% CI [1.018-1.148]). With respect to gender, women were about 92% less likely (OR = 0.081, 95% CI [0.049-0.401]) to report being much better off postdivorce than men. Each additional unit of personal well-being above the mean is associated with a 12% decrease in the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce (OR = 0.878, 95% CI [0.814-0.947]).

Based on these results, financial well-being and the formation of new and intimate relationships, but not religious involvement or social support, affected the postdivorce adjustment of men and women in the Jewish Orthodox community. The first hypothesis tested the relationship between religious involvement postdivorce and postdivorce adjustment. This variable, characterized as religious well-being, the p value exceeded the cutoff of .05 (p = .249). Therefore, the first null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The second hypothesis tested the relationship between social support postdivorce and postdivorce adjustment. This variable, characterized as social well-being, the p value exceeded the cutoff of .05 (p = .526). Therefore, the second null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The third hypothesis tested the relationship between financial well-being postdivorce and postdivorce adjustment. This variable demonstrated a significant relationship to the log odds of being much better off postdivorce, and the p value was well below the .05 threshold, (p = .011). Therefore, the third null hypothesis is rejected. Finally, the fourth hypothesis tested the relationship between the formation of new and intimate relationships postdivorce and postdivorce adjustment. This variable,

characterized as relationship status, the p value exceeded the cutoff of .05 (p = .998). Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

These findings are discussed in Chapter 5 in light of the current literature and the theoretical framework that served as the foundation of the study. Study limitations are presented, and recommendations for further research are offered. Chapter 5 also includes implications for positive social change and clinical practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The broad purpose of this study was to fill a gap in the scholarly literature involving the experience of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish community. The specific intent was to gain a greater understanding of the factors contributing to or hindering postdivorce adjustment in this population. These factors included active involvement in one's religious community, the existence of social support networks, financial well-being and security, and involvement in new and intimate relationships. A greater understanding of how these factors relate to postdivorce adjustment in this specific community could lead to more effective therapeutic approaches to helping members of the Orthodox Jewish community to cope with divorce.

To address the gap in the literature, the researcher performed bivariate analyses and hierarchical multiple logistic regression, which facilitated the determination of any relationships between and among the variables (see Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). The primary variables of interest were involvement in religious life postdivorce, social support, financial well-being, and new and intimate relationships. Additional explanatory variables were explored: age, gender, and personal well-being.

Results indicated that several variables significantly affected postdivorce adjustment. Financial well-being postdivorce had the most significant impact, with greater financial well-being generally predicting being much better off postdivorce but the association somewhat levelling off. Additional factors that predicted postdivorce adjustment included gender and self-reported personal well-being. In addition to these

predictors, other relationships among the variables were uncovered. Correlations existed between postdivorce adjustment and relationship status; religious involvement and social well-being, financial well-being, and personal well-being; social well-being and financial well-being and personal well-being; and financial well-being and personal well-being.

The following discussion explores these relationships within the context of the family stress and coping theory and the extant literature. Also presented in this chapter are details about the study limitations, recommendations for further research, and implications for social justice and clinical practice. It is anticipate that the findings will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding postdivorce adjustment in a population that has been studied infrequently.

Interpretation of the Findings

Postdivorce Adjustment and Financial Well-Being

According to the findings, financial well-being, which refers to feelings of personal financial confidence and security, was the greatest predictor of postdivorce adjustment. In general, for each additional unit of financial well-being above the mean, there was an 8% increase in the likelihood of being much better off postdivorce. The effect of financial well-being initially increased and then decreased over time, reflecting the curvilinear relationship between these two variables. This finding may be explained in part by the family stress and coping theory. This theory explains that postdivorce adjustment depends on three factors: accumulation of stressors, resources for coping with stress, and definitions of the stressor event (Wang & Amato, 2000). The disruptive life changes that occur as the result of divorce can erode the financial situation of the

individuals involved and cause significant stress. Divorced couples may move apart, at least one of whom must now seek a new residence, perhaps with new furnishings. Individuals accustomed to living on two salaries must now depend on one, which may be particularly problematic for an ex-spouse with custody of the children. The noncustodial spouse must pay child support, which further depletes financial resources. When individuals have to adapt to a large number of stressors, such as these types of financial stressors, in a relatively short period of time, their ability to cope with the stressors may become overwhelmed and lead to diminished psychological functioning and well-being (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Postdivorce adjustment related to financial well-being may be different according to the length of time that the couple was previously married. According to Schnall et al. (2013), couples married for longer periods of time reported greater financial stress than newer couples did. This result was understandable because the longer that couples are together, the more belongings and wealth they may accumulate and thus lose in a divorce. Future researchers could investigate the relationship between the length of marriage and level of financial strain. Given the negative impact of not only divorce on financial well-being but also the accumulation of stressors on psychological well-being, divorced individuals with less financial stress and thus greater financial well-being may fare better psychologically.

Postdivorce Adjustment and Gender

In addition to financial well-being, gender also predicts postdivorce adjustment. Results of the study indicated that women were 92% less likely than men to report being

much better off postdivorce. The reasons underlying this finding may include financial issues and stigma or social issues. According to Wang and Amato (2000), the standard of living postdivorce declines more for women than for men. Part of the reason for this decline may be related to child custody. Single mothers tend to move more than married mothers because of their inability to afford current housing (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Furthermore, women in the Orthodox Jewish community often are expected to contribute financially to the family, such as by working as educators or within other sectors of the Orthodox business community. Divorce is associated with social stigma and failure. The Orthodox community holds the social value that women should serve as wives and mothers. Divorce undermines this value and may lead to social exclusion. For women employed in businesses or schools within the Orthodox community, social exclusion may translate into dismissal from employment (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). Employment is an important resource for coping with stress because it is linked to income (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Although social stigma may interfere with employment postdivorce, the stigma itself negatively affects postdivorce adjustment to a greater degree in women than in men. In general, divorce can result in a loss of social support. Divorcees may now have less in common with married friends, and former friends and acquaintances may segregate themselves into “his and her” friends postdivorce. In addition, married individuals may view newly single friends as a threat to their own spousal relationships (Wang & Amato, 2000). The loss of social support, combined with the stigma associated with divorce in the Orthodox community, reduces the resources available to individuals to cope with

stress. This effect may be more pronounced for Orthodox women, who face greater financial stress postdivorce (Wang & Amato, 2000). Future researchers could address the interaction between gender and financial well-being to gain more insight into the adverse impact of divorce.

It is possible that the predictive ability of gender may be stronger among subgroups of Orthodox Jewish individuals. Chassidic women typically marry at a young age, such as in their late adolescent years, and bear large families. The average number of children in a Chassidic family is 5.8, compared with an average of 1.3 children to non-Orthodox families (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). Divorced women who retain custody of their children may experience significant financial distress because of the large size of the family unit. Other aspects of the Chassidic culture, such as a lack of fluency in English, limited amounts of secular education, and significant religious and family obligations, may insulate members of this Orthodoxy group from mainstream society (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). Greater social isolation may reduce the ability to secure adequate employment postdivorce, particularly if the community in which these individuals live and work stigmatizes them.

These experiences may be contrasted with the Yeshivish community, which is typically more integrated into American culture. In addition, the predominant language of Yeshivish Orthodox individuals, unlike the Chassidic, is English (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). Yeshivish women who divorce may be more likely than Chassidic women to find employment. The researcher recommends that future researchers address

the possible differences among subgroups of Orthodox Judaism with respect to the relationship between gender and postdivorce adjustment.

The finding in this study that women were less likely than men to report positive financial well-being aligns with Kanarfogel et al.'s (2014) results of their study on the impact of divorce on financial well-being. These researchers reported that a greater percentage of men than women indicated feelings of financial well-being postdivorce, at 75% and 70%, respectively. The difference between the genders was even more pronounced upon consideration of the community to which the respondents belonged. in the Chassidic Orthodox community, 73% of men and 50% of women reported positive financial well-being postdivorce (Kanarfogel et al., 2014). These findings suggest that additional research comparing different groups of Orthodox individuals may provide greater insight into the variables explaining the link between gender and postdivorce adjustment.

Postdivorce Adjustment and Personal Well-Being

Another explanatory variable that predicted postdivorce adjustment was personal well-being. Each additional unit of personal well-being above the mean was associated with a 12% decrease in the likelihood of successful postdivorce adjustment. This finding may be considered within the context of the family stress and coping theory. According to this theory, the ability to cope with stressors depends in part on perceptions involving the stressors.

With respect to divorce, individuals who were unhappily married prior to separating may perceive that their personal well-being increased after divorcing. In

contrast, spouses who were happily married prior to divorcing may perceive that their personal well-being decreased after the separating (Wang & Amato, 2000). The lack of effective skills and resources to cope with a stressor such as divorce has been associated with a decrease in overall well-being (Wang & Amato, 2000). Thus, if divorce is not perceived as a stressor, personal well-being may not be significantly impacted.

The results of the study indicated that increased personal well-being postdivorce was associated with a reduced ability to cope with the divorce, a finding contradictory to the theory. However, it is possible that social support and other variables may play a mediating role in this relationship. Social support from parents, family, friends, and children mediate the process of building a sense of well-being when coping with the loss of a marriage (Kołodziej-Zaleska & Przybyła-Basista, 2016). It is possible that individuals who already feel a sense of personal well-being postdivorce are less likely than those with a lower sense of personal well-being to seek social support, which negatively affects their ability to cope with the change. On the other hand, the spouse who initiates the divorce typically experiences less stress (Lloyd et al., 2014) and may feel an increased sense of well-being, despite struggling to cope with other issues such as finances. Alternatively, given that self-report data is subject to bias, including social desirability, it is possible that some respondents overestimated their sense of well-being.

An additional possibility is that the study respondents were experiencing different stages of the adjustment process. According to McCubbin et al. (1980), the adjustment of a family to a crisis such as divorce occurs involves an initial period of disorganization, followed by a period of recovery and an additional period in which a new type of

organization emerges. Coping and personal well-being, along with the relationship between these two factors, may vary according to the specific stage that the individual occupies. Future researchers could investigate the interactions between personal well-being postdivorce and other variables, such as the degree of happiness or security in the marriage or the time since divorce.

Postdivorce Adjustment and Relationship Status

Relationship status postdivorce may play a significant role in postdivorce adjustment. Participants in the study who were engaged or had remarried tended to report being much better off postdivorce than individuals who remained single. Although relationship status was not a significant predictor of being much better off postdivorce, while controlling for other predictors in the model, the bivariate analyses suggested that the adjustment of individuals involved in intimate relationships was significantly associated with better postdivorce adjustment.

According to the family stress and coping theory, social support plays an integral role in coping with stressors. New intimate relationships may serve as a source of social support and help divorcees to improve coping and resolve negative feelings related to the divorce (Wang & Amato, 2000). Strong social relationships also are associated with greater levels of adjustment. Although these relationships include those with established community or social groups, strong individual relationships, such as those in romantic partnerships, protect against maladjustment (Krumrei et al., 2007).

Divorced participants who were engaged or had remarried also may have experienced better postdivorce adjustment than single individuals because of financial

reasons. As discussed previously, divorce can be associated with significant financial strain, such as the strain associated with relocation, child support, and employment loss resulting from stigma or violation of Orthodox social norms. The formation of couples who share financial expenses may reduce the stress of financial difficulties upon divorce and contribute to improved adjustment. Future researchers could examine the interaction between financial well-being and relationship status postdivorce.

It is important to consider that remarriage may not be an option for some Orthodox individuals. One of the more difficult consequences of divorce may be decreased opportunities for remarriage. In some groups, marriages are prearranged and well controlled by the community. The stigma associated with divorce may reduce the ability of individuals to seek new relationships (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014; Weiss et al., 2013).

Financial Well-Being

In addition to the relationship with postdivorce adjustment, financial well-being was found to be moderately and positively correlated with personal well-being. This result was not surprising, given that a lack of financial well-being may be a significant source of stress. Financial well-being may be largely the result of adequate employment and education. Increased education leads to greater likelihood of finding higher paying jobs and is associated with increased problem-solving skills (Wang & Amato, 2000). Employment is associated with income, independence, and self-worth. Education, income, and employment are key resources to overcoming stressors (Wang & Amato, 2000). The more resources that individuals have to cope with stressors, the more success

they will experience. In light of the potentially significant costs associated with divorce, such as legal fees and relocation, the ability to achieve financial well-being in the midst of this crisis will likely contribute to improved overall personal well-being.

Religious Life Well-Being

Although religious life well-being did not predict postdivorce adjustment, it did demonstrate moderate and positive associations with several other variables, including social well-being, financial well-being, and personal well-being. The failure to predict postdivorce adjustment partially conflicted with Quinney and Fouts's (2003) results showing that postdivorce adjustment was associated with resilience. Resilience among adults who participated in a divorce recovery workshop was associated with a number of factors, including spirituality and meaning of life. Both of these factors were related to religiosity and also were significantly associated with postdivorce adjustment. The degree of adjustment with respect to these two variables increased over time (Quinney & Fouts, 2003).

The results of Quinney and Fouts's (2003) study should be applied to the current study with caution. Their study did not include members of the Orthodox Jewish community, so their results may have had limited applicability to the current study. In addition, religiosity comprises additional factors not considered in their study, including affiliation, attendance or participation in religious activities, and religious beliefs (Mathur, 2012).

The lack of a statistically significant relationship between religious life or well-being and postdivorce adjustment also conflicted with the results of Kanarfogel et al.'s

(2014) study. In their study, female, conservative divorced members of the Yeshivish community reported greater religious well-being postdivorce than Modern Orthodox or Chassidic women. However, these results did not hold true for the men in the sample. Of the variables considered in their study, the greatest difference between men and women with respect to postdivorce adjustment existed in religious well-being, with 90% of female and 75% of male respondents reporting a sense of well-being in this area (Kanarfogel et al., 2014). Given the results of the two studies, it is possible that the relationship between religious well-being and postdivorce adjustment in the current study remained uncovered because of a heterogeneous sample of men and women from five religious groups. Additional analysis focusing on individual types of Orthodoxy may reveal additional insights about this relationship.

Religious life is a central aspect to Orthodox Judaism (Cooperman & Smith, 2013), so it was not surprising that it correlated positively with social and personal well-being. Participation in a religious community that shares common traditions and activities fosters greater social bonds among its members. These bonds may serve as the basis for social support. Regarding postdivorce adjustment, community members may rely not only on family and friends but also religious leaders (Bineth, 2017). This reliance may be problematic if the individuals live within communities that stigmatize divorce because of religious reasons: Religious leaders may not support those who break from religious law and tradition in this manner.

Social Well-Being

Social well-being demonstrated moderate and positive correlations with financial well-being and personal well-being, the latter of which resulted in a stronger association. It is possible that individuals with greater financial well-being had the resources to maintain ties within a social group, such as by engaging in social activities with a financial cost. The family and stress coping theory posits that greater resources for coping with stress are associated with improved adjustment to stressful situations such as divorce. Participants who possessed a core group of supportive family and friends had greater resources upon which to rely when coping with adversity. This reliance may have been particularly important when attempting to counter the stigma associated not only with dealing with divorce but also seeking help for mental health issues (Bineth, 2017).

Social support may have been particularly important within the more conservative Orthodox groups. Weiss et al. (2013) examined the relationship between religious and cultural norms in Orthodox communities and perceptions about mental illness. Even though adjusting to divorce is not considered a mental illness, the findings from this study are pertinent. Members of ultra-Orthodox communities practice a faith that requires strict adherence to the laws of the Torah (Cooperman & Smith, 2013). Individuals within this type of Orthodoxy focus on values and traditions that include maintaining separation from outsiders. Individuals who suffer from mental illness, or in the case of this study, individuals who had difficulty coping emotionally with divorce, may be unable to completely fulfill their religious commandments and duties and may, therefore, face feelings of prejudice or other negative feelings from community members (Weiss et al.,

2013). Such actions take away the possibility for social support at a time when the affected individual may need it the most. Therefore, if members of ultra-Orthodox communities are unable to obtain social support from within their own group, it is important that they have the opportunity to seek support among other resources if desired.

Limitations of the Study

This study had several strengths and limitations. The type of study design possessed the strengths of being nonintrusive, facilitating the examination of extant data rather than the collection of new data and containing a high degree of external validity (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). However, limitations did exist.

The percentages of Chassidic and Yeshivish research participants were different from those found in the overall New York area. For example, 36.2% of the respondents in this study were Yeshivish, versus 20% of the statewide Orthodox population in New York. Similarly, 22.7% of the study respondents were Chassidic, compared with 48% of the New York Orthodox population (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). These differences may have impacted the external validity of the study, given that the values and beliefs of these two groups were different in some areas. For example, Yeshivish community members tend to be more integrated into mainstream American society and more open to secular experiences than members of the Chassidic community are (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). These differences in values could have impacted financial well-being or perceived personal well-being postdivorce. In addition, the self-report archival data used in this study were associated with potential recall inaccuracies and

bias. Participants might have been motivated to respond in socially acceptable manners to the questions.

A number of statistical limitations also existed. Many data were missing, perhaps partly because of the length of the survey. More than 100 individuals had missing data on most of the variables included in the statistical model. Similarly, respondents who reported being engaged had missing data pertaining to financial well-being, which necessitated a comparison between only single and remarried individuals.

A second limitation was a smaller sample size for logistic regression than desired, which may have negatively affected the ability of the researcher to detect statistically significant relationships between and among variables. The smaller size sample increased the chances of Type II errors, meaning that false null hypotheses could have been accepted rather than rejected. Future studies should include larger sample sizes.

A third limitation was the skewness of the distribution of the outcome variable, postdivorce adjustment. The DV could have been treated as continuous (Glass et al., 1972) rather than binary, which would have facilitated the use of multiple linear regression. Treating the DV as continuous would have been advantageous, given that continuous variables have greater variance than binary variables. However, the distribution was positively skewed, because most respondents reported being much better off postdivorce, which violated the assumption of normality and precluded the use of multiple linear regression.

Two additional limitations must be considered. Because this study involved the secondary analysis of archival data, the researcher had no control over the questions

asked in the initial survey. Similarly, the predictors of postdivorce well-being involved single questions. The researcher was unable to design additional questions related to these constructs, which could have improved the reliability of the study. Finally, the majority of respondents in the survey (i.e., 74.1%) were women, which limited the generalizability of the findings to men.

Recommendations

Recommendations exist for additional research. As discussed previously, the ability of gender to predict postdivorce adjustment may vary by the type of Orthodox community to which a woman belongs. In general and as demonstrated in this study, fewer Orthodox women than men reported financial well-being postdivorce. This different was greater among the more conservative Chassidic Orthodox community (Kanarfogel et al., 2014). Gaining greater insight into the impact of cultural differences among the overall Orthodox population on postdivorce adjustment may lead to more targeted interventions based upon the specific Orthodox community in which the divorced individual lives.

Another recommendation for further research pertains to the relationship between postdivorce adjustment and personal well-being. According to the results of the current study, although personal well-being predicted postdivorce adjustment, the relationship was negative. In other words, greater levels of personal well-being were associated with reductions in postdivorce adjustment. This finding cannot easily be explained by the family stress and coping theory and does not align with previous research on this topic. Future researchers should explore this relationship, possibly considering whether the

stage at which the individual exists (i.e. disorganization, recovery, or reorganization) impacts this relationship.

The final recommendation is to conduct more research pertaining to postdivorce adjustment among men, particularly given that the majority of respondents in this study were women. Many studies in the scholarly literature focused on men and women in general or on women alone. A dearth of research exists pertaining solely to men. Men may experience unique issues uncommon to women, such as feelings of abandonment, persecution, or humiliation (Walfisch, 2009). Furthermore, in some Orthodox groups, boys and men primarily speak Yiddish, which leads to a communication barrier with the outside English-speaking world (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). To provide equitable counseling services to men and women in the Orthodox community, it is important to gain greater insight into the unique experiences of men postdivorce.

Implications

The findings have several implications for clinical psychology practice, including assisting clients with financial goals and information, providing opportunities for women to experience social support, exploring the negative feelings of men associated with divorce, and teaching skills to engage successfully in new and intimate relationships. Because financial well-being is a significant predictor of postdivorce adjustment, therapists should help clients to establish short- and long-term financial goals. Referrals to external resources such as legal representation or financial advisors may be appropriate. Clients also may benefit from employment resources, such as job placement and training. Divorce can disrupt individual incomes, particularly when one individual

must relocate to a new residence, perhaps with children. A two-income family may now become a one-income family, and that income may not be adequate. The noncustodial parent also may struggle with child support or other types of support payments to the ex-spouse.

Women may need additional support because of the impact of gender on postdivorce adjustment. Women also may experience a greater impact of financial issues. A lower percentage of female respondents than men in the current study reported a sense of financial well-being postdivorce.

Furthermore, divorced women experience a larger decline in their standard of living when compared with men. In addition to financial issues, divorce has a significant impact socially. Orthodox women serve the primary roles of mother and wife, so divorce may be viewed as a failure or a disappointment. This perception by the community may lead to social isolation.

Because divorce contradicts community expectations of self-restraint, compliance with social values, and moral values aligned with religious beliefs, the process often is often performed in secret and remains hidden from the community (Barth & Ben-Ari, 2014). This sense of shame and secrecy may make it difficult for divorcees to find much-needed social support. Orthodox women seek social support from other women as a way to cope with the demands of married life (Shai, 2002). Therapists could consider offering support groups for female Orthodox divorcees.

Women are not the only ones who could benefit from additional support. Traditionally, men are the initiators of the divorce process by providing women with a

get, or permission to divorce. When faced with divorce, men may feel persecuted, humiliated, or abandonment when the wives desire dissolution of their marriages (Bayme & Rosen, 1994; Fishman, 1994; Walfisch, 2009). Therapists should explore these feelings with male clients and consider helping clients to reframe their perceptions in less maladaptive ways.

Entering new and intimate relationships may facilitate postdivorce adjustment. Results of this study indicated that divorced individuals who were engaged or had remarried reported being much better off postdivorce than individuals who remained single. However, before focusing on any new relationships, it is important to explore the reasons for divorce in past relationships. Clients may benefit from communication and problem-solving skills training, which may increase the likelihood of long-term success in their new relationships.

Lee and Hett (1990) used a group therapy approach to address these issues. The group discussed the various stages of divorce, perceptions and personal experiences of divorce, ways to maintain family relationships, impact on children, and dating and sexual issues. In addition, group members practiced expressing personal needs. One of the outcomes of this group therapy was an improved ability to form new relationships (Lee & Hett, 1990). Although this study did not address directly intimate relationships, the formation of strong social relationships may be an important first step.

An additional implication for clinical practice is the consideration of cultural values. Although Orthodox individuals may have different values and norms from non-Orthodox individuals, differences also exist among the various types of Orthodox groups

according to how they dress, the type of education that they receive, and how integrated into the non-Orthodox community they are willing to become. On one end of the spectrum, Modern Orthodox Jews participate fully in American society while still complying with religious laws and restrictions. Modern Orthodox Jews also may promote greater equality between men and women with respect to studying the Talmud and Jewish law (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016).

On the other hand, members of the Chassidic Orthodox community involve themselves less in non-Orthodox community life. Boys and young men receive a primarily religious education with few secular components. Because of the belief that girls and women do not have an obligation to study the Talmud, they may receive a more secular education. Yiddish, rather than English, is the primary language of Chassidic Orthodox Jews. As such, communication issues may arise during therapy (Jewish People Policy Institute, 2016). These differences between Orthodox Jews and non-Orthodox individuals and between different types of Orthodox groups necessitate a high degree of cultural competence when working with this population. When working with Chassidic Orthodox Jews, it may be beneficial to collaborate with Yiddish translators or a bilingual Yiddish therapist.

In addition to implications for clinical practice are social justice implications. Social justice hinges on the equitable treatment of all members of society and the protection of vulnerable groups. Women within the Orthodox community represent a vulnerable group, and they have reported decreased financial well-being postdivorce and a greater decline in standard of living than men. Helping female members of the

Orthodox community to strengthen their coping skills postdivorce may contribute to a more equitable financial situation. In addition, because of the potential unwillingness of some groups of Orthodox Jews to reach out to the external resources for support, they may not be afforded the same types of resources available to non-Orthodox individuals. Therapists must ensure that members of the Orthodox community have access to culturally relevant resources that promote postdivorce adjustment.

Conclusion

The overarching purpose of this study was to examine the factors predicting postdivorce adjustment among members of the Orthodox Jewish population. Postdivorce adjustment may be particularly difficult for members of this population partly because of their adherence to cultural and religious values pertaining to marriage and the role of women in Orthodox society. Results indicated that even though religious involvement and social support did not predict postdivorce adjustment, financial well-being, gender, and personal well-being were predictive. In addition, relationship status was significantly associated with postdivorce adjustment. Thus, greater postdivorce adjustment was likely to occur among Orthodox individuals who experienced positive financial well-being and who were men. In addition, members of the Orthodox community who became involved in romantic partnerships postdivorce were more likely to report greater levels of postdivorce adjustment. Of these results, two of them were somewhat surprising, including the lack of a relationship between religious well-being and postdivorce adjustment, as well as the negative relationship between postdivorce adjustment and personal well-being.

Additional research is needed with respect to postdivorce adjustment in the Orthodox community. Relatively few current studies have address this topic, and few, if any studies, have focused solely on men. In addition, given the variations in cultural beliefs and practices among different types of Orthodox groups, future researchers should examine each group separately. Overall, this study contributes to the body of knowledge pertaining to divorce within the Orthodox population by identifying four factors related to postdivorce adjustment: financial well-being, personal well-being, gender, and relationship status.

These findings may be beneficial to therapists who work with the Orthodox population. Treatment plans should address issues such as financial goals and information; social support, particularly for women; men's negative feelings associated with divorce; and skills development to engage successfully in new and intimate relationships. Cultural competence is essential, especially given the variations in beliefs and even language among various groups of Orthodox Jews.

Postdivorce adjustment may be difficult for any individuals. However, members of the Orthodox community may face unique challenges. More conservative or adherent groups may interact little with the secular world, preventing them from securing resources and information that may aid in adjustment and coping. Furthermore, divorce may not be as socially acceptable among the Orthodox population as in the general population of the United States, which may increase the stigma and social isolation of the individuals who experience this phenomenon, thus inhibiting coping and recovery. By having an increased understanding of the factors contributing to more positive outcomes

among divorced individuals in the Orthodox community, therapists may then be poised to promote greater social justice among the more vulnerable members of the community.

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Appendix A: Data Use Agreement

This Data Use Agreement ("Agreement"), effective as of 04/19/2020 ("Effective Date"), is entered into by and between [Name redacted] ("Data Recipient") and [Name redacted], PsyD ARCC Institute ("Data Provider"). The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set ("LDS") for use in research in accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1. Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the "HIPAA Regulations" codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.

2. Preparation of the LDS. Data Provider shall prepare and furnish to Data Recipient a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA or FERPA Regulations

Data Fields in the LDS. **No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS).** In preparing the LDS, Data Provider or shall include the **data fields specified as follows**, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research: Responses to all ARCC survey questions (see attached questions).

3. Responsibilities of Data Recipient. Data Recipient agrees to:

    a. Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;

    b. Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

    c. Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

    d. Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and

    e. Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.

    f. For purposes of this research project the IRB of record will be Walden University.

4. Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS. Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the LDS for its research activities only.

5. Term and Termination.

    a. Term. The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.

    b. Termination by Data Recipient. Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.

    c. Termination by Data Provider. Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.

    d. For Breach. Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.

    e. Effect of Termination. Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(e) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.

6. Miscellaneous.

    a. Change in Law. The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.

    b. Construction of Terms. The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.

    c. No Third Party Beneficiaries. Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.

d. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

e. Headings. The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf. 04/19/2020

DATA PROVIDER	**DATA RECIPIENT**
Signed: [Signature redacted]	Signed: [Signature redacted]
Print Name: [Name redacted]	Print Name: [Name redacted]
Print Title: Founder and Director, ARCC Institute	Print Title: Data Recipient

Appendix B: Institute for Applied Research and Community Collaboration Survey

Consent

You are cordially invited to participate in an important new study about the experience and outcomes of divorce in the Orthodox Jewish community.

If you have already taken the survey and forwarded it to others, thank you so much for your help. Please disregard.

Insight gained from this groundbreaking study will be used to educate community leadership and service providers (rabbis, educators, counselors, shadchanim, etc.) about how to best support individuals through the dating and marriage process, and through divorce when it occurs. The findings will be made available to the public as well.

The fundamental goals of the study are to use the knowledge gained to " further increase the frequency of harmonious marriages within our community " help those for whom divorce is necessary to navigate the process with the best possible outcomes for all parties concerned

The survey will ask questions about your experiences, thoughts and feelings throughout your dating, marriage, and divorce. Responses are confidential and anonymous!. You will not be asked for your name or any other identifying information. (Nor will anyone else (including the person that referred this survey to you) know whether or not you have chosen to participate.) Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may end your participation at any time.

The study is being conducted by a new action research organization, the Institute for Applied Research & Community Collaboration (ARCC), which is dedicated to studying the health, behavioral health and social issues of the frum community and improving wellbeing through data driven decision-making.

Should you have any questions about the study, please email info@arccinstitute.org. To be included on a mailing list to receive a brief summary of results once they are available, email info@arccinstitute.org (or check ARCC's website homepage where a registration box for requesting results may be available).

The survey typically takes just 15 to 30 minutes to complete, and per the respondent's preference can be answered in either one or multiple sessions. (Once having begun the survey, you can return to complete it in a later session using the same link in this email – as long as you are on the same computer and have not yet cleared your browser's cookies since your first session.) To begin the survey just click next.

After completing this survey, please forward it to 5 divorced individuals that you think would be open to participate as well. The more people we get to complete the survey the better we can understand divorce and improve the experience and outcomes for everyone involved.

The ARCC team and I thank you for joining us in this meaningful opportunity!

Dr. Yitzchak Schechter Director, Institute for Applied Research and Community Collaboration (ARCC)

Please answer ALL questions in reference to your most recent marriage which ended in divorce

Demographics

*1. What is your gender?

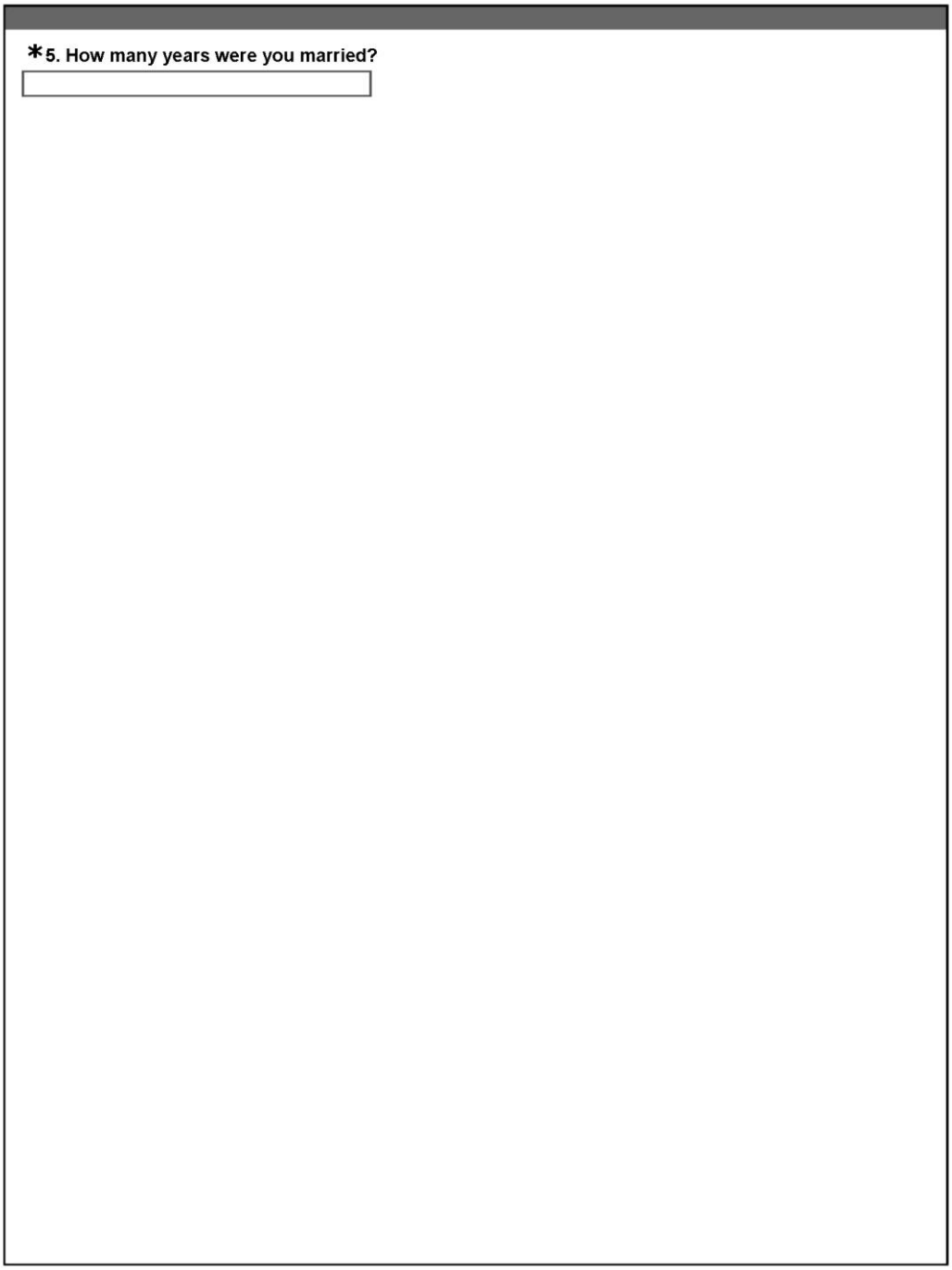
○ Female ○ Male

2. What is your age?

3. At what age did you get divorced? (Again, respond to all questions in reference to your most recent marriage which ended in divorce)

*4. Were you married for at least a year?

○ Yes ○ No


*5. How many years were you married?

6. How many months were you married?

7. How many times have you been divorced?

8. Many people tend to identify with particular segments of the community. Of these categories which most closely (even if not exactly) describes you?

Non-Orthodox | Chassidish | Chabad/Lubavitch | Yeshivish | Modern Orthodox

9. How strongly do you adhere to cultural norms and ideals of your community?

1(Not at all) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (Completely)

10. Are you of Ashkenazi or Sephardi origin?

Ashkenazi | Sephardi | Both | Don't Know

11. Are you a Baal Teshuva?

Yes | No

If yes, how many years before you got married (to your most recent ex-spouse) did you become frum?

12. What was your religious affiliation during your marriage?

Non-Orthodox | Chassidish | Chabad/Lubavitch | Yeshivish | Modern Orthodox

13. How strongly did you adhere to cultural norms and the ideals of your community during your marriage?

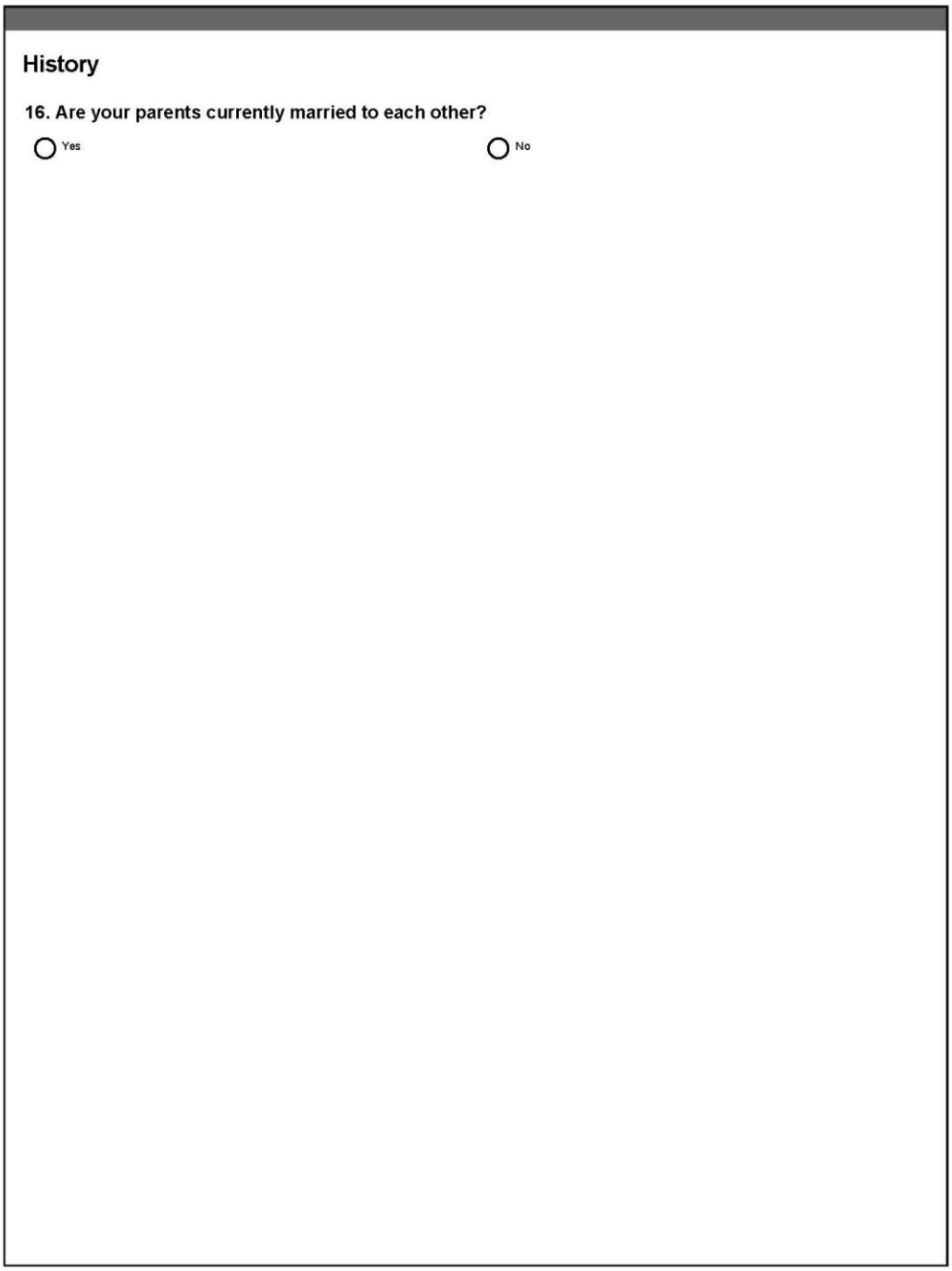
1(Not at all) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (Completely)

14. What was the religious affiliation of the home in which you were raised?

Non-Orthodox | Chassidish | Chabad/Lubavitch | Yeshivish | Modern Orthodox

15. How strongly did you adhere to cultural norms and ideals of your community in the home in which you were raised?

1(Not at all) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (Completely)



History

16. Are your parents currently married to each other?

Yes

No

17. How did their marriage end?

◯ Divorce ◯ Separation ◯ Death of a parent ◯ Other

Other (please specify)

18. How old were you when their marriage ended?

◯ 0-5 ◯ 6-10 ◯ 11-15 ◯ 16- 20 ◯ 21 or older

19. How much conflict between your parents did you experience growing up?

◯ 1 None ◯ 2 ◯ 3 ◯ 4 ◯ 5 A lot

20. Growing up were you ever the victim of...

	No	Yes, minimal	Yes, moderate	Yes, severe
Physical Abuse	◯	◯	◯	◯
Sexual Abuse	◯	◯	◯	◯
Emotional abuse	◯	◯	◯	◯
or Witnessed domestic abuse	◯	◯	◯	◯

21. Prior to the marriage, did you or your spouse go for psychotherapy related to dating/engagement?

○ You ○ Ex-spouse ○ Both ○ Neither

22. Were you or your ex-spouse diagnosed with a mental illness before your marriage?

○ You ○ Ex-spouse ○ Both ○ Neither

23. Please specify the diagnoses (if any) for yourself:

24. Please specify the diagnoses (if any) for your ex-spouse:

25. When was the diagnosis disclosed?

	During dating	During engagement	During marriage	During/after separation or divorce process	Never	N/A
You	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ex-spouse	○	○	○	○	○	○

26. Did you or your ex-spouse take any psychiatric medication prior to marriage?

○ You ○ Ex-spouse ○ Both ○ Neither

27. Please specify which medications (if any) you took:

28. Please specify which medications (if any) your ex-spouse took:

29. When when was the information disclosed? (that medication was being taken)

	During the dating	During engagement	During marriage	During/after separation or divorce process	Never	N/A
You	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ex-spouse	○	○	○	○	○	○

30. If medication was disclosed, how did it impact the marriage?

	Very Negative Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Positive Impact	Very Positive Impact
Your disclosure	○	○	○	○	○
Your ex-spouse's disclosure	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

Dating

31. How long did you date your ex-spouse before engagement?

- ◯ 2 meetings or less
- ◯ 3 meetings or up to 1 month
- ◯ 1-3 months
- ◯ 4-5 months
- ◯ 6-8 months
- ◯ 9-12 months
- ◯ More than 12 months

32. How did you meet your ex-spouse?

- ◯ Professional Matchmaker
- ◯ Dating Website
- ◯ Rabbi/Rebbetzin
- ◯ Family
- ◯ Friend/Acquaintance
- ◯ We met on our own
- ◯ Other

Other (please specify)

33. People frequently seek guidance and advice when dating from different people. Please check those you have consulted:

- ☐ Mental Health Professional
- ☐ Shadchan
- ☐ Dealt with the situation alone
- ☐ Immediate family (e.g., parents, siblings)
- ☐ Extended Family
- ☐ Close friends
- ☐ Shul or community Rabbi/Rebbetzin
- ☐ Rosh Yeshiva
- ☐ Mashgiach/Mashpia
- ☐ Rebbe/Teacher
- ☐ Other Religious Figures
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

34. How long were you engaged prior to marriage?

- ◯ Less than 1 month
- ◯ 1-2 months
- ◯ 3-4 months
- ◯ 5-6 months
- ◯ 7-8 months
- ◯ 9-10 months
- ◯ 11-12 months
- ◯ More than 1 year- 2 years
- ◯ More than 2 years

35. Did you have doubts about the person at the time of your engagement?

- ◯ No, not at all
- ◯ Yes, a little
- ◯ Yes, moderate
- ◯ Yes, very much

36. Was your engagement difficult?

- ◯ Smooth
- ◯ Some challenges
- ◯ Difficult/turbulent
- ◯ Very difficult/turbulent

37. To what extent did you have doubts or concerns before or during the engagement with spouse from whom you are most recently divorced?

○ 1. Not at all ○ 2. ○ 3. ○ 4. ○ 5. Very much

38. Did you ever consider breaking your engagement to spouse you are most recently divorced from?

○ 1. Not at all ○ 2. ○ 3. ○ 4. ○ 5. Very Much

39. Did you feel pressured into getting married?

○ No ○ Yes, a little ○ Yes, moderately ○ Yes, very much

40. From whom did you feel pressure? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Spouse
- ☐ My Mother
- ☐ My Father
- ☐ Spouse's Mother
- ☐ Spouse's Father
- ☐ Extended Family
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Rabbis
- ☐ Teachers/Mentors
- ☐ Community/Society
- ☐ Self
- ☐ Mental Health Professional
- ☐ Shadchan

Other (please specify)

Marriage

Again, please answer all questions regarding your most recent marriage which resulted in divorce

41. How old were you when you got married?

42. How many children did you have together?

43. Did you or your spouse already have children from previous marriages when you came into this marriage?

	Yes	No
You	○	○
Your spouse	○	○

If so, how many children did you and/or your spouse have when you came into this marriage?

44. How many months after marriage was your first child together born?

45. Did you use birth control at the beginning of marriage?

○ Yes ○ No

46. For how long did you use birth control?

- ◯ less than a month
- ◯ 1-3 months
- ◯ 4-6 months
- ◯ 7-9 months
- ◯ 10-12 months
- ◯ more than a year-2 years
- ◯ more than 2 years

47. Was Halacha/religion something that brought you together or apart?

○ Together ○ Apart ○ Neither together nor apart

48. How happy were you at the happiest point of your marriage?

○ 1 Very Unhappy ○ 2 Unhappy ○ 3 Somewhat Unhappy ○ 4 Neutral ○ 5 Somewhat Happy ○ 6 Happy ○ 7 Very Happy

49. State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items. Please answer regarding the *best point* in your marriage

	Always Agreed	Almost Always Agreed	Occasionally Disagreed	Frequently Disagreed	Almost Always Disagreed	Always Disagreed
Handling family finances	○	○	○	○	○	○
Matters of recreation	○	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrations of affection	○	○	○	○	○	○
Friends	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sexual relations	○	○	○	○	○	○
Conventionality (right, good, or proper conduct)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Philosophy of Life	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ways of dealing with your parents	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ways of dealing with your spouse's parents	○	○	○	○	○	○
Issues of Religion/Halacha /Yiddishkeit	○	○	○	○	○	○

50. Please answer this reflecting the *best* point in your marriage...

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
I did not get much fulfillment out of sacrificing for my partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am not the kind of person who found satisfaction in putting aside my interests for the sake of my relationship with my partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Giving something up for my partner was frequently not worth the trouble	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It was personally fulfilling to give up something for my partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I got satisfaction out of doing things for my partner, even if it meant I'd miss out on something I wanted for myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It made me feel good to sacrifice for my partner	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

51. While in your marriage (that resulted in most recent divorce) which of these occured?

	Yes	No
Therapy for just yourself	○	○
Therapy for just your spouse	○	○
Couples Therapy	○	○

52. Was the therapy helpful to...

	1. Not at All	2.	3.	4.	5.Very Much	N/A
Yourself	○	○	○	○	○	○
Your spouse	○	○	○	○	○	○
Your relationship as a couple	○	○	○	○	○	○

Divorce

53. At what timepoint in the marriage did you first realize you were having problems? (Ex. within first 3 months, in the first year, 10 years in...)

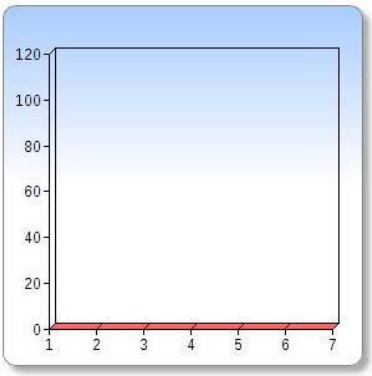
54. When in your marriage did you realize you might get divorced?

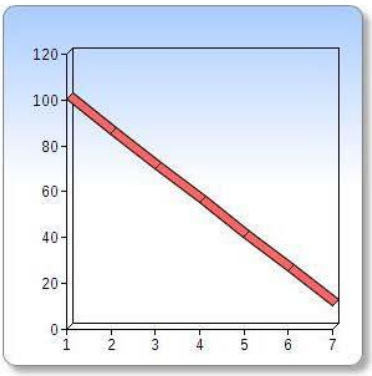
55. Who initiated the divorce?

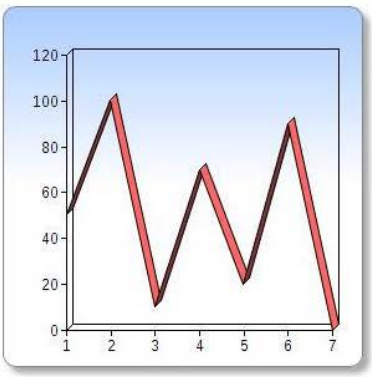
- ◯ You
- ◯ Your spouse
- ◯ Both of us at the same time
- ◯ Your family member
- ◯ Your spouse's family member
- ◯ A friend
- ◯ A Rav

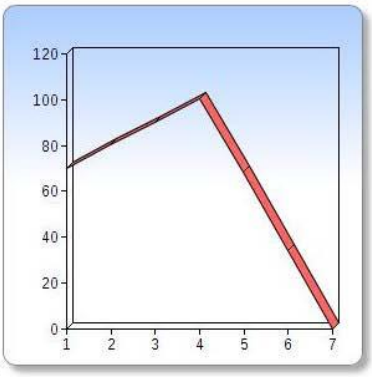
If you chose someone other than you or your ex-spouse please elaborate?

56. What graph most resembles your marriage?









○

○ Other-None of these graphs closely resemble my marriage

Other (please specify what a graph of your marriage would look like)

57. Was there a particular incident that led to your divorce or was it gradual?

○ Particular Incident ○ Gradual

If it was an incident (please specify)

58. Which of these factors contributed to the end of your marriage. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Information undisclosed prior to marriage
- ☐ Financial issues
- ☐ Disagreements over children
- ☐ Problems with extended family
- ☐ Religious differences
- ☐ Clashes of personality style
- ☐ Lack of emotional support
- ☐ Lack of emotional intimacy/connection
- ☐ Sexual issues
- ☐ Different life goals
- ☐ Life stressors
- ☐ Problems in communication
- ☐ Infertility
- ☐ Lack of time spent together
- ☐ Mental illness
- ☐ Drifted apart
- ☐ Fighting too much
- ☐ Infidelity (you)
- ☐ Infidelity (your spouse)
- ☐ Substance/ Alcohol use (you or your spouse)
- ☐ Sexual addiction (you or your spouse)
- ☐ Verbal/emotional abuse
- ☐ Lack of commitment to the marriage
- ☐ Unprepared for marriage/ unrealistic expectations
- ☐ Physical abuse
- ☐ Unmet emotional needs
- ☐ Feeling put down/ demeaned by spouse

Other (please specify)

59. Please select the two factors most influential factors in bringing about your divorce?

First Most Influential Factor in Divorce	
Second Most Influential Factor in Divorce	

60. Do you feel you stayed married longer than you should have?

◯ Yes ◯ No

61. How much longer do you feel you stayed together than you should have?

○ A month or less ○ 1-3 months ○ 4-6 months ○ 7-9 months ○ 10-12 months ○ 1-2 years ○ 3+ years

62. Did you feel pressured to stay married?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes, a little
- ○ Yes, moderate
- ○ Yes, very much

63. From whom did you feel pressure to stay married? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Children
- ☐ Spouse
- ☐ My Mother
- ☐ My Father
- ☐ Spouse's mother
- ☐ Spouse's father
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Rabbi
- ☐ Teacher/Mentor
- ☐ Community/Society
- ☐ Self
- ☐ Shadchan

Other (please specify)

64. Did you have a separation period?

○ Yes ○ No

65. Was the separation period helpful in your decision making?

◯ Yes ◯ No

Please explain

66. People frequently seek guidance and advice during divorce from different people. Please check all those you used consistently:

- ☐ Mental Health Professional
- ☐ Dealt with the situation alone
- ☐ Immediate family (e.g., parents, children, siblings)
- ☐ Extended Family
- ☐ Close friends
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Shul or community Rabbi/Rebbetzin
- ☐ Rosh Yeshiva
- ☐ Mashgiach/Mashpia
- ☐ Rebbe/Teacher
- ☐ Other Religious Figures
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

67. From the list above, who was most influential on your decision to get divorced?

68. To what extent did you feel prepared for each of the following?

	1. Completely Unprepared	2.	3.	4.	5. Very Prepared
Dating	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Marriage	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Divorce Process	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Get Process	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Aftermath of Divorce	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

69. In what state or U.S. territory did you get divorced?

Outside U.S. (please specify country)

70. How contentious (combative or argumentative) was your divorce process?

1. Not at All	2.	3.	4.	5. Very
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

71. From the moment you or your spouse first disclosed wanting a divorce, how long did it take until...

	Less than 1 month	1-3 months	4-6 months	7-9 months	10-12 months	Greater than 1 year-2 years	Still Waiting...	N/A
Giving/getting your Get?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Civil Divorce?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Final Agreement/Custody?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

72. What were the obstacles you faced in finalizing your divorce?

73. Did your spouse use the get as leverage?

○ Yes ○ No

74. If yes, was it effective for their purpose?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure

75. Did you use the get as leverage?

○ Yes ○ No

76. If yes, was it effective for your purpose?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Not sure

77. Did you complete your civil divorce through litigation or mediation?

- ◯ Litigation
- ◯ Mediation
- ◯ Both mediation and litigation
- ◯ Other

Other (please specify)

78. Overall, would you recommend that method to others?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Other

Other (please specify)

79. If yes, why would you recommend that method? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Quicker
- ☐ Cheaper
- ☐ Less negative
- ☐ Punished ex-spouse
- ☐ Got what I wanted
- ☐ Easier
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

80. If no, why wouldn't you recommend that method? (Check all that apply)

☐ Adversarial ☐ Expensive ☐ Draining ☐ Took too long ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

81. Who was involved in your divorce proceedings? (Check all that apply)

☐ Lawyer ☐ Professional Mediator ☐ Non-professional Mediator ☐ Toen ☐ Rav/Rabbi ☐ Parent ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

82. How satisfactory was the process with the following?

	1 Extremely Unsatisfactory	2	3	4	5 Extremely Satisfactory	N/A
Mediation	○	○	○	○	○	○
Civil Court	○	○	○	○	○	○
Bais Din	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please comment

83. Which Bais Din did you use?

84. Please rate your experience with your Bais Din

○ Very negative ○ Negative ○ Neither negative nor positive ○ Positive ○ Very positive

Please enter any specific comments

85. Was there domestic abuse in your marriage?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Not Sure

86. If yes, what was your role?

- ◯ Victim
- ◯ Abuser
- ◯ Both

87. How did you tell your children about the divorce?

- ◯ N/A (no children)
- ◯ We never spoke to them
- ◯ I spoke, but my ex-spouse did not
- ◯ My ex-spouse spoke, but I did not
- ◯ We both spoke to them together
- ◯ We both spoke to them separately
- ◯ Someone else spoke to them instead of us

Other (please specify)

88. Did you have a pre-nuptial agreement?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Post-divorce

89. After your divorce how much help/support did you from each of the following?

	1. None at all	2.	3.	4.	5. A lot
Family	○	○	○	○	○
Friends	○	○	○	○	○
Community	○	○	○	○	○
Rabbi(s)	○	○	○	○	○
Therapist	○	○	○	○	○

90. If you have children, who has custody of the children?

- ○ Joint
- ○ Me, with ex-spouse visitation
- ○ Ex-spouse, with me having visitation
- ○ Only me
- ○ Only my ex-spouse
- ○ Other
- ○ N/A (no children)

Other (please specify)

91. Was custody worked out through...

- ◯ Bais Din
- ◯ Court
- ◯ Mediation
- ◯ Court (after Bais Din or mediation)
- ◯ Mutual agreement(we did it ourselves)

Other (please specify)

92. How satisfied are you with this custody arrangement?

- ◯ 1 Not at all
- ◯ 2
- ◯ 3
- ◯ 4
- ◯ 5 Very much

93. How are your children handling the divorce?

- ◯ They are happier now
- ◯ They are sadder now
- ◯ They seem unaffected by the divorce
- ◯ Some are handling it relatively well and some are handling it poorly
- ◯ Not sure
- ◯ We don't talk about it
- ◯ N/A

94. Did any of your children go to therapy following the divorce?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

95. Is or was the therapy helpful for your children?

1. Not at all	2.	3.	4.	5. Very Much
○	○	○	○	○

If therapy was helpful for some children and not helpful for others please tell us about that

96. Overall, was the school(s) helpful to the children after the divorce?

○ 1 Not at all ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 Very much ○ N/A

If the school(s) was helpful for some children and not helpful for others please tell us about that

97. What is your current marital status?

◯ Single ◯ Engaged ◯ Remarried ◯ Separated from a different spouse ◯ Divorced from a different spouse ◯ Widowed from a different spouse ◯ Other

98. How are you doing after the divorce?

◯ Much worse off ◯ A little worse off ◯ About the same ◯ A little better off ◯ Much better off

Please elaborate

99. Overall, how well are you doing in the following areas of life? Please rate each domain on a scale from 0 (doing terribly) to 100 (doing perfectly)

Personal well-being	
Interpersonal/Social Relationships (e.g. family, friends, others)	
Work/Professional life	
Religious life (e.g. observance, Torah learning, faith)	
Personal finance	
Overall	

100. Looking back, what factors could have helped you while you were dating?

101. Looking back, what factors could have helped you while you were engaged?

102. Looking back, what factors could have helped you during marriage?

103. Looking back, what factors could have helped you during the divorce process?

104. Looking back what factors could have helped you after the divorce?

105. If you are dating or have dated after your divorce- what are things important to you now in a potential spouse as compared to the past?

106. What else would you like to tell us about your life post-divorce?

Just A Few More Demographic Questions (Really)

107. What is your highest level of secular education?

- ◯ Elementary school
- ◯ Some high school
- ◯ High school graduate or general equivalency diploma (GED)
- ◯ Some college/university
- ◯ College diploma or university degree
- ◯ Masters/Professional degree
- ◯ Doctoral degree

108. What is your highest level of Jewish education?

- ◯ No formal Jewish education
- ◯ Jewish elementary school
- ◯ Jewish High School
- ◯ Yeshiva/Seminary
- ◯ Kollel

Other (please specify)

109. What is your approximate current annual gross household income from all sources?

- ◯ less than $25,000
- ◯ $25,001-50,000
- ◯ $50,001-75,000
- ◯ $75,001-100,000
- ◯ $100,001-130,000
- ◯ $130,001- 175,000
- ◯ $175,001-200,000
- ◯ $200,001- 250,000
- ◯ more than $250,000

110. Any general comments or thoughts about this survey or this topic in general?

Thank you and please forward!!

Thank you very much for participating in this study, and for helping to better our community. We sincerely appreciate your time and efforts.

We encourage you to forward this to (at least) 5 indivduals that would want to take this survey to help the community.

To receive the results of this study when they become available please email info@arccinstitute.org or visit our website www.arccinstitute.org.

Further questions or comments on this research can be directed to info@arccinstitute.org or by calling 845-445-7631. Thanks

If you have any questions or comments please contact ARCC at info@arccinstitute.org
For more information about ARCC Institute please visit us as arccinstitute.org

Appendix C: Western Institutional Review Board Exemption

Global Leader | Proven Expert

September 2, 2014

Isaac Schechter, PsyD
ARCC Institute
2 Keri Lane
Spring Valley, New York 10977

Dear Dr. Schechter:

SUBJECT: REGULATORY OPINION—IRB EXEMPTION
Protocol Title: Dating, Marriage, and Divorce Dynamics, Risk Factors, and Outcomes
Investigator: Isaac Schechter, PsyD

This letter is in response to your request to Western Institutional Review Board (WIRB) for an exemption determination for the above-referenced research project. WIRB's IRB Affairs Department reviewed the exemption criteria under 45 CFR §46.101(b)(2):

> (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
> (i) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

We believe that the research fits the above exemption criteria. The data will be collected in a way so that the subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants. You have also confirmed that the results of this study will not be submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for marketing approval.

This exemption determination can apply to multiple sites, but it does not apply to any institution that has an institutional policy of requiring an entity other than WIRB (such as an internal IRB) to make exemption determinations. WIRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions. You are responsible for ensuring that each site to which this exemption applies can and will accept WIRB's exemption decision.

Western Institutional Review Board®
1019 39th Avenue SE Suite 120 | Puyallup, WA 98374-2115
Office: (360) 252-2500 | **Fax:** (360) 252-2498 | **www.wirb.com**

Appendix D: Scatterplots

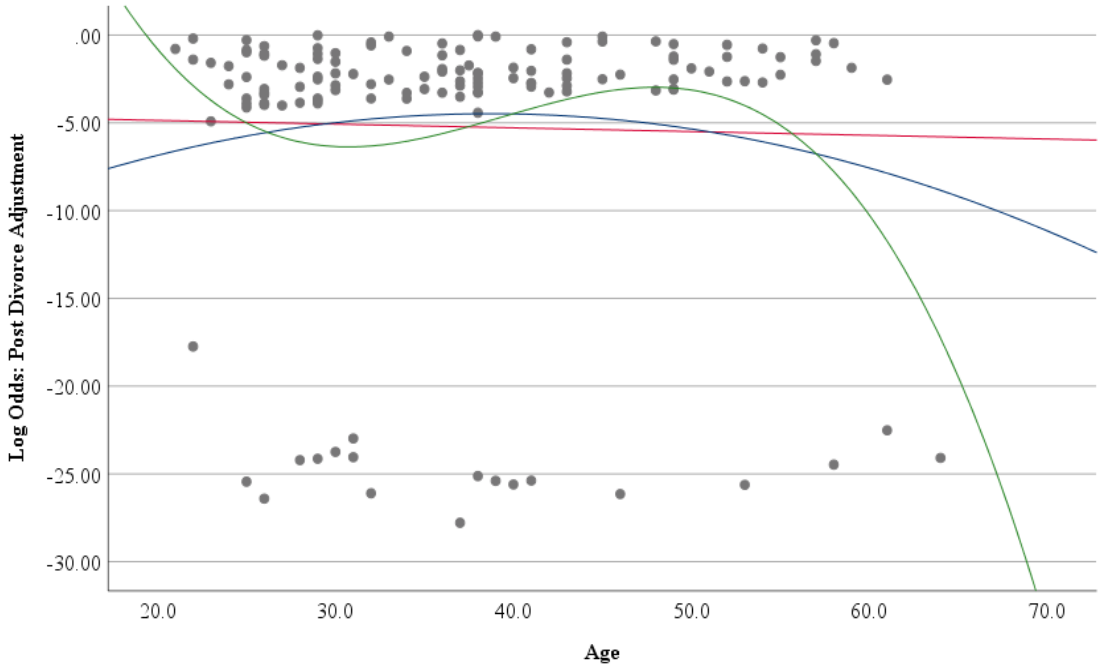


Figure D1. Scatterplot of log odds of postdivorce adjustment by age.

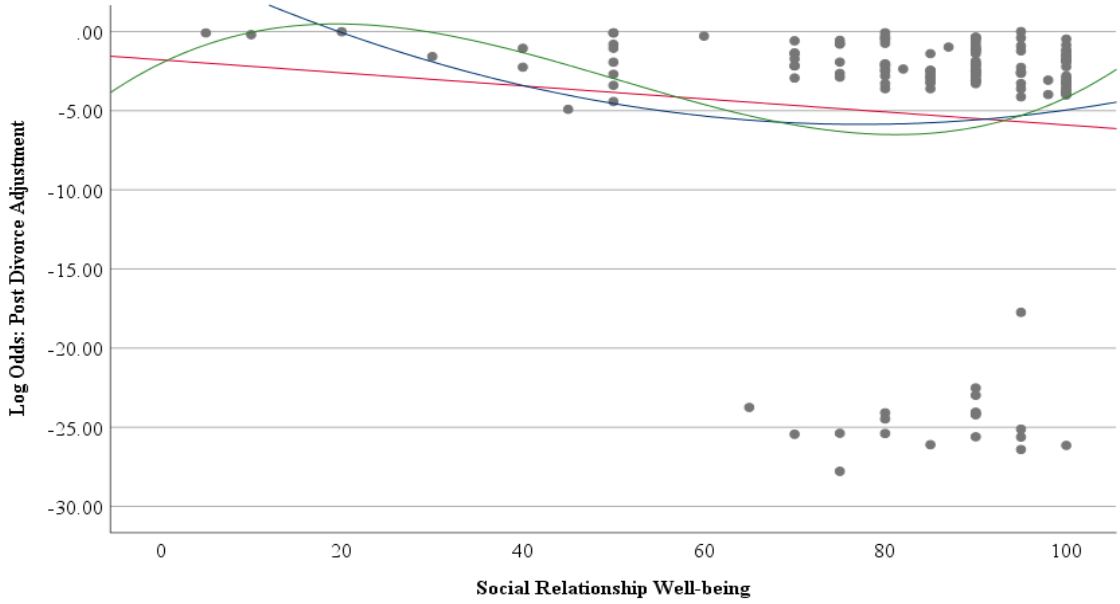


Figure D2. Scatterplot of log odds of postdivorce adjustment by social well-being.

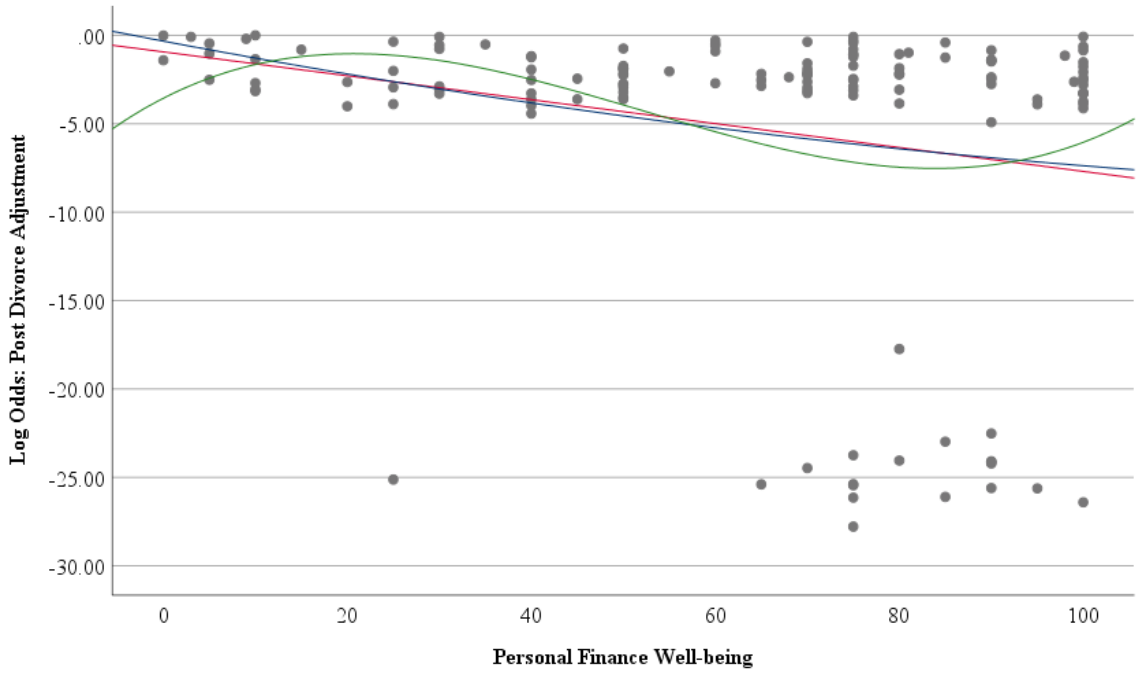


Figure D3. Scatterplot of log odds of postdivorce adjustment by personal finance well-being.

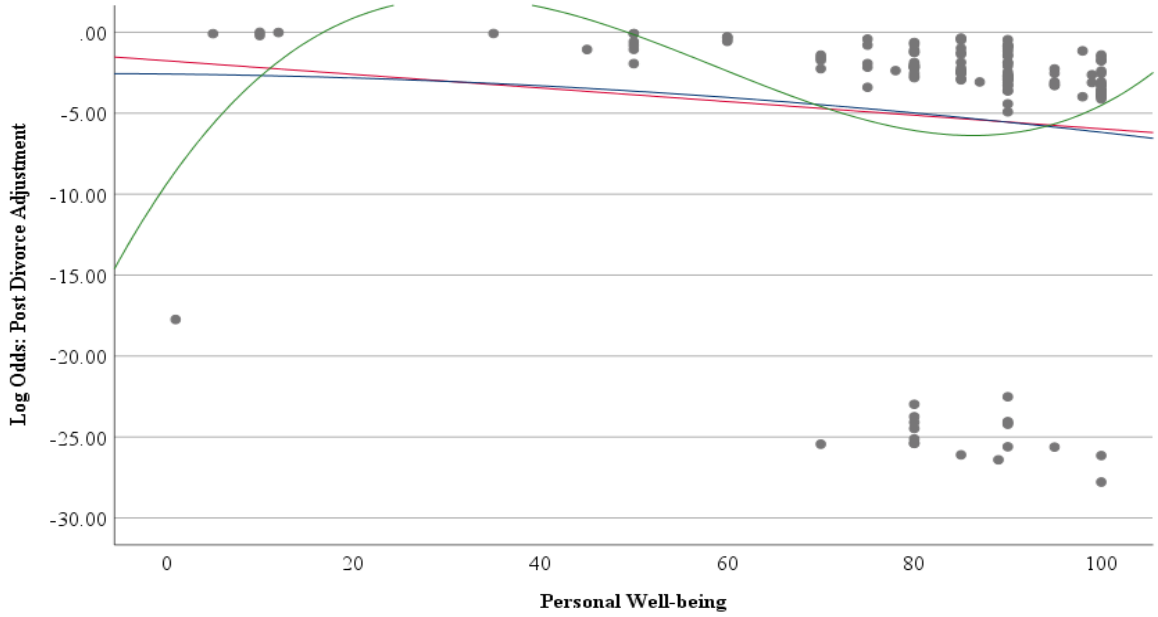


Figure D4. Scatterplot of log odds of postdivorce adjustment by personal well-being.

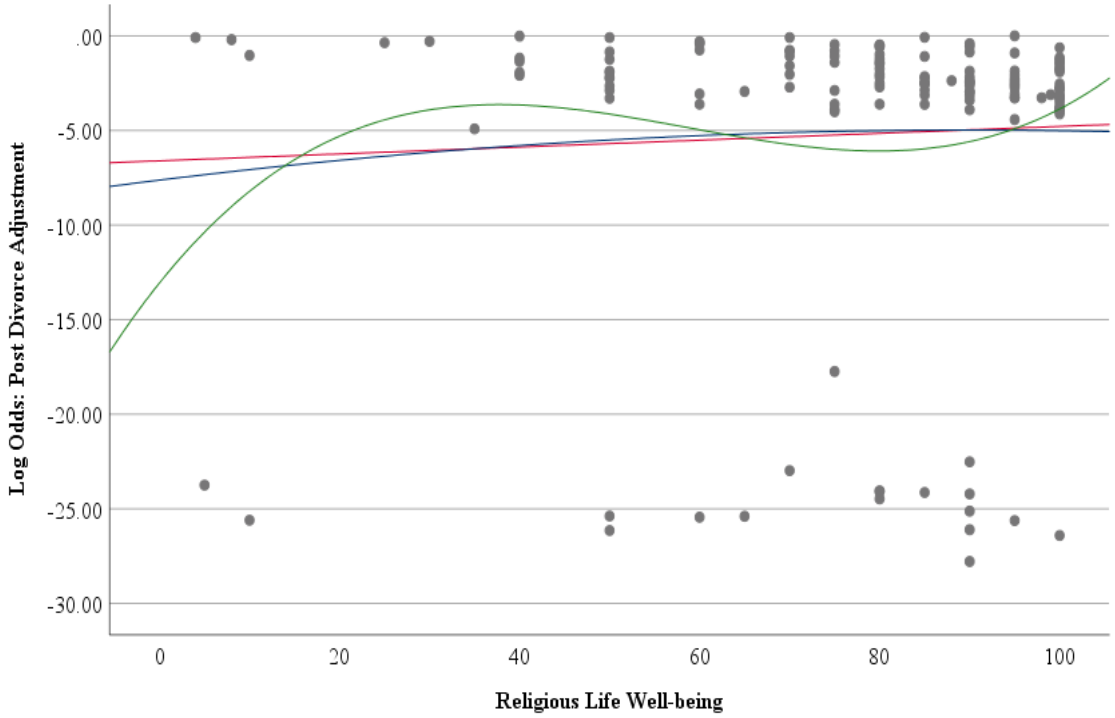


Figure D5. Scatterplot of log odds of postdivorce adjustment by religious well-being.