

Abstract

“Divorce decision process and life management process of women after divorce” is a study to understand divorce decision process and life management process of women after divorce, sequential stages in divorce process and rational contingencies involving in each stage of the process. Symbolic interactionist perspective is used as a theoretical orientation for the analysis. Sociological qualitative method is employed and in-depth interview is used as basic means for data collection. Eleven divorced women have been selected as key informants.

The decision process of women comprises three stages. The first stage is occurrence of conflict problems due to women consider their husbands involvement with “other women”, as indicator of “unfaithfulness” and “dishonesty” to themselves. They proposed to their husbands that they must terminate the relationship with other women in order to maintain their marriage life, but their husbands still maintain the their “philandering” relationship. This situation is leading to the next stage, separation. In this stage, the women perceive their husbands “philandering” relationship with other women as more serious and more open and regard their husbands’ behaviors as “disparaging” and “contempt” that cannot be tolerant anymore and this lead to the final stage, divorce. In this stage, women are necessary to explain to social and significant others to justify their decision to divorce.

After divorce, women must spend time to manage their life during transition from the former way of life to new one. This comprises two stages. The first stage is a transitional period which women tend to look at themselves in negative way with feeling of failure to keep their families alive. Interaction with other people makes the women gradually change their self concept to be more positive. It leads to positive actions and becoming successful “working women” and “single mom” in the case of having children. In this initial stage, the women attempt to “find themselves” and build up their new identity and eventually are able to live a normal life.