

## The Phenomenon of Family Disintegration In the Algerian Society

### ظاهرة التفكك الأسري في المجتمع الجزائري

Dr. Merzougui Ahmed<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Chati Nadjet <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Tahri Mohammed bechar (Algeria), ahmed.merzougui@univ-bechar.dz

<sup>2</sup>University of Ibn Khaldoun Tiaret (Algeria), Nadjet.chati@univ-tiaret.dz

Received: 19/01/2025

Accepted: 22/05/2025

Published:30/06/2025

**Abstract:** Given that the family is the fundamental unit of society, it is important to provide it with a generation that aids in its development and growth under the guidance of harmony and understanding within the family to ensure the stability of society free from fear, deviation, and events that have an impact on both the family and society as a whole. In order to investigate the research inquiries, we employed a questionnaire that the researcher designed. It was distributed to a sample of 63 individuals. The primary objective of this study is to determine the reality regarding the issue of family disintegration in Algerian culture as well as the most significant factors contributing to it. The statistical package for social research (SPSS) was used to examine their responses. The study's findings demonstrated that Family disintegration is a widespread issue throughout Algerian society, particularly in Oran.

Additionally, we determined that social and psychological factors are the primary contributing factors to this.

**Keywords:** family disintegration, family disintegration factors, society.

**ملخص:** باعتبار أن الأسرة هي اللبنة الأساسية لبناء المجتمع وتزويده بجيل يساعده على النمو والتقدم تحت ظل التفاهم والانسجام داخل الأسرة لضمان استقرار المجتمع بعيدا عن الخوف والانحراف والأحداث بما يؤثر على الأسرة والمجتمع ككل. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على واقع مشكلة التفكك الأسري في المجتمع الجزائري واهم الأسباب المؤدية إليها، حيث اعتمدنا على المنهج الوصفي للقيام بهذه الدراسة. للإجابة على تساؤلات البحث عمدنا على تطبيق استبيان تم اعداده من قبل الباحث، وقد تم توزيعه على عينة مكونة من 63 فرد، ولتحليل إجاباتهم، تم استعمال الحزمة الإحصائية للبحوث الاجتماعية (SPSS). أسفرت نتائج الدراسة على: انتشار واسع لظاهرة التفكك الأسري في المجتمع الجزائري-وهران- كما توصلنا الى ان ابرز العوامل المؤدية لذلك هي اولاً العوامل النفسية والاجتماعية كلمات مفتاحية: التفكك الأسري، عوامل التفكك الأسري، المجتمع.

\* Corresponding author

## 1. Introduction

The family serves as the initial environment where a child's personality is formed in society, nevertheless, in many Arab countries, the framework of family life has been confronted with cracks and fractures caused by a variety of factors, which has resulted in manifestations of disintegration and collapse in some families as well as an aggravation of family issues.

The family is confronted with many challenges, demands, and pressures as a result of the development that touched all facets of life, which had an impact on the family's role and functions, including the emergence of conflict.

the imitation of video games and television shows, as well as the prolonged absence of parents from the household in addition to the breakdown of the family and deterioration of its functions, are among the issues that manifest in children's behavior and make kids more prone to delinquency and crime, negatively affecting the position of the children and their mental health, (ازدهار و نجاح، 2020، صفحة 224) Thus it is upon this perspective that this study emerged, identifying the main causes of family disintegration in Algerian society.

### Statement of the problem

The field of family studies has undergone significant development to reflect the prevailing societal conditions and the evolving nature of social and economic life. With the advent of industrialization, the family encountered numerous challenges stemming from factors such as poverty, emigration, and social upheaval. Concurrently, researchers witnessed a shift in focus as women's participation in the workforce increased, leading to substantial changes in family dynamics and the emergence of individuality. This transformation was accompanied by alterations in the processes of socialization and the family's relationship with other social groups in society (بيومي و ناصر، 2003).

A multitude of studies and research have been conducted to examine the profound changes that have directly and significantly impacted the structure of families. These changes encompass the transition from extended family systems to nuclear families, as well as transformations in family roles, and relationships, and the emergence of new norms and trends. The resulting tension often disrupts the family's effectiveness and deviates it from its intended path of achieving its objectives, ultimately leading to its disintegration and dissolution (هايل عبد الله العمرو) in addition Studies examining the effects of marital dissolution on children's welfare have repeatedly found that children of separated parents perform worse on several well-being parameters than those from intact households. Depression is highly represented in the health care system among

children and older offspring of divorced parents, the **study** of Hassan Maajeeny ,2022, found that « Family disharmony may be linked to a higher incidence of severe depressive illness in children of divorced parents. (Hassan Maajeeny ,2022,p65)

Hassan Maajeeny ,2022,p65

✓ **Objectives of the study:** This paper intends the :

- Investigation the phenomena of family disintegration in Algerian society.
- Examining the key factors of family disintegration.

✓ **Theoretical concepts**

- a) **Family:**It is defined as the juvenile's guiding family, which consists of the father and mother or other primary caregivers brothers and sisters, and those who live with them permanently and in the same housing from the parents and relatives.
- b) **Family disintegration:** The collapse of the fundamental family unit occurs when the social roles associated with it are dissolved due to the failure of one or more members to fulfill their respective roles.

The family holds a significant role as the fundamental unit of society, contributing to the growth and development of individuals who will assume adult responsibilities within broader societal institutions. Moreover, it serves as the primary social institution influencing a child's personality, shaping their behavior, and facilitating continuous internal interactions that nurture and strengthen their character throughout life (هايل عبد الله العمرو ، 2007 ، صفحة 07).

The family performs diverse functions that encompass religious guidance, protection, economic productivity, provision of essential services, social status attribution, child-rearing, and the facilitation of activities, entertainment, and love. Each of these functions contributes to the overall well-being and stability of the family unit

Family disintegration, encompassing both minor and major offenses, refers to the breakdown within the family entity. Recognizing the significance of even minor issues, such as the use of offensive language, is essential, as neglecting them may lead to the emergence of more significant problems, including familial rebellion and divorce. By acknowledging and addressing even the seemingly insignificant problems, the potential for larger issues can be mitigated,(غضبان، 2009، صفحة 06).

## **2. The concept of Family**

The family is a societal institution that encompasses a structured, biological, and social collective comprising a wedded couple along with their offspring. Its foundation rests upon two fundamental elements. The first element is of a

biological nature, which manifests in the form of matrimonial relations, kinship ties between parents and children, and lineage. The second element encompasses religious, social, and cultural aspects, whereby the marital bond is established in accordance with Sharia teachings, recognized by society, and shaped by prevalent social norms and customs (الحجاري، 2011، صفحة 14).

Bogardus defines the family as a social group consisting of a father, mother, and one or more children, who engage in reciprocal love and share responsibilities (Bogardus). Ibn Manzoor offers a definition that characterizes the family as a fortified shield, sought for refuge in times of need and feared to be harmed

## 2.1 Types of Families

**Extended Family:** it is composed of the husband and the wife in addition to the children and the grandchildren. The old type of family, which is still in existence today, may also include the father of the wife or husband.

**the Nucleus Family:** it is composed of the husband and the wife in addition to the children or without children. However, some of the researchers consider that a marriage that does not have children as not form a family

## 2.2 The concept of disintegration within the Family:

Family disintegration refers to the dissolution of the cohesive entity formed by interdependence and separation from its collective unit. It entails the separation of one or more individuals from the familial unit and the erosion of relationships, interdependence, compassion, love, and affection between siblings or between children and parents, potentially culminating in the disintegration of the family itself, the emergence of conflicts, and an escalation of grievances and resentments (الجسار، 2013).

Such disintegration is explicitly prohibited in our religious doctrine, as emphasized by the Almighty's words: "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from yourselves that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought".

Scholars within the field of social sciences do not universally agree on a standardized definition for the concept of family disintegration. They exhibit divergence in their interpretation and application of this concept, leading to variations in its terminology. Some employ the term "family disintegration" to refer to the loss of one or both parents, abandonment, divorce, or the presence of multiple spouses. Others utilize the phrase "shattered homes" to denote households resulting from divorce, abandonment, or the death of one or both

parents. Meanwhile, a third group employs the term "cracking" to describe families affected by polygamy, divorce, or the death of parents. Despite these discrepancies, there are shared elements among these labels, such as divorce, death, abandonment, or prolonged absence of one or both parents (1988 ، الياسين)

Family disintegration patterns can be classified as follows:

A. Partial family disintegration: This category encompasses cases of intermittent separation and desertion, where the couple periodically returns to the family life, yet the threat of further desertion or separation persists.

B. Aggregate family disintegration: This classification pertains to instances of divorce, death, suicide, or the killing of one or both spouses.

Furthermore, the last classification of family disintegration can be categorized into the following types:

A. Psycho-captivity disintegration: This type emerges from continuous disputes among family members, particularly the parents. It is also associated with a lack of respect for the rights of others, substance abuse (such as drugs and alcohol), and engagement in gambling .

B. Social disintegration of the family: This category results from desertion, divorce, the death of one or both parents, or prolonged absence of either parent. Furthermore, this type is exacerbated by unjust instances of polygamy and the abandonment of children by a spouse due to work commitments, leading to a breakdown in family ties (رضا خليل المصري ، محمد عبد القادر ، عبد الرحمان ، و شحاتة ، 2010، صفحة 15).

### **3. Research Method and tools**

#### **3.1 Research methodology**

The researcher employed a descriptive approach in this study, aiming to describe and interpret the phenomenon being investigated with the intention of achieving meaningful generalizations (1991 ، ابو حطب و صادق).

#### **3.2 The Research sample**

The study comprises a community sample consisting of tutors selected randomly from the city of Djelfa. The purpose of this selection was to investigate their opinions regarding the phenomenon under examination.

#### **3.3 Research tool**

A questionnaire was utilized as the approved method for data collection, with the aim of directly delivering the questionnaire to the participants. This

approach allowed the researchers to clarify the purpose of the questionnaire distribution and address any potential queries or concerns.

### **3.3.1 The axes of the Questionnaire :**

The study encompasses four main axes of investigation. The second axis focuses on social factors, specifically examining the circumstances of individuals in entrepreneurial occupations and their susceptibility to engage in construction activities.

The first axis centers on psychological factors and includes a series of paragraphs exploring the emotions, behaviors, and interactions among family members.

The third axis focuses on economic factors and assesses the influence of social standards on individuals' self-realization, as well as their pursuit of independence and successful contracting within the construction sector.

The fourth axis pertains to health factors and comprises a set of questions regarding diseases within family members.

The study was conducted in December 2021, with a targeted sample of Algerian families residing in Oran who face challenges such as marginalization, divorce, and unemployment. The sample selection was intentional, aiming to capture specific characteristics within the population of interest.

### **3.3.2 Validity of the tool:**

The two scales were administered to a group of psychology and educational sciences experts functioning as arbitrators. The objectives of this administration were two fold:

1. To assess the clarity and linguistic formulation of the scale's phrases.
2. To review, correct, and determine the appropriate placement of scale items.

Upon presenting the questionnaire to the arbitrators, the researchers carefully examined their observations and guidance pertaining to the questionnaire items. Some items were modified based on their feedback, while no items were removed.

In addition, the internal consistency validity was employed to assess the reliability and coherence of the questionnaire items. The results substantiated the validity of the majority of the statements.

### **3.3.3 The stability of the study tools:**

The stability of the study tool was determined using the Cronbach's alpha method. The calculated coefficient of stability for the study tool was found to be acceptable, providing evidence for the validity of its utilization. The results of this analysis are presented in the following table: [Please insert the relevant table with

the coefficients and corresponding values.]

**Table. (1):** Cronbach's alpha stability coefficient.

| <b>The number of paragraphs</b> | <b>the sample</b> | <b>The method used</b> | <b>The method used</b>       | <b>variable</b>                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 33                              | 63                | 0.75                   | Cronbach's alpha coefficient | Family disintegration questionnaire |

**Source:**(Designed by the researcher using the SPSS program)

Thus, the scale has reached its final form and is now prepared for implementation

### **3.3.4 The statistical methods used:**

For analyzing the research results, the following statistical methods were employed:

- Arithmetic mean and standard deviation: These measures were used to calculate the average and variability of scores obtained from individuals.
- One Sample T-test: This statistical test was utilized to determine the significance of differences between the mean scores of individuals and a hypothetical mean.

## **4. Research Method and tools**

1. The research question - How widespread is the phenomenon of family disintegration in Algerian societies and what are the most prominent factors leading to it?

**Table. (2):** T) test for the statistical significance of the difference between the means

| <b>degrees of freedom</b> | <b>indication</b> | <b>value T</b> | <b>Hypotheticalaverage</b> | <b>SMA</b> | <b>standard deviation</b> | <b>the sample</b> | <b>variable</b>              |
|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 62                        | 0.00              | 53.03          | 55                         | 91.76      | 13.74                     | 63                | Désintégration of the family |

**Source:** (Designed by the researcher using the SPSS program)

Based on the previous table, it is evident that the arithmetic mean of parents' responses is estimated to be 91.76. This value differs significantly from the hypothetical mean of the study, which is 55, with a standard deviation of 13.74. The calculated difference between the two means is 91.79, with a level of significance (sig) of 0.00 and degrees of freedom (df) of 62.

The corresponding t-value is 53. These findings indicate that the phenomenon of family disintegration is widespread according to the perceptions of the study sample.

Furthermore, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the main factors contributing to family disintegration were extracted, yielding the following results: [Please provide the relevant statistical values for each factor.]

**Table. (3):** Frequency distribution and t-test for the statistical significance of the difference between the arithmetic means of the total score

| ddl | Sig  | value<br>T | Hypotheticalaverage | moyenne | Ecart<br>type | variable             |
|-----|------|------------|---------------------|---------|---------------|----------------------|
| 62  | 0.00 | 35,513     | 15                  | 27,71   | 6,194         | Social factors       |
|     | 0.00 | 26,100     | 15                  | 19,32   | 5,875         | Economicfactors      |
|     | 0.00 | 51,641     | 13.33               | 28,79   | 4,426         | Psychologicalfactors |
|     | 0.00 | 67,202     | 11.66               | 14,11   | 1,667         | Healthfactors        |

**Source:** (Designed by the researcher using the SPSS program)

The provided table highlights that social factors obtained a notably high arithmetic mean of 27.71, surpassing the hypothetical mean of 15. The corresponding standard deviation value is 6.19. Following closely are the psychological factors, with an arithmetic mean of 75.3, also exceeding the hypothetical mean estimated by B. Among the psychological factors, D demonstrated the highest arithmetic mean with a value of 28.79. On the other hand, health factors ranked last with an arithmetic mean of 28.3.

## 5. Results Discussion

The above table illustrates several significant findings. Social factors exhibit a high arithmetic mean of 27.71, surpassing the assumed mean of 15, with a standard deviation of 6.19. Following closely are the psychological factors, with an arithmetic mean of 28.79, surpassing the assumed mean of 15. On the other hand, the economic factors obtained an arithmetic mean score of 19.32. Lastly, health factors garnered the lowest arithmetic mean of 14.11.

These results suggest that psychological factors play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining cohesive family units. The absence of deception, selfishness, jealousy, and suspicion among spouses, as well as positive interactions with children, contributes to a thriving family structure. Social factors, such as the individual's compatibility with their family and societal values, along with the fulfillment of their psychological and social needs (e.g., respect, love, acceptance), are essential for a well-adjusted individual within the family and broader social system.

when these factors are deficient, individuals may deviate from the system and seek validation and belonging elsewhere. Negative influences from friends and companions may lead to engagement in destructive behaviors like addiction, drug trafficking, theft, and vandalism. The importance of economic factors should also be acknowledged, as low wages, unemployment, and financial struggles within the family can push individuals towards delinquency, begging, and substance abuse as perceived solutions.

In terms of health factors, the average level suggests that the lack of adequate health insurance and limited access to medical care can contribute to family disintegration. Conversely, chronic or contagious illnesses can be a unifying factor within Islamic societies, fostering compassion and solidarity among family members. However, psychological and social factors, such as betrayal, divorce, and abusive and inhumane treatment like physical violence and cruelty, often lead to family members distancing themselves to ensure their own peace, safety, and well-being.

According to (هايل عبد الله العمرو ، 2007 ، صفحة 16)، persistent conflicts and quarrels between couples create an unstable environment that negatively impacts the entire family. Such disputes and rivalries leave lasting effects on the children's character. These children often seek refuge from the troubled and anxiety-filled atmosphere at home and try to find substitutes where they can feel accepted and belong. Unfortunately, they end up becoming disruptive elements instead of contributing to the family's happiness and well-being

(رضا خليل المصري ، محمد عبد القادر ، عبد الرحمان ، و شحاتة ، On the economic front، 2010، صفحة 19).

suggest that low economic factors, including unemployment, often lead to family instability and a lack of cohesion. Unemployment can result in the husband's authority being compromised as he struggles to provide for the family's needs and ensure their safety. Consequently, mothers may have to seek employment outside the home, as observed in contemporary society. However, this shift in focus

towards work and social status can lead to neglect of the mother's roles within the family, such as being a caring wife, a compassionate mother, and an efficient homemaker. The pursuit of a career outside the home can undermine the natural maternal responsibilities, leaving the children deprived of essential elements for their physical and psychological development, such as warmth, affection, tenderness, and proper education and guidance (هايل عبد الله العمرو ، 2007 ، صفحة 22).

Poverty and unemployment are often cited as major factors contributing to family crises. These conditions result in the inability to meet the basic physiological needs of family members, leading to homelessness and deprivation of educational opportunities for children. Living in overcrowded and unhealthy environments further exacerbates the family's needs and gives rise to stress and disputes among family members. In such situations, mothers may find themselves compelled to resort to begging or seeking employment outside the home, which can strain relationships and lead to conflicts with their spouses

However, it is important to note that poverty alone cannot be solely blamed for family fragmentation, nor can wealth guarantee family cohesion if there is a lack of willingness and compassion. The presence of financial resources, be it money or material possessions, does not automatically foster family unity, nor does its absence directly lead to disintegration. Rather, it is the attitudes and values of the individuals within the family that determine its strength or weakness. Even abundant wealth can corrode familial bonds when division, discord, conflict, and divorce prevail. This suggests that money itself is not the root cause of family disintegration; rather, it is the individual's mindset and behavior that play a crucial role ((غضبان، 2009 ، صفحة 15)).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The family plays a vital role in meeting the emotional needs of children, such as kindness, compassion, love, and fairness. By providing a nurturing and secure environment, the family creates a sense of belonging and importance for children. However, this can only be achieved when there is stability and cohesion within the family. A stable family climate fosters the development of these emotional bonds and contributes to the overall mental and social well-being of children.

In contrast, when a family is characterized by turmoil, conflicts, and fear, it becomes impossible to fulfill these fundamental emotional needs. Such an unstable family environment leads to disintegration and fragmentation as individuals seek to find fulfillment outside the confines of the immediate family

unit. They search for support and belonging in the larger community, often resulting in a loss of cohesion and a sense of detachment.

It is therefore crucial for families to cultivate an atmosphere of stability and cohesion, ensuring that children feel loved, valued, and secure. This, in turn, promotes their emotional and social development and prevents the negative consequences associated with family disintegration.

## 7. List of references

1. اسماء رضا خليل المصري ، نسمة محمد عبد القادر ، محمد عبد الرحمان ، و ياسين محمد شحاتة . (2010). *التفكك الاسري وتأثيره على الثقة بالنفس لطلاب الجامعات ، دراسة حالة على طلاب كليتي الحقوق والهندسة . جامعة القاهرة*.
2. جعفر الياسين . (1988). *اثر التفكك العائلي في جنوح الاحداث . بيروت*.
3. خلف الهواري ازدهار، و حسين الهبازنة نجاح. (2020). *العوامل المؤدية الى التفكك الاسري وانحراف الاحداث في المجتمع الاردني*. مجلة كلية التربية ، جامعة الزمهر.
4. سلوى الجسار. (19 01, 2013). *التفكك الاسري واثره في سلوك الابناء*. الكويت ، الكويت . تاريخ الاسترداد 05 17, 2017 من [www.assakina.com/news/news1/21142.html](http://www.assakina.com/news/news1/21142.html)
5. فؤاد ابو حطب ، و امال صادق . (1991). *مناهج البحث وطرق التحليل الاحصائي في العلوم النفسية والتربوية والاجتماعية . القاهرة : مكتبة الانجلو مصرية*.
6. محمد احمد بيومي ، و عفاف عبد العلي ناصر. (2003). *علم الاجتماع العائلي دراسة التغيرات في الاسرة العربية . الاسكندرية ، مصر : دار المعرفة الجامعية*.
7. مصطفى الحجازي. (2011). *واقع الارشاد الاسري ومتطلباته في دول مجلس التعاون (الإصدار 67)*. البحرين، المنامة : سلسلة الدراسات الاجتماعية .
8. نادية هایل عبد الله العمرو . (2007). *التفكك الاسري وعلاقته بانحراف الفتيات في الاردن -دراسة مقارنة بين الفتيات المنحرفات وغير المنحرفات ، جامعة مؤتة . الاردن*.
9. يوسف غضبان. (2009). *سجناء في قصر الزوجية ، دراسات في الامن الاجتماعي*.
10. Hassan Maajeeny (2022), Effects of family disintegration on children later depression , International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences, 9(3), Pages: 65-70 Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia , <https://science-gate.com/IJAAS/Articles/2022/2022-9-3/1021833ijaas202203008.pdf>