

## **Comparison of General Health, Social Adjustment, Happiness, Life Expectancy and Emotional Intelligence among Divorced Women with or without Sexual Relation**

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**Abstract:** The aim of this research was to determine the difference of general health, social adjustment, happiness, life expectancy and emotional intelligence among the divorced women with and without a sexual relation. The research community consisted of the divorced women who are members of General Organization of Woman Affairs in Tehran Municipality (Region 2). Using Cochran table, 340 divorced women selected through available sampling. The tools in this research include General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), Bile's Adjustment Questionnaire, Oxford's Happiness Questionnaire, Snyder's Life Expectancy Questionnaire and Bar-on Emotional Intelligence Inventory. The results of t-test showed that there is not a significant difference between mental (general) health, social adjustment, happiness, life expectancy and emotional intelligence of the divorced women with or without a sexual relation and they possessed a high mean in all variables.

**Key words:** General health, social adjustment, happiness, life expectancy, emotional intelligence

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Divorce has nowadays become a prevalent phenomenon especially in the metropolises. For whatever reason it happens, this social phenomenon is inevitable. Therefore, the demeanor and view to this subject is very important. Sexual needs of the divorced women is one of the most important cases and is less paid attention because of the social limitations. The important point is that the women have generally specific sexuality which is in relation through a complex process with the endocrine system, blood vessels and psycho-neuro system and is consequently influence by means of the family-related and social factors, religious beliefs, inter-personal communications, traditions and values. Woman sexuality includes various dimensions in the cases of biology, culture, medicine, law, ethic, community, psychology and psychiatry. The lack of a satisfied sexual relation causes anarchy and many interactional, health and psychic problems (Mohammadi-Asl, 2009).

The communities pay a special attention to the women because of their specific status particularly to the divorced women. Mental health, social adjustment, emotional intelligence, happiness and life hope are among the various factors that the government or the researchers notice for a successful life of the women. Sexualities are one of the factors that have a direct influence on the

above mentioned variables for a better life and consist an important dimension of their instinct and human nature which considerably influence their character (Mohammadi-Asl, 2009).

**Divorced women:** The phenomenon of divorce dates back to the emergence of marriage. As the human beings marry because of their natural demand in order to reach serenity and stability along with a warm family, they may avoid continuing the life and accepting divorce. Voltaire states, divorce and marriage have emerged in one time. It is obvious that the divorce has been in many divine and non-divine religions (Farjad, 1993).

The social, economic and cultural conditions of the divorced women have been the focus of attention for many sociologists and psychologists. In fact, the existence and development of the divorced women in the today communities are inevitable. In all countries, such as developed or developing ones, this look at matter has been increased because it influenced many important cultural, social and economic variables. Based on the research, the connubial cultures and the point of view to the mutual life changed and consequently the divorce phenomenon lost its ugliness in the society and is daily increasing. Therefore, it is expected that the people have the label of divorced. Waldron and coauthors carried out a research in the influence of marital status on woman

health by studying the difference between bachelor women, divorced women and separated women. They concluded that there is a little difference in the woman health for the bachelor women, divorced women and separated women. According to the literature, this little difference in the mental health includes the samples between the age of 23 and 3 which acts a moderating variable while for the older women the serious problems exists a little more than bachelor women. Forgas and Innes (1989) has stated that the appropriate combination of job and children caring for the divorced women do not damage the mental health of the divorced women. By analyzing the depression state between the divorced women and the married women, Khan Mohammadi and Yaghubi concluded that there is a significant difference for two groups in the case of depression. The divorced women attained high score in the depression questionnaire and they afflicted a 70% depression. In the title of analyzing the effect of self-highlighting training on the reduction of the divorced women's problems in 2006 Tehran, Shakibaei concluded that the educating methods have been influential in improving the difference between the divorced women and reducing their general health. By analyzing the general (mental) health of the divorced women who are membered in Emam-Khomeini concluded that there is not a significant difference between the general health of the divorced women and the widows and they were at the same level of mental health.

**General (mental) health:** The human beings have been created by soul and body. They should protect them and satisfy the needs of both. The issue of health for the human beings is an important one that the public opinion usually notices mostly to the body aspect as the health candidate, whereas the soul health is also important. In principle, the health for body and soul is necessary and complementary of each other. The mental health depends on the thinking way, emotion and behavior. Generally, the healthy people have positive attitude about life. They are ready to face the life challenges. They feel good about themselves and others. They are responsible in the environment and their relations. When the human beings possess the mental health, they expect the best things in life and ready to face any accident (Chahinze, 1991).

The mental health for the divorced women entails a specific significance. According to Goldstein, self-actualization has been defined as the balance between the members and the environment. Another researcher may interpret the mental health as a condition of psychological maturity which means a maximum

efficient and satisfaction of personal and social interactions which include emotions and positive feedback to himself and others (Chahinze, 1991).

Ann has stated that the relationship between the personal traits, acute stress and chronic depression on mental health of middle-aged American-African women at Western Reserve University. She concluded that the personal traits depend on the living place of people as a moderating variable for the mental health of these women and the extensive acute stress and long-term chronic depression have had a direct influence on their general health and these factors do not related to the living place factor. Khorrami and coauthors have surveyed the mental health of a 180 guardian women, the widows and the divorced women under the cover of Tehran Welfare Organization. The findings showed that the average score of mental health and nine factors in the subjects is significantly higher than the same tests in the normative Iranian society and it presages that these women are facing the mental damage.

**Social adjustment:** Adjustment has been the focus of attention from the creation of human being but scientifically, the adjustment and its most important dimension, i.e., social adjustment does not have a long background. The emergence of essential studies in relation with the social adjustment was started by Ruesch who presented a model for social adjustment of people in the society. Lazarus and Fendley Continued have continued their work and proposed a new model for the adjustment. In the following years, the relationship of the adjustment with the other variables was investigated. Bruce (1991) and Ballard have analyzed the methods of increasing the adjustment by means of behavioral and psychological methods in the short-term and groups.

The social adjustment of the divorced women and the effects of sexual relations of them have been the major reasons for conducting this research. Based on the research, a socially adjustable person has been learned the responses that enabled him/her to interact with the environment and behaves in such an acceptable way of his/her society members in order to get the needs satisfied. A person in a specific social condition can in a large deal adapt and adjust himself with the condition (Boivin and Begin, 1989).

Bafghi has analyzed the social adjustment among the widows. Mirzamani Bafghi showed that the woman who encountered an accident experienced more problems in relation with the social adjustment than the women who had not a negative and salient event in the life.

Having analyzed the efficiency of sacrifice training on the social adjustment, Afshari *et al.* (2012) showed that sacrifice training toward their ex-husband causes increase in self-value, in moving away from the pressure of previous relation, in the social trust, in social self-value and reduction in anger and in the sorrow and grief signs of among the divorced women.

**Happiness:** Argyle *et al.* (1989) in a research in the definition of happiness, found out that when the people are asked what the happiness is they present two responses: first, they may state the positive emotional state (such as enjoyment) and second, they may consider happiness generally as satisfied with the life or with the many aspects. Therefore, it sounds that the happiness consists of two major elements (of emotional and psychological). Its emotional dimension causes that the public opinion distinguish the happy person as the cheerful and lively person and s/he can easily communicate with other people. From the psychological standpoint, such a person views positively his/her environment and looks optimistically his/her surrounding events and occurrences.

Happiness is another variable that is close relationship with appropriate woman sexualities and this variable consists of two major elements (of emotional and psychological). Its emotional dimension causes that the public opinion distinguish the happy person as the cheerful and lively person and s/he can easily communicate with other people. From the psychological standpoint, such a person views positively his/her environment and looks optimistically his/her surrounding events and occurrences.

Bardot and Richard in the analysis of happiness and satisfaction with life among women reached this conclusion that the difference between happiness and appropriate satisfaction with life is unchangeable and these two components are mutually interdependent. That is, the happiness for satisfaction with life pushes back the unimportant and saddening issues and in fact the happiness affects the satisfaction with life and extends the human life expectancy.

Sheikh-al-Eslami have mentioned that the self-esteem is a positive predictors of positive empathy. In other words, the self-steemed women experience much more happiness.

**Life hope (life expectancy):** Life hope is one of the most important indexes and criteria for health-related, economic and social assessment. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers this index along with the indexes of annual income, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the

rate of women's literacy as the factors in human resources development. It is nowadays the most important criteria for evaluating the societies.

The researchers have defined life hope among the divorced women as the average years for the living in a country (Snyder *et al.*, 1991). Many researchers have stated that defeating the problems by women has a positive effect on life hope (Schonberg *et al.*, 2012).

In a research in the developing countries, the researchers found that the economic status does not have a relationship with the life hope in the developing countries whereas the health condition and gender classification in the society had most relationship with the life hope (Goode, 1973).

Ebadi and coauthors have stated that the positivism with an emphasis on the Quranic verses was effective on increasing the life hope among the divorced women in Ahvaz, Iran. According to the research, the results had enough stability.

**Emotional intelligence:** The emotional intelligence is another important variable in relation with the divorces women and its effect on the sexualities. The emotional intelligence is a series of non-cognitive skills, talents and capabilities that increases the success of people when they face pressures and environmental requirements (Bar-On, 1997). In a research, in the title of the barriers to awareness and liberty in sexual instinct among university divorced women by focusing on the sexual inability and the emotional intelligence, concluded that fear of sexual inability presents the feeling of being victim for these women and this issue influences negatively the emotional intelligence of these women. He states that the women should take into account the usage and discretion of modern medical treatments.

Since, there are about 200,000-250,000 divorced women or the guardian women in Iran and in Tehran, the necessity of considering their needs have been increased. Therefore, these people after separation of their husband face a kind of sexual push-back. Consequently, incorrect guide of this relation and satisfying it may put in danger their mental and physical safety and threat the society indirectly. This is an important issue that this research is to find a strategy for it.

Having considered the experimental evidence and according to the theoretical principals stated, paying attention to the important role of sexualities of the divorced women in the mental health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and the emotional intelligence seems important and necessary. It seems that paying attention to the striking population of divorced women in Tehran can improve the life quality of them and maintain the

health of society and people. The main aim of this research is to compare the mental health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and the emotional intelligence among the divorced women with or without sexual relations. Using the results in the planning and law-making can reduce the vulnerability and increase the welfare of the divorced women.

In fact, considering the sexualities of the divorced women and utilizing this case in determining the difference of the mental health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and the emotional intelligence of the women are the objectives accomplishing in this research. Therefore, the following hypotheses will be explained:

- The general health is different for the divorced women with or without sexual relation
- The social adjustment is different for the divorced women with or without sexual relation
- The happiness is different for the divorced women with or without sexual relation
- The life hope is different for the divorced women with or without sexual relation
- The emotional intelligence is different for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Research design:** This research based on the nature and objective followed are a kind of applied (survery) research and is a descriptive research because it, during the data collection, aimed to describe the mental health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and the emotional intelligence among the divorced women in the case of sexual relation in improving the above-mentioned variables. The research community of this research are all the divorced women in Tehran General Organization of Woman Affairs (Region 2). The community has been estimated 19,000 woman, statistical center of Iran reported.

By assuming the unlimitedness of research community and using Cochran formula at 5% standard error, 384 people selected through random sampling. It is increased to 390 people in distributing the questionnaire to enhance the confidence degree.

### **Tools**

**General Health Questionnaire (GHQ):** This questionnaire has been created by Bar-On (1979) for separating the mentally disordered people from the people referred to the public medical centers. This questionnaire includes 28 items and each 4 components include

physical symptoms, anxiety signs and disorder in social action as well as depression symptoms each including 7 articles.

In relation with the reliability, stated that this questionnaire is the most well-known screening test that have had significant influence on the development of psychiatry. Goldberg (1978) have reported the validity of the general health questionnaire as 78% on 244 subjects. In relation with the reliability, believes that the general health questionnaire possesses an enough potential for evaluating the intensity of psychological disorders. In a research in the title of norms of general health test for the students of teacher training, has reported the reliability and correlational coefficient as 82% for all general health test.

**Bill's adjustment questionnaire:** This questionnaire has been adapted from Bell's questionnaire in 1961 to measure the degree of adjustment to the environment. The questionnaire includes 15 items and 3 components of interaction in the family environment, adjustment to the environment and adjustment to the laws and general norms. Each component includes 5 sub-items. In relation with the validity have reported a high content validity and face validity. In relation with the reliability, has reported 88% reliability for the social adjustment of this questionnaire. After translation and edition, Bahrami and Honarmand executed this questionnaire on 200 subjects by random and achieved 89% reliability by means of Cronbach alpha.

**Oxford's happiness questionnaire:** This questionnaire was first proposed by Argyle *et al.* (1989). The questionnaire includes 29 items in the case of measuring two psychological and emotional components. have investigated the validity and reliability of Oxford's happiness questionnaire among 101 B.A. Allameh Tabatabaee University and Shahed University by age average of 22.5 (between 19 and 39). Analyzing the internal consistency of questionnaire showed that 29 items have high correlation. Cronbach alpha is 0.93 and half-split reliability is 0.92.

**Life hope questionnaire:** The questionnaire was first proposed by Oskamp (1991) to measure the average expected years for the life of human being. It consists of 12 items and 2 components of functional thinking and strategic thinking. Each component includes 6 sub-items. To measure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in the different countries such as Britain, America, Canada, Spain, China, Japan, Australia, Taiwan and other countries, there are many studies with the result of a

strong and valid instrument of this questionnaire in measuring the happiness. Adib, (2010) has evaluated the validity and reliability of Eshnaider's life hope questionnaire at University of Isfahan. The validity was 72% by using alpha test. Its validity and its application are confirmed in Iran.

**Emotional intelligence Questionnaire (EQ):** This questionnaire was first created by Bar-On (1997). This questionnaire consists of 90 items with 5 components, as following:

- Inter-personal skills (including sub-scales of Emotional Self-awareness (ES), Assertiveness (AS), Self-Actualization (SA) and independence (IN))
- Inter-personal relationship (including sub-scales of Empathy (EM), Social Responsibility (SR) and Interpersonal Relationship (IR))
- Adjustment (Reality Testing (RT), Flexibility (FL) and Problem-Solving (PS))
- Pressure (Stress Consistency (SC) and Impulse Control (IC))
- Creation (Optimism (OP), Happiness (HA))

By now, nine validity-related studies have been carried out on the emotional intelligence questionnaire which includes face, content, construct, convergent, divergent, criterion-based, diagnosis and prognosis validities, all confirmed the validity of this questionnaire (Bar-On, 1997).

Samoei and colleague have assessed the validity and reliability of the emotional intelligence questionnaire in Iran. The reliability is 93% by using Cronbach alpha for total test. This rate (alpha in the third step) is equal with the alpha in the second step.

**Research method:** To carry out the research, General Woman Organization of Tehran Municipality was accompanied and the qualified certificates were taken from Organization of Women Affairs (Tehran, Region 2). The questionnaires of general health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and emotional intelligence were distributed among 390 divorced women. The data gathered from these questionnaires which completed by the divorced women were analyzed through SPSS Software using the descriptive statistics and t-test.

**Findings:** According to the data collected from the demographic information, the participants include 390 divorced woman among which 246 people (63%) had sexual relation and 144 (37%) did not experienced it after

divorcing. According to the education background, 177 samples (45.35%) are under diploma; 82 samples are under AA.; 115 samples (29.49%) are BA.; 16 samples (4%) are MA. On the time of being divorced, 18 women (46.2) were under 2 years; 90 women (23.56%) between 2-4 years; 91 women (23.85%) between 4-6 years; 104 women (25.13%) between 8-10 years and 34 women (10%) were above 10 years. During the divorce, 22 women (56.6%) were in their 15-25 years old; 97 women (25%) were in their 25-35 years old; 97 women (25%) were in their 35-45 years old; 105 women (27.06%) were in their 45-55 years old and 69 women (17.78%) were in their 55-65 years old.

According to the tables of mean and standard deviation, it is seen that the mean of general health and happiness is equal in two groups but this mean for the divorced women with sexual relation is lower than the mean for the divorced women without sexual relation. The mean for social adjustment, happiness, life hope and emotional intelligence is equal in both groups but this mean is higher for the divorced women with sexual relation. The comparison of means for two groups is in Fig. 1. As it is seen, the lack of difference is obvious in the surveyed dimensions.

In the next step, correlational matrix and relationship between variables are shown in Table 1-3. In order to analyze the hypotheses, Bonferroni's T-test is used and the results are in the following Table 1-3.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of variables for women with sexual relation (N = 144)

Variables	Mean	SD
General health	2.72	0.41
Social adjustment	2.34	0.44
Happiness	2.81	0.43
Life hope	2.94	0.44
Emotional intelligence	2.81	0.73

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of variables for women without sexual relation (N = 241)

Variables	Mean	SD
General health	2.78	0.90
Social adjustment	2.29	0.44
Happiness	2.83	0.47
Life hope	2.9	0.41
Emotional intelligence	2.66	0.71

Table 3: Correlational matrix of variables

Emotional Variables	General health	Social adjustment	Happiness	Life hope	intelligence
General health	1	0.08	-0.02	-0.001	0.019
Social adjustment	0.8	1	-0.001	0.009	-0.021
Happiness	-0.02	-0.001	1	0.091	0.054
Life hope	-0.001	0.009	-0.091	1	-0.082
Emotional intelligence	0.019	0.021	0.054	-0.082	1

\*Significance at 0.01 level; \*\*significance at 0.05 level (N = 093)

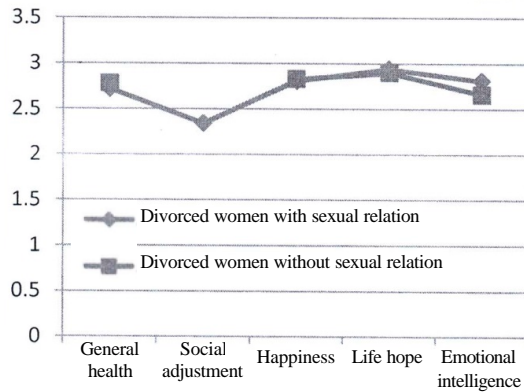


Fig. 1: Comparing means of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Table 4: Comparison of general health of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>With relation</b>					
General health	144	2.72	0.41	460	0.1
Without relation	246	2.66	0.39	1	

Table 5: Comparison of social adjustment of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>Social adjustment</b>					
With relation	144	2.34	0.44	0.591	0.2
Without relation	246	2.29	0.44		

Table 6: Comparison of happiness of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>Happiness</b>					
With relation	144	2.81	0.43	0.591	0.2
Without relation	246	2.83	0.47	0	

- $H_1$ : The general health is in a significant difference for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

The results of analysis of this hypothesis is presented in Table 1-4 by means of t-test. The results show there is not a significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation.

- $H_2$ : The social adjustment is in a significant difference for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

The results of analysis of this hypothesis is presented in Table 5 by means of t-test. The results show there is not a significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the dimension of social adjustment.

- $H_3$ : The happiness is in a significant difference for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

Table 7: Comparison of life hope of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>Life hope</b>					
With relation	144	2.94	0.44	963	0.4
Without relation	246	2.9	0.41	0	

Table 8: Comparison of emotional intelligence of divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>					
With relation	144	2.81	0.73	411	0.3
Without relation	246	2.78	0.71	0	

Table 9: Comparison of general health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and emotional intelligence among divorced women with or without sexual relation

Variables status	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p<
<b>General health</b>					
With relation	144	2.72	0.41	1.46	0.1
Without relation	246	2.66	0.39		
<b>Social adjustment</b>					
With relation	144	2.34	0.44	1.059	0.2
Without relation	246	2.29	0.44		
<b>Happiness</b>					
With relation	144	2.81	0.43	-0.591	0.2
Without relation	246	2.83	0.47		
<b>Life hope</b>					
With relation	144	2.94	0.44	0.963	0.4
Without relation	246	2.9	0.41		
<b>Emotional intelligence</b>					
With relation	144	2.81	0.73	0.411	0.3
Without relation	246	2.78	0.71		

The results of analysis of this hypothesis is presented in Table 6 by means of t-test. The results show there is not a significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the dimension of happiness.

- $H_4$ : The life hope is in a significant difference for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

The results of analysis of this hypothesis is presented in Table 7 by means of t-test. The results show there is not a significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the dimension of life hope.

- $H_5$ : The emotional intelligence is in a significant difference for the divorced women with or without sexual relation

The results of analysis of this hypothesis is presented in Table 8 by means of t-test. The results show there is not a significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the aspect of emotional intelligence. Generally, the results of independent t-test shows that there is not a significant difference between two groups of with or without sexual relation in all variables of the general health, social adjustment, happiness, life hope and emotional intelligence (Table 9).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in the literature of this research assumed that there is a significant difference between the general health of the divorced women with or without sexual relation. This hypothesis is rejected because there is not a significant difference between two groups based on the data analysis ( $p < 0.1$ ). In determining this issue, it can be said that, since the sexual relation can increase the general health but the cultural filters definitely influence this issue and cause reducing it. Therefore this research is in line with stating that the sexual relation for the divorced women is less in the focus of attention because of economic problems, family-related problems, children keeping and negative views in the society therefore, it negatively or positively affects the general health of the divorced women concluded that the average scores of life quality (physical and psychological health, social relations and living environment) for the divorced women is significantly lower than the ordinary women. As a result, decrease in all these factors may reduce the quality of general health. Since, the sexual relation could bring about the general health and satisfaction, the general health decreases in the total score because of the interference of other reducing factors. the hypothesis of significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the case of social adjustment is rejected because there is not a significant difference between two groups based on the data analysis ( $p < 0.2$ ). In determining this issue, it can be said that, a person with many sexual relations is faced with a kind of paradox because the paradoxes would be continued. Therefore, a person cannot, for this reason, adjust himself/herself to the laws and rules of the environment s/he is entering because Mazaheri considers the ethical adjustment as one of the dimensions of the adjustment. This result is in tune with who state that sexual satisfaction is like a fingerprint of a human being characterizing the personality, culture and beliefs of him/her. the hypothesis of significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the case of happiness is rejected because there is not a significant difference between two groups based on the data analysis ( $p < 0.2$ ). This result is in harmony with Sam Blantman, Hersi not considering the happiness only in satisfying the sexual need for the divorced women. In addition, Najme *et al.* (2011) have concluded that the happiness for the divorced women mostly depends on the personality and the social commitment rather than instinct-related needs such as sexual needs, food and clothes.

The hypothesis of significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the

case of life hope is rejected, because there is not a significant difference between two groups based on the data analysis ( $p < 0.4$ ). The component of life hope is under the influence of factors such as general health, social class and happiness as well as political participation (Nobles *et al.* 2010). As long as, the sexual relation can increase those factors, the life hope automatically increases. the hypothesis of significant difference between the divorced women with or without sexual relation in the case of emotional intelligence is rejected, because there is not a significant difference between two groups based on the data analysis ( $p < 0.3$ ). In determining this issue, the intermediate and effective factors should be analyzed. Zeribavel and Neoga concluded that fear of sexual inability presents the feeling of being victim for these women and this issue influences negatively the emotional intelligence of these women. He states that the women should take into account the usage and discretion of modern medical treatments. Adjustment, tolerance of adjustment stress and stress tolerance are the components of emotional intelligence which may reduce the total score of emotional intelligence. According to Birami, social adjustment affects the emotional intelligence. As it was found out in determining the second hypothesis, this aspect is low for the divorced women with sexual relation which naturally is effective on their emotional intelligence. This result is in harmony with the findings of Ahadi.

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