

Dimensions of the Malaysian Experience in Rehabilitating those Who are About to Get Married and the Implications

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Abstract

In this paper, we reviewed the dimensions of the Malaysian experience in preparing and rehabilitating those who are about to get married, which is called (the marriage license). The success achieved by that experience within the Malaysian society, in which the divorce rate - at one time - reached nearly 32%. After applying this experience in Malaysia, the divorce rate decreased to 7%. This confirms the importance of preparing and qualifying those who are about to get married of both sexes (male and female); achieves stability within the family, which is one of the building blocks of society. It included the Malaysian experience, which came after an extensive scientific study that includes many scientific programs that would achieve a happy family climate. These programs included a package of psychological rehabilitation programs, social preparation, religious preparation, in addition to economic preparation. This package of rehabilitation programs came in order to advance the Malaysian family and seek to eliminate and reduce the phenomenon of divorce within Malaysian society. In this study, we relied on the inductive approach as well as the analytical approach to reach a statement of the dimensions of this unique experience and the success achieved in the Malaysian society, and how to benefit from it globally, with the aim of achieving stability within the family in general. This is done through two chapters and a conclusion.

Keywords: Dimensions, Experience, Malaysian, Rehabilitation, Couples, Marriage

Introduction

Malaysia is considered one of the leading countries in the field of family development and advancement in various aspects of life. The marriage license, or the qualifying courses for those about to get married, is a unique model in eliminating family problems of all kinds and causes. On top of these problems was the problem of the rise in the phenomenon of divorce, especially among newly formed families. Hence, the need to prepare such training courses for marriage converts; which helps stability within the Muslim family, which is the first building block in building society, which leads to achieving tranquillity, reassurance, affection and mercy between spouses (Ghanayim, 12)

Those goals of marriage set by the Holy Quran. Allah SWT said in Surah al-Rum (Al-Rum, 21)
 “ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ” (Ibn Katheer, 3\145)

This research is concerned with shedding light on the dimensions of the Malaysian experience in training and rehabilitating those who are about to get married, the consequences of that, and the positive effects resulting from these training courses.

In this paper, we try to explain the importance of the Malaysian license for those who are about to get married. The view of scholars and critics of this unique experience, which many Arab countries seek to follow the example of Malaysia in implementing these training courses and working to make them compulsory for young people about to get married, which would eliminate many of the social problems that may arise between the spouses, and also demonstrate the importance of these training courses in working to reduce the divorce rate, witnessed a significant increase in many Arab countries.

Research Methodology

The research relies on the inductive approach by collecting and analysing data, as well as the descriptive approach by describing the phenomenon and trying to propose solutions to this phenomenon by explaining the importance of preparation and rehabilitation for those about to get married.

Research Problem

The research problem is represented in trying to search for serious means to eliminate the problems of the Muslim family, by presenting the dimensions of the unique Malaysian experience in training those about to get married and the benefits.

This is done by searching for the reasons that lead to the occurrence of divorce and trying to treat and eliminate them through scientific study that relies on contemporary scientific methods and capabilities.

Reasons for the Study

The reasons for writing on this topic are due to several reasons, including:

- Trying to contribute to the stability of the family and society.
- Searching for solutions to human problems
- Looking into rehabilitation and preparation programs for those about to get married
- Setting a general vision for the outputs of rehabilitation programs for those about to get married

Research Questions

The research problem results in several questions that we try to answer through this study, the most important of which are:

- 1- What is meant by preparing and rehabilitating those who are about to get married?
- 2- What are the programs and courses that contribute to achieving qualification for the future students?
- 3- What are the results of these training courses?
- 4- What is the view of the Arab countries on this unique experience?

Research Objectives

The research aims to:

- 1- Explain the importance of training and rehabilitating those who are about to get married.
- 2- Identify the way to rehabilitate those who are about to get married.
- 3- Demonstrate the impact of these training courses in eliminating the phenomenon of divorce.
- 4- Emphasize ways to benefit from this training course for those about to get married in Arab countries.

The first topic: the Malaysian experience of rehabilitating those about to get married

Dimensions of the Malaysian experience

The Malaysian experience in rehabilitating and preparing those about to get married is a unique experience, as the Malaysian legislator realized the importance of family stability in the process of economic development. There is no progress or development except with family stability. This prompted the Malaysian legislator to think about how to eliminate family problems, which often end in divorce and family fragmentation. Malaysia is a Muslim country, as 60% of the population is Muslim. Marriage here represents a sacred bond. Therefore, there is a need for legislation to establish such centres to rehabilitate and prepare those who about to get married.

First: The reasons for the emergence of the idea of preparing and rehabilitating those about to get married in Malaysia

Malaysia is considered one of the Muslim countries. Its constitution stipulates that Islam is the official religion of the state, and it consists of fourteen states: Perlis, Kedah, Perak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan, Terengganu, Melaka, Sarawak, Pahang, Pulau Pinang, Johor and Sabah. Each state enjoys self-rule, and all of these states are united by a general federation, and each state has its own constitution. The legislation may differ from one state to another, especially with regard to the personal status law (Zaghloul: The Number of Wives in Islam 162), but they all agree on the license of marriage; because it was issued by the Religious Affairs Council of the central government. And with the emergence of Malaysia as an economic power in Southeast Asia, and it became one of the countries of the Asian Tigers, some social problems began to appear. This made the Supreme Council for Religious Affairs issue this decision to hold training courses for those about to get married. In 1993, the divorce rate in Malaysia reached about 32%, which was considered by the Malaysian government - headed by Mahathir Muhammad - as a dangerous indicator of the plans for renaissance and development in the country. So, it was decided to implement the idea (marriage license) as a solution to create a scientific marital culture among young men and women who are about to get married. Marriage and divorce statistics in Malaysia have

been a source of concern for family and marriage advocates, premarital counsellors and educators, and as a result (By Joash Koh).

The reasons for the Malaysian marriage license legislation can be summarized as follows

First: The divorce rate increased significantly, reaching its highest rate in 1992, at 32%.

Second: The Malaysian economy has been affected by this problem, in terms of the high divorce rate. Because family instability negatively affects the growth of the economy.

Third: The high divorce rate in society may lead to the spread of crime among young people.

Fourth: The nature of the population in Malaysia differs from many neighbouring countries. In addition to the indigenous people, they are Malay tribes. They make up more than 60% of the population, but there are other Chinese, Indian, Thai and Pakistani races. Thus, the need to issue legislation regulating marriage arose.

That is why the central government in Malaysia decided to legislate a decision stating that it is necessary to provide evidence that the applicant for marriage has passed the training course. The idea was based on the fact that every applicant for marriage must submit to the Sharia judge a certificate from the Ministry of Social Affairs stating that he or she has completed courses in marital and family life.

The Malaysian official authorities concerned with addressing the problems of the Muslim community after invoking all the aforementioned legal texts. The workshops held in order to solve the problems of divorce and reduce the high rate of divorce. The committee charged with looking into the matter came out with a proposal for a practical program called "*Modul Bersepadu Kursus Pra-Perkahwinan Islam* (MBKPI)". It can be translated into (the integrated model for premarital courses) to be applied in 1997 AD / 1996 AD compulsory in all states of Malaysia except in the states of Sarawak and Sabah. Then, it was followed by a second improvement before the release of 2008 AD, and then other improvements were made before the third version in 2012 AD, in which updates were created by enhancing the content of slides and short videos. This is one of the most important initiatives of the Malaysian government, in cooperation with religious affairs, in an effort to provide early knowledge for young people about to get married of their shared responsibilities in maintaining and caring for the stability of the structure of the Muslim family. It must be managed in a guaranteed and effective manner, and implemented in accordance with the methodology and guiding principles of the course, and these courses are conducted under the full supervision of the Office of Islamic Religious Affairs (JAKIM, 2016, Osman, 126).

It is permitted that training programs be carried out by third parties, provided that they adhere to the following conditions

First: The applicant must be a Muslim.

Second: A certified copy of the identity card.

Third: He has the address of the company registered with the Malaysian Companies Commission (SSM).

Fourth: A certified copy of the company's licensing certificate.

Fifth: He has a permanent office address.

Sixth: He has a draft proposal for the Islamic marriage course.

Seventh: Any other necessary documents required. (The previous reference)

Course contents (marriage license): These courses include specific points, such as:

First: Sharia training, which includes

- Study of faith and the provisions of worship. Came to talk :” The Messenger of God, may God’s prayers and peace be upon him, said, “Islam is built on five: testifying that

there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, establishing prayer, and saying Zakat, Hajj, and fasting in Ramadan” (Al-Bukhari,4515)(Muslim,16)

- Study of the family jurisprudence (the rights of the husband and wife, and the duties of each of them.(Al-Qurtubi,16\14)
- Study of the jurisprudence of dealing between spouses.(Al-Jawz,26)

Second: Introducing the goals of building a family, the purpose of marriage, and how to achieve this goal.

Third: Planning for marital life on scientific bases and social programs that will achieve stability within the family.

Fourth: Psychological training for those about to get married. Ways to reach knowledge of each other's psychological side, and how to increase the psychological rapprochement between the spouses by scientific means, and the application of the procedures and experiences of psychologists.

Fifth: The art of communication and dialogue between spouses, and how to help each party understand the others.

Sixth: The art of managing family problems without escalating problems outside the home. How to solve household problems at home without the need for the intervention of another party.

Seventh: The art of managing the economic resources of the family. Training those about to get married on how to manage expenses and costs, as well as how to manage economic resources; especially since both sides of most families (husband and wife) work outside the home.

Eighth: Moral preparation for those about to get married, and explaining the importance of morals and their place in the family.

Ninth: Get acquainted with the marriage contract procedures and the laws related to it in each of the Malaysian states.

Requirements for attending the qualifying session:

Third: Participants' commitment to the terms of the course (JAKIM, 2016)

The organizer of the preparation course programs for those about to get married must ensure that all participants adhere to the following:

- a. The participant's presence five (5) minutes before the start of the marriage session. If the participant fails to attend any of the sessions or arrives late more than fifteen (15) minutes after the official session, he must repeat the course.
- b. The credit hours for the entire course are thirteen (13) hours for two consecutive days for each of the premarital courses.
- c. Attendance record signature form for each premarital session. The participant must wear elegant and modest clothes, and adhere to good morals throughout the course (Osman, 126).

In addition to

- Register before the start of the course.
- Bring personal identification information.
- Pay the prescribed fees, which are not more than RM80; equivalent to 25 US dollars.
- Commitment to decency and solemnity.
- Commitment to Islamic dress code for girls.
- Commitment to attend all hours of the training course.

The second topic: the implications of applying the experiment

After applying the experience and generalizing it in all Malaysian states, and subjecting the specialized rehabilitation centres to the supervision of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, affiliated to the Prime Minister in the central government. The divorce rate decreased within ten years from the beginning of the implementation of the idea, as the percentage decreased from (32%) to (7%) only. The main reason for the decline in this percentage is the increasing awareness of those about to get married. As a result of those courses that they obtained, and confirmed that they benefited from them.

Malaysia aims, as part of its strategic plan, to become one of the developed countries in terms of the family, by making these courses compulsory before marriage. This is something that can be applied in our countries if governments adopt it and make it compulsory, just as a medical examination before marriage has become obligatory in many countries.

Some Opinions Related to the Malaysian Experience

Hamid bin Awad Al-Anzi - Editorial Director of the Training Magazine - comments on the Malaysian experience in dealing with the high divorce rate, compared to the solutions being made in the Arab world to confront it, saying: "The experience of the Malaysian society, with its different cultural pluralism, which may stand as a direct obstacle to dealing with issues of the size of "divorce", was realized, with religious awareness, without hesitation in the usefulness of using training and self-development in dealing with these problems. Some focused on a number of traditional solutions, which come in the form of general prescriptions, such as speeches, lectures, and seminars, or special prescriptions that appear in the form of personal and self-initiatives to treat divorce issues, but our numbers and ratios confirm the ineffectiveness of these tools over the past ten years, at least. In recent years, it has been evident that the rate has increased, despite the efforts exerted to address the status quo. This definitely means the need to search for other solutions, most notably approving the license to practice married life. Training and self-development are one of the effective solutions to face the spectre of divorce. And if there is a positive and clear alliance between the training institutions and the parties entrusted with the marriage contracts, we will witness a decline in the numbers" (Al-Anzi, 21).

Under the title of the Malaysian marriage license and the dream that did not see the light, the human development trainer, Faisal Al-Dhubiani, explains the importance of adopting the Malaysian model in qualifying those who are about to get married. And the necessity of compulsory marriage license for those about to get married, since 2012 and during the years of our training for several sectors and governmental and private agencies within the framework of programs and community bags to rehabilitate those about to get married.

Now, after 9 years of waiting, we are looking forward to, according to the latest annual statistics issued by the Ministry of Justice in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

That out of every 10 marriages there are 3 divorces, i.e., 32%, which is the same rate at which the Malaysian qualitative experience was applied, in which it was able to reduce the divorce rate from 32% in 1992 to 7%, which is the lowest rate in the world.

Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad was aware that this high percentage impedes in one way or another his country's ambitions for development and has a negative impact on the future of Malaysia and its ambitions to be one of the economic tigers in Asia.

Therefore, in 1992, he undertook a unique and remarkable experiment, which can be summed up as follows

Imposing a system for every man and woman who is about to get married to be exempted from work for a month in order to take a course on how to deal with the partner, how to deal with minor problems, and how to make his life and his partner happy.

Therefore, he resorted to developing a treatment, which is (the marriage license), according to which all those who wish to marry of both sexes are obligated to undergo specialized training courses, after which they obtain a license that authorizes them to marry.

Within a decade, i.e., in 2004, the divorce rate in Malaysia decreased to 7%, and today it is considered one of the lowest countries in the world in the divorce rate (Al-Dhubiani, 23).

In Jordan, Dr. Amal Naseer clarified: The increase in divorce cases in the Kingdom is a matter that calls for standing on its causes and methods of treatment. In a study conducted by the Al-Afaf Association through a sample of one hundred divorced women. (50) of them divorced before consummation, and (50) in the first year of marriage. It was found that 42% of the divorced women believed that the divorce occurred due to poor choice, followed by the intervention of the parents by 30%. Then the lack of responsibility by 29%. From the point of view of divorced women, 18% occupied the subordination of one of the spouses to a member of his family. Lack of verbal and intellectual communication by 16%. Other studies indicated that among the reasons for divorce from the point of view of divorced women before consummation is the lack of clarity and honesty, and the lack of self-disclosure. Including what is due to the abuse of alcohol or drugs, age difference, young age, and physical abuse, followed by romantic dreams of girls.

Professors of sociology believe that one of the reasons for the recent increase in the divorce rate is the rush to get married. Not giving the issue of marriage great importance, especially since (79%) of divorce cases take place before consummation. This confirms that marriage takes place without organization and prior preparation.

For all of the above reasons, we need more than others to apply the successful Malaysian experience to preserve the Jordanian family to form a healthy family of genetic diseases. Hence, the importance of applying the marriage license as a condition for the marriage contract in order to preserve the psychological and social health of the family, so that training institutions are responsible for holding this type of course. And certified trainers for those about to get married, who educate them about the rights and duties between spouses, housekeeping, and family skills from a legal, emotional and social standpoint. Since a large percentage of our daughters do not go to the labour market after graduating from university, it is useful to expand the opening of specializations related to maternity skills, marital relations, and housekeeping, so that we may benefit future generations in applying these skills in family life. We reduce mental illnesses and cases of family disintegration, which are two of the most important causes of societal violence. (Naseer, 12)

It is clear from the foregoing that the training courses that qualify those about to get married serve as a lamp that lights the way to a safe and stable married life, especially in light of the high rates of divorce, which is the main motive for giving and receiving these courses. Hence, the preparation for such courses was a societal necessity based on psychological foundations, and to serve as a guiding tool.

The most Important Findings and Recommendations

Thank you, Allah, this research paper has been completed to participate in the Sixth Forum of Saudi Societies. It dealt with some of the study the Malaysian experience in rehabilitating and preparing those about to get married. It showed the basic aspects of this experience, and how

to benefit from it in our Arab countries, especially since there is a common denominator that unites the Arab countries and Malaysia, namely Islam.

The Malaysian government has been able, through the application of that experience by reducing the divorce rate, which had reached 32% in 1992 AD, to drop it to only 7%. Malaysia aims, within its strategic plan for the year 2020, to become one of the developed countries in terms of the family, by making these courses compulsory before marriage. This is something that can be applied in our countries if governments adopt it and make it compulsory, just as a medical examination before marriage has become obligatory in many countries.

Recommendations

- Benefiting from the Malaysian experience in rehabilitating those about to get married; As the closest and most suitable for the Arab and Muslim countries.
- If it is not possible to make these courses compulsory before marriage, such as: Malaysia, then these courses must be available at reasonable prices, and in multiple places, and they are directed to married couples and those about to get married.

Paying attention to the establishment of family counselling offices in every region, and paying attention to selecting their employees well and follow-up with supervision and courses that increase their experience. These offices can also contribute to addressing problems that arise between spouses.

- These courses are mandatory, and the state monitors them; which achieves the desired goal. The family is the building block upon which society is built, and there is no doubt that what we see of corruption in societies, especially youth, is due - mainly - to a defect in the family.
- Such scientific courses help in helping to build the right family, and to treat problems that spouses may face in the future, which helps development and stability in society.

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