Is Divorce More Painful When Couples Have Children?

Evidence From Long-Term Panel Data on Multiple Domains of Well-Being

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Abstract

Theoretical models of the divorce process suggest that marital breakup is more painful in the presence of children. Yet, little is known about the role of children as a moderator of divorce effects on adult well-being. The present study addressed this gap of research based on long-term panel data from Germany (SOEP). Following individuals over several years before and after divorce, we used random-effects models to investigate whether the impact of divorce on multiple measures of well-being varied by the presence and age of children before marital breakup. Three central findings emerged from the analysis. First, declines in well-being were sharper in the presence of children, and these moderator effects were larger if children were younger. Second, domain-specific measures of well-being revealed gender differences in the moderating role of children. Mothers sustained deeper drops in economic well-being than fathers did; the reverse was true for family well-being. Third, most of these disproportionate declines in the well-being of divorced parents did not persist in the long term, as higher rates of adaptation leveled out the gaps compared to childless divorcees.

Keywords

Divorce, well-being, children, panel data, random-effects models

Introduction

Divorce is associated with declines in well-being and health (Hank and Wagner 2013, Kamp Dush 2013, Simon 2002, Simon 2014, Waite 1995, Williams 2003). This has been observed for several indicators, including depressive symptoms, psychological distress, and life satisfaction. More recent research has shifted the attention from estimating average effects of divorce to exploring individual heterogeneity in these effects: Some breakups are especially painful, others less so, and some might even bring relief from a stressful or unhappy situation. Following this idea, authors have studied moderators such as gender (Simon 2002), age (Williams and Umberson 2004), marital quality (Kalmijn and Monden 2006, Williams 2003), family background (Mandemakers, Monden and Kalmijn 2010), cohabitation versus marriage (Musick and Bumpass 2012), poverty (Liu and Chen 2006), and marriage cohort (Liu and Umberson 2008). None of these have yielded consistent moderator effects, even though there is broad consensus that the consequences of divorce vary considerably among the individuals involved (Amato and Anthony 2014).

Of all potential moderator variables, one of the most intriguing is whether couples have children before divorce. Although having children at home is generally believed to aggravate the effects of divorce on the well-being of former partners, only two studies have considered this moderator.[1] A register-based study of Norwegian panel data from the early 1990s found that the detrimental effect of divorce on sickness absence – as a measure of health – was stronger when couples had children before divorce than when couples were childless (Blekesaune and Barrett 2005). An American analysis of two-wave panel data collected in 1987 and 1992 found that the

[1] There are studies that focus on parents but do not compare them to couples without children (e.g., Kamp Dush 2013).

increase in depression after divorce was three times stronger when couples had preschool-aged children before divorce (Williams and Dunne-Bryant 2006).

The moderating role of children is relevant for a number of reasons. First, declines in parental well-being after divorce may affect child outcomes. Many studies have shown that parental depression impacts on the emotional health and psychological functioning of children (Amato and Anthony 2014, Kiernan and Huerta 2008). If the well-being of divorced parents declines more strongly and recovers less swiftly, this can impose a double burden on children. Moreover, the effects of divorce and parental well-being can interact. Parents may be less able to provide a secure post-divorce living arrangement for their children when they have to deal with their own emotional problems.

Second, how the presence of children moderates divorce effects is also relevant from a theoretical perspective. If adverse effects of divorce on the well-being of men and women are strong for parents but absent or inconsequential for childless couples, this has important implications for the way in which we interpret the link between marriage and health. Traditionally, the effects of divorce on depression and other aspects of mental health have been regarded as evidence that marriage benefits health (Waite and Gallagher 2000). If such effects are limited to couples with children, however, they point to the importance of loss and crisis, rather than protection (Johnson and Wu 2002, Pearlin 2009). Third, information about the moderating role of children may be relevant on a practical level of decision-making. If children at home aggravate the negative effects of divorce on former partners' well-being, and possibly on child outcomes, this information may be applicable for parents who are considering postponing their divorce until children leave home. Although it is difficult to estimate the causal impact of variation in the timing of divorce (Sigle-Rushton et al. 2014), a good description of such effects is an important start.

In the present study, we use German panel data to examine if and to what extent the presence of children moderates the impact of divorce on the well-being of men and women. Like the two studies before us, we also assess the importance of child age for moderator effects, and we test how men and women differ in this respect. Apart from adding a new societal context and more recent data, we bring two new elements to this field of study. First, we strengthen the dynamic nature of the analysis. In contrast to previous research on this topic, our data include multi-wave (rather than two-wave; Williams & Dunne-Bryant, 2006) panel measurements and direct (rather than indirect; Blekesaune and Barrett, 2005) measures of well-being. Our study draws on 29 annual waves of data from the German Socio-economic Panel Study (SOEP), spanning the period from 1984 until 2012. These data allow us to accurately trace changes in well-being throughout the divorce process. Important analytical benefits include a longer view of well-being before divorce and a better view of initial declines after divorce and subsequent adaptation. This enables us to determine whether, and at which point in time, people "recover" to pre-divorce levels of well-being

Second, we contribute to the literature by looking at multiple domains of well-being. Specifically, we examine not only general life satisfaction, but also satisfaction with income and satisfaction with family life. By disentangling these domains of subjective well-being, we gain new insight into the mechanisms behind the possible moderating role of children. Moreover, address gender differences in the effects of divorce on well-being. Evidence has shown that men and women react in different ways to divorce, with women experiencing more internalizing problems and men experiencing more externalizing problems (Simon 2002, Simon 2014). We argue that men and women may also respond differently to divorce in terms of reduced well-being. Specifically, we expect that for women, children may aggravate adverse effects of divorce via economic pathways, whereas this occurs via social pathways among men. This suggests

stronger moderator effects of children on the economic well-being of women and stronger moderator effects on the family well-being of men.

Background and Hypotheses

Many studies have shown that the experience of a divorce negatively affects well-being and health. In the past years, the focus has shifted from estimating average effects to exploring heterogeneity in these effects. In Table 1, we give an overview of the moderators that have been studied and the results that have been found so far. Gender is the most frequently studied moderator. Simon (2002) found that men are more likely to respond by externalizing behavior such as alcohol use, whereas women more often experience internalizing problems such as depression. In terms of general life satisfaction, most studies found no major gender differences, although a German study reported men to suffer more in the first years following separation (Andreß and Broeckel 2007).

- Table 1 -

Another moderator variable that has been studied is marital quality. The evidence is mixed, suggesting that leaving an unhappy marriage is not generally better for well-being, in contrast to what relief hypotheses argue (Johnson and Wu 2002, Kalmijn and Monden 2006, Williams 2003). Interactions with age have also revealed inconsistent patterns (Blekesaune and Barrett 2005, Williams and Umberson 2004). Further studies of moderators have indicated that divorce has become more detrimental across marriage cohorts in the U.S. (Liu and Umberson 2008), and that divorce effects are stronger in more religious countries of Europe (Kalmijn 2010).

The presence of children before divorce has only been studied twice (Blekesaune and Barrett 2005, Williams and Dunne-Bryant, 2006). Both studies have concluded that couples with children suffer more from a divorce than couples without children. In the study by Blekesaune and Barrett (2005), this conclusion was based on register data with an indirect indicator for well-

being, measuring the number of times people were officially registered as ill. Williams and Dunne-Bryant (2006) used more direct measures, but their study is based on data that are now relatively old (late 1980s and early 1990s). More importantly, this study could only analyze two waves of data, a design which offers only limited information about the adjustment process after divorce, and the degree to which children moderate this process. Two-wave panel studies also carry the risk that the pre-divorce measurement is colored by the impending divorce, especially when the divorce occurred shortly after the first wave.

To understand how children could moderate the impact of divorce, we start with general ideas about how a divorce affects people's lives, in particular the crisis model and the resource model. Next, we apply these ideas to our key moderators of interest, namely the presence and age of children before divorce. We pay special attention to differences between men and women, given that the effects of children on the economic and social costs of divorce are deeply divided along gender lines. To uncover these differences, we consider the moderating effects of children on three types of well-being: satisfaction with life ("general well-being"), satisfaction with income ("economic well-being"), and satisfaction with family life ("family well-being"). We are aware of only one study that has studied divorce in relation to domain-specific well-being outcomes (Andreß and Broeckel 2007). This study, however, was limited to general and economic well-being, and did not consider the presence of children.

The Crisis and Resource Model of Divorce

According to the *crisis model* (Amato 2000, Amato 1993, Johnson and Wu 2002, McLanahan and Sandefur 1994), a divorce is not only emotionally straining, but also brings a series of practical changes, each of which can be stressful. These secondary stressors include moving, adjusting to living alone, making new financial arrangements, dividing consumption goods,

informing families and friends, finding a new partner, and so forth. An important tenet of the crisis model is that the effect of divorce is short-lived. After practical arrangements have been made and everyone is accustomed to new routines, people will start to feel better. Similarly, the emotional impact of losing a partner is believed to be transient (Stroebe, Schut and Stroebe 2007). Another expectation of the crisis model is that the decline in well-being begins before the actual separation. Divorce is a process, not an event, and well-being will be reduced throughout this process.

A second theoretical perspective on how divorce affects well-being is the *resource model* (Johnson and Wu 2002, McLanahan and Sandefur 1994, Soons, Liefbroer and Kalmijn 2009).[2] This model typically distinguishes between economic and social resources. According to the model, a divorce involves declines in these resources which, in turn, involve declines in well-being and health (Andreß and Hummelsheim 2009, McLanahan and Sandefur 1994). Economic resources typically decline after divorce, especially for women (Andreß and Hummelsheim 2009, Poortman 2000, Uunk 2004). This occurs for four main reasons: men typically contribute a higher share of household income; alimony payments are often insufficient for child maintenance; earning capacities in the presence of children are limited; and economies of scale are lost when couples separate (Holden and Smock 1991). Moving into a smaller home or into a poorer neighborhood are examples of this decline.

Social resources comprise the set of personal relationships and networks that people can rely on. A divorce not only disrupts a critical primary tie but also involves the risk of losing ties to family members and mutual friends, although there may also be increases in friendship contacts which compensate for these losses (Terhell, Broese van Groenou and Van Tilburg 2004).

[2] This model is similar to the “role” model and the “chronic strain” model.

Another example of a decline in social resources is the loss of neighborhood ties when people are forced to move after divorce (Hagan, MacMillan and Wheaton 1996).

Hypotheses on the Moderating Role of Children

How would children moderate the impact of divorce? Our first hypothesis is that children intensify the negative effect of divorce on the general well-being of both men and women (Hypothesis 1). The crisis and resource models offer two main reasons for this expectation. First, the crisis associated with the separation process will be more intense and last longer if children are involved, in particular because couples who divorce with children experience an increase in parenting-related stress (Williams and Dunne-Bryant 2006). Parents and children have to find new living arrangements and new ways of maintaining their relationships. Compared to divorcees without children, personal concerns about children's well-being may constitute an additional source of stress after separation. The same applies to contact with ex-partners. Divorced parents often have to stay in touch, and this can be another source of strain and continued conflict. In the absence of children, ex-partners more often experience a swift decline in contact (Fischer, De Graaf and Kalmijn 2005). Such a "clean break" can be beneficial for recovery in terms of well-being, but is less likely to occur for couples with children.

Second, divorce-related declines in resources are also exacerbated by the presence of children. Looking at economic resources, mothers generally find it more difficult to work for pay after divorce than divorced women without children (Van Damme 2010). Moreover, mothers with young children at home are less likely to find a new partner, which further reduces their options for economic and emotional recovery (DeWilde and Uunk 2008; Ivanova, Kalmijn and Uunk 2013). As a result, the economic costs of divorce are higher for mothers than for childless women. Generally, this is also true when comparing fathers to childless men, as divorce often

entails long-term commitments in terms of child maintenance and alimony, as well as losses in economies of scale. Compared to mothers, however, the child-related increase in the economic costs of divorce will be far less pronounced, in particular because breadwinner fathers and do not face similar constraints in terms of labor force participation (Poortman 2000).

A contrasting picture emerges when looking at the social costs of divorce. Fathers are at a greater risk of losing day-to-day contact with their children (Juby et al. 2007, Swiss and Le Bourdais 2009). There is even a substantial minority of divorced fathers who never see their children after divorce (Kalmijn 2015b). Not all divorced fathers miss their children, but many indicate feelings of dissatisfaction and loss (Parkinson and Smyth 2004). As a result, the social costs of divorce among fathers can be expected to exceed those of childless men. There may also be social costs of divorce for mothers, but only a small minority of mothers lose child custody following a divorce (Kalmijn 2015b).

To summarize, the crisis model implies that the presence of children intensifies the negative effects of divorce on general well-being both among men and women. The resource model is also consistent with this expectation for general well-being, but further posits differential effects depending on the type of resource involved. A focus on domain-specific aspects of well-being allows us to separate these two mechanisms: In terms of *economic well-being*, we expect the moderating effect of children to be larger for women than for men (Hypothesis 2a). Conversely, in terms of *family well-being*, we expect the moderating effect of children to be larger for men than for women (Hypothesis 2b).

So far, we have only distinguished between the presence versus absence of children before divorce. Next, we consider how this effect might vary with child age. We posit that the moderating effect of children declines if children are older. Specifically, we expect that the negative effects of divorce on general well-being are largest in the presence of preschool-age

children before divorce, and smaller in the presence of older resident children (Hypothesis 3). This expectation is consistent with the factors highlighted by the resource model: The younger the children, the larger the divorce-related declines in economic and social resources. Again, we expect that these effects are divided along gender lines: Regarding economic resources, costs are highest for mothers of preschool-aged children. If children are older, divorced women's earnings and labor force participation are higher (Van Damme 2010). Regarding social resources, child age influences the strength of the tie to fathers: the younger children are, the less time fathers spend with them (Swiss and Le Bourdais 2009), and the earlier children experience parental divorce, the less contact they maintain with fathers (Kalmijn 2015a).

These considerations are an extension to the rationale outlined above, suggesting that gender differences emerge primarily when looking at domain-specific aspects of well-being: In terms of *economic well-being*, we expect the moderating effect of child age to be larger for mothers than for fathers (Hypothesis 4a). Conversely, in terms of *family well-being*, we expect the moderating effect of child age to be larger for fathers than for mothers (Hypothesis 4b).

Adjustment to Divorce

The hypotheses above do not distinguish between initial declines in well-being and the subsequent adjustment process. According to the setpoint theory, well-being will gradually revert to pre-divorce levels after the crisis is over. Although this theory posits that people eventually recover fully, it does not make specific predictions about the speed of the adjustment process (Anusic, Yap and Lucas 2014; Soons, Liefbroer and Kalmijn 2009). Findings on this process are mixed: Some authors report positive duration effects on well-being (Dupre and Meadows 2007, Kamp Dush 2013), others find no duration effects (Johnson and Wu 2002, Williams and Umberson 2004). With regard to our study focus, it is unclear how the adjustment process may

differ depending on the presence of children. On the one hand, social costs may increase over time because fathers may not be able to improve the relationships to their children over time. On the other hand, social costs may decline because children's feelings of being 'caught in the middle' may weaken when they grow older, which, in turn, may improve contact with nonresident fathers (Amato and Afifi 2006). Opposing predictions can also be made for economic costs. On the one hand, these costs for women may decline when children grow older, as restrictions in terms of employment and remarriage chances decline (Ivanova, Kalmijn and Uunk 2013). On the other hand, economic costs may also be stable, because women who are non-employed after divorce may not be able to re-enter the labor market due to loss of experience and depreciation of human capital (Van Damme 2010).

Sources of Bias

When estimating the moderating effect of children, several potential sources of bias need to be considered. First, research has shown that children raise the threshold to divorce (de Graaf and Kalmijn 2006). If couples still divorce, this is likely to indicate more intense conflict and more serious marital problems compared to childless divorcees. Due to floor and ceiling effects in panel data (Wang et al. 2008), post-divorce declines in well-being may be therefore be less pronounced if couples have children. This could potentially suppress the interaction effects that we hypothesized. In the present study, we adopt a random-effects approach to consider differences in pre-divorce levels of well-being, but we are unable to include marital quality measures or instrumental variables that would allow us to statistically control for selectivity.

A second potential source of bias lies in marital duration. Within the age range that we consider, most childless couples are married for a shorter period. If effects of divorce on well-being are smaller when marriages were shorter, this could lead to a spurious interaction effect.

We control for this, at least indirectly, by considering age at divorce.[3] Third, we also consider differences along socioeconomic lines. Preliminary analyses of our data suggested that lower socioeconomic groups are more likely to divorce in the presence of pre-school age children. If divorce is also more harmful among lower-status individuals, this could bias our hypothesized interaction effects.

Data and Method

Data

Our analysis is based on data from 29 waves of the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP, Version 29, 2013, doi:10.5684/soep.v29; Wagner, Frick and Schupp, 2007). The SOEP is a household panel survey in which each household member age 17 and older is interviewed separately. The SOEP data are regarded as a gold standard in studies on the consequences of life events for well-being (Clark et al. 2008). For our purposes, these data yielded three benefits. First, the large sample size allowed us to examine not only average effects of divorce but to test for heterogeneity in these effects on well-being. Second, the large window of closely spaced observations was ideally suited to track short-term and long-term changes in well-being across the divorce process. Third, the SOEP offers a comprehensive set of indicators for well-being, enabling us to test our theoretical considerations about differential effects of divorce on general, economic, and family well-being. Given our study focus, we restricted the analytical sample to persons who divorced across their observation period in the panel. To capture this transition, we selected 2,353 respondents who were initially observed in a marital union and subsequently

[3] Our data did not include a direct measure for marital duration. As we deleted couples who were divorced before they entered the panel, age at divorce can be considered a good proxy for marital duration.

divorced.[4] If a person divorced more than once, we examined the first divorce recorded in the panel.

We identified a divorce by a change of marital status from "married and living together" to "divorced." Because a change in the legal status from married to divorced may involve some delay (due to an obligatory year of separation), we also assigned the status divorced if a respondent reported a change from "married and living together" to "married but separated." Hence, our definition of divorce captures the actual year of separation.

To estimate pre-divorce levels of well-being, we considered all panel observations up to one year before the transition.[5] We also included all observations after divorce in the analysis to estimate short-term and long-term patterns of adaptation. After all restrictions, the analytical sample consisted of 2,353 individuals comprising 35,146 panel observations (i.e., person-years). The average number of annual observations per respondent is 15 years, with a range of 2 to 28. Note that we include the post-divorce observations in which persons began living with a new partner. Although repartnering will affect wellbeing (Sweeney 2010), the chances to repartner are affected by having children (Ivanova, Kalmijn and Uunk 2013). Hence, repartnering may be a mediator of our interaction effects, and not a confounder.

Measures

Outcome variables. To test our hypotheses about changes in different domains of well-being, we used three outcome variables. Our measures of *general well-being* and *economic well-being* are based on the survey questions "How satisfied are you with your life, all things

[4] Because of our study focus, we considered only observations of respondents aged 60 or younger. Furthermore, we removed 92 divorcees from a selective high-income sample (Sample G, drawn in 2002).
[5] We remove the observation directly preceding divorce because well-being in this year is often already affected by the impending marital breakup.

considered?", and "How satisfied are you with your household income?" Data on these measures are available at all 29 panel waves conducted between 1984 and 2012. Our measure for *family well-being* was based on the survey question "How satisfied are you with your family life?" This question lets respondents' define "family" as they wish, given that no further specification is offered. Data on this measure are available annually since 2006. Each outcome variable was measured on an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 ("completely dissatisfied") to 10 ("completely satisfied"). Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for the outcome variables.

- Table -

Divorce variables. To assess the short-term and long-term impact of divorce on these outcomes, we use three variables: (1) a dummy variable changing from 0 in all pre-divorce observations to 1 in all post-divorce observations; (2) a linear duration variable counting the years after divorce, starting from 0 in the first wave after divorce; and (3) a squared duration variable. These measures jointly represent the effect of divorce on the outcomes, allowing us to study the initial impact as well as long-term patterns of adaptation: The dummy variable capture initial drops in well-being (i.e., duration variables equaling zero). The duration variables capture linear and curvilinear adaptation. We found this functional form to be an adequate and parsimonious specification after assessing changes in the outcomes based on a set of dummy-variables that allowed for year-to-year changes in the effects of divorce on the outcome variables.

Moderator variables. We interacted the divorce variables with an indicator variable for whether *at least one child under 18* was living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*) to test our hypotheses about heterogeneity in the effects of divorce. People without children either have no children or no resident children (e.g., empty nest). To assess gender differences in the moderating effects of children, we added further interaction terms between the divorce variables and gender (0 = *female*, 1 = *male)* and three-way interactions

between the divorce variables, the child indicator, and gender. In a final step, we replaced the child indicator by a set of indicator variables for the *age of the youngest child* living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce (0-4 years, 5-12 years, 13-18 years, no children under 18). All child variables are based on the situation before the divorce and do not vary over time, given our use of interactions with the divorce variables.

Controls. We controlled for potential confounders in the relationship between the presence of and age of children before divorce and the consequences of divorce for well-being. These include age at divorce, education (ref.: less than secondary degree), immigrant status (ref.: native German), and East German (ref.: West German).[6] We centered all of these controls at their means. Furthermore, we included a control for the calendar year of divorce (centered at 2010) in the models for general and economic well-being. In contrast to family well-being (measured from 2006 until 2012), these outcome variables spanned an observation period of almost three decades (1984 until 2012). Our control for calendar year ensured that divorce effects were conditioned on a comparable periodic context across all outcomes. In all models, we interacted the time-constant controls with the divorce variables. Finally, we included a measure of age at divorce as a proxy for marital duration.

Table 3 gives an overview of the moderator and control variables. Table 4 shows how the sociodemographic characteristics included as control variables varied by our key moderators of interest, namely the presence and age of children before divorce.

- Tables 3 & 4 -

[6] The distinction between East and West Germans was based on a survey question about where a respondent lived in 1989 (i.e., before unification).

Models

We estimated random-effects hierarchical linear models for annual panel observations nested in persons. Because every respondent in the sample experienced a divorce across the observation period, there was no risk that the event indicators were correlated with unmeasured, time-constant characteristics (Allison, 1994, p. 192). As a result, the bias-reducing properties of the fixed-effects estimator did not apply. In this case, the random-effects generalized least squares estimator is preferable. This estimator is more efficient and allows for the inclusion of main effects for time-constant variables. For our purposes, a major advantage of the random-effects estimator is that it allows us to consider baseline differences in well-being between couples with and without children.

We estimated three models for each outcome. Model 1 includes only the divorce variables. In Model 2, we interact the divorce variables with the presence of children. In Model 3, we add a three-way interaction to test if the interactions between divorce and children vary between men and women. All models include control variables, as well as interactions between time-constant controls and the divorce variables. Given that all control variables are centered, these extra interactions do not affect the key interaction effects pertaining to our hypotheses.

Results for all models are shown in Table 5 (general well-being), Table 6 (economic well-being), and Table 7 (family well-being). We plot our main findings from these models in Figure 1 (general well-being), Figure 2 (economic well-being), and Figure 3 (family well-being). Each figure comprises nine plots: the top row shows overall effects, the middle row shows moderator effects of the binary child indicator, and the bottom row shows moderator effects of the indicator for child age. The left-hand column shows effects for men and women combined, the middle column shows effects for women, and the right-hand column shows effects for men. Note that we present the results for child age only in the plots so that the tables are easier to read.

- Tables 5, 6 & 7 -

- Figures 1, 2, & 3 -

Results for General Well-Being

Model 1 in Table 5 presents baseline estimates for changes in general well-being following a divorce. The main effects of the divorce variables represent the average impact of divorce, conditioned on a divorce year of 2010 and mean values on all other time-constant controls. These estimates are in line with previous research: The initial decline amounts to more than one third of a *SD* of within-person change in general well-being over time (-.477 / 1.28 = .37). The duration effect is positive, indicating adjustment. Figure 1 shows that in the years after divorce, people fully recover from this initial decline in well-being (Figure 1, top left-hand plot).

Turning to heterogeneity behind these average effects, we hypothesized, first, that children intensify the negative consequences of divorce for general well-being (Hypothesis 1). The findings from Model 2 (Table 5) support this hypothesis. In this model, the main effects of time are defined for persons without children in the year before divorce; the interaction effects tells us if this effect differs for those with at least one resident child in the year before divorce. Results show that the initial decline in well-being more than doubles in the presence of children (an interaction of -.305 versus a main effect of -.261). We further see that the main effect of duration is significantly stronger for people with children than for people without children. As illustrated by the middle left-hand plot of Figure 1, this indicates that sharper initial declines in general well-being are followed by faster recovery. As a result, the gap to divorcees without children narrows over time.

In an extension to our initial hypothesis, we expected a gradient by child age: the younger the children before divorce, the larger their parents' declines in general well-being

(Hypothesis 3). The bottom left-hand plot of Figure 3 is broadly consistent with this expectation, indicating the largest drops in the presence of preschool-aged children. However, two qualifications apply. First, we find no systematic differences between other age groups; second, the remaining gaps by child age vanish in post-divorce years, as divorcees with preschool-aged children recover faster.

In Model 3 (Table 5) we test whether the moderating effects of children on general well-being differ between men and women. The point estimates for the three-way interactions between the divorce variables, the child indicator, and gender are insignificant. Yet, the direction of the interaction suggests that the moderator effect is somewhat more negative for men, a tendency that can also be seen in the middle and right-hand columns of Figure 1. Hence, the negative impact of children appears to be larger for men than for women.

Results for Domain-Specific Well-Being

Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 4 are based on the argument that domain-specific measures of well-being are needed to uncover gender differences in the moderating effects of children. To test these hypotheses, we turn to the models for economic well-being (Table 6, Figure 2) and family well-being (Table 7, Figure 3). For ease of comparison, models and plots for both outcomes are aligned with those presented for general well-being. To test our remaining hypotheses, it is sufficient to look at the estimates and plots that are based on the fully specified models (Model 6 and Model 9).

Tables 6 and 7 show that a divorce is associated with a substantial decline in both domains of well-being (Model 4 and Model 7). Both types of well-being reveal a positive duration effect and a small negative effect of the squared duration term, indicating adjustment in economic well-being and family well-being during the post-divorce period. The initial effect of

divorce is stronger on economic well-being than on family well-being. When we look at men and women combined (left-hand columns of Figures 2 and 3), we see that children moderate the impact of divorce in the expected direction: For economic well-being (Model 5, Table 6), the negative divorce effect doubles in the presence of children (an interaction of -.466 versus a main effect of -.439). For family well-being (Model 8, Table 7), this interaction is negative as well, but smaller and not statistically significant.

The primary goal of separating the two domains of well-being was to examine gender interactions. These are presented in Model 6 and Model 9. In terms of economic well-being, we expected that the moderating effects of children are larger for women than for men (Hypothesis 2a). In terms of family well-being, we expected that the moderating effects of children are larger for men than for women (Hypothesis 2b). Model 6 for economic well-being shows that the three-way interaction of gender, divorce, and children points in the expected direction. The effect, however, is small and not significant ($b = .070$, $p > .05$, Table 6). This result is inconsistent with Hypothesis 2a. Looking at Model 9 for family well-being, a much clearer pattern emerges for the corresponding three-way interaction ($b = -.899$, $p < .01$, Table 7). For women, the moderator effect of children is positive ($b = .221$), but not different from zero at conventional levels of statistical significance. For men, the moderator effect of children is strongly negative. The implied moderator effect for men is $b = .221 – .899 = -.678$. Hence, declines in family well-being after divorce are larger when there are children, but this is only true for men. This finding is in line with Hypothesis 2b.

Turning to more detailed results broken down by child age, we find support for our remaining hypotheses. In the presence of pre-school age children, women's economic well-being declines by a full scale point in the year of divorce, and this is a stronger drop than is found for men (Figure 2, bottom row). Although this difference is not significant, the direction is in line

with our hypothesis. For family well-being, the plots on child age (bottom row of Figure 3) are consistent with Hypothesis 4b, as the steepest declines in men's family well-being are found if children are of younger age (Figure 3, bottom right-hand plot). In this case, men drop by almost 2.5 scale points or approximately 2 *SD* of within-person change in family well-being over time. In contrast to our findings on women's economic well-being, however, men recover from these disproportionate declines in family well-being. Six years after divorce, differences compared to childless men have largely disappeared.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to theoretical models of the divorce process, the presence of children intensifies both the emotional crisis associated with marital breakup and former partners' loss of economic and social resources. Yet, although these models suggest that divorce is more painful for couples with children, little is known about the role of children as a moderator of divorce effects on well-being.

This study addressed this gap of research based on long-term panel data from Germany. Following individuals over several years before and after divorce, we investigated whether the presence of children aggravated the impact of divorce on well-being, we assessed the importance of child age for moderator effects, and we tested how men and women differed in this respect. Our empirical analyses went beyond previous work by strengthening the dynamic nature of the analysis and by examining changes in multiple domains of well-being.

Three central findings emerged from the analysis. First, declines general well-being, economic well-being, and family well-being were much sharper if dependent children were present before divorce. Moreover, moderator effects of children tended to be larger if children were younger. Second, although these effects were largely similar among men and women when

looking at a general measure of well-being, domain-specific measures revealed gender differences. Women tended to suffer more in terms of economic well-being – in particular if pre-school age children were involved –, whereas men suffered more in terms of family well-being. Third, with the exception of women's economic well-being, the gaps compared to childless divorcees narrowed over time. Moderator effects of children emerged most clearly in the year after divorce, declined across subsequent observations, and had largely disappeared six years after separation.

Although these findings are broadly consistent with two earlier studies on this subject (Blekesaune and Barrett 2005, Williams and Dunne-Bryant 2006), they offer novel insight into how children moderate the effect of divorce on well-being. Most notably, we have shown that these moderator effects run through economic and social pathways that are sharply divided along gender lines. Moreover, our findings demonstrate that most of the disproportionate declines in the well-being of divorced parents do not persist. Although the divorce effect is larger for parents, they seem to adjust in the long term.

This study contributes to an emerging line of research on heterogeneity in the effects of divorce on outcomes in adults and children, as summarized in Table 1. With regard to adult outcomes, gender has been the most intensely studied moderator. Most of these studies have found no substantial gender differences in the consequences of divorce for health and well-being, although men and women may adapt on different time scales (Andreß and Broeckel 2007). Our findings suggest that one reason for not finding gender differences in general measures of well-being is that divorce effects are domain-specific, in particular when children are involved. Under these conditions, the consequences of divorce for adult well-being are strongly gendered, but specific measures of well-being are required to uncover these differences in the economic and social costs of divorce. The need for specific measures to capture gender differences has already

been demonstrated in previous studies of men's and women's behavioral responses to the divorce crisis: Men displayed externalizing behavior in the form of increased alcohol use, whereas women internalized problems in the form of increased depressive symptoms (Simon 2002). We show that men and women may not only respond to a divorce in different ways, but also for different reasons.

Our findings also have implications for the study of child outcomes. The present analysis has shown that although divorce is a powerful stressor per se, the associated crisis is more intense among parents. These findings on children magnifying the negative consequences of divorce support theoretical ideas according to which adverse outcomes in children are partly transmitted through increased parental stress experienced across the divorce process. Given that parental declines in emotional well-being entail strong and direct effects on children's well-being (Kiernan and Huerta 2008), we posit that declines in parental well-being constitute a major pathway through which divorce affects children. In this regard, an interesting line of speculation is that not divorce per se, but rather parents' response to it, constitutes one of the main problems in these intergenerational effects. Although further research is needed to substantiate this claim, it calls for a shift in emphasis from the divorce itself to its effects on parental well-being.

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Table 1. *Overview of Longitudinal Studies on Moderator Effects of Divorce on Well-Being Since 2000, Sorted by Year of Publication*

Authors	Main effect[a]	Outcome studied	Moderators studied	Moderator effect[b]	Country	Data
Kim & McKenry (2002)	–	Depression	Gender	n.s.	USA	NSFH
Simon (2002)	–	Depression	Gender	stronger for women	USA	NSFH
Johnson and Wu (2002)	–	Psychological distress	Marital quality	stronger for low-quality marriages	USA	
Williams (2003)	–	Depression, life satisfaction	Gender Marital quality	n.s. stronger for high-quality marriages	USA	ACLS
Williams & Umberson (2004)	–	Self-rated health	Age	stronger for older persons (men) n.s. (women)	USA	ACLS
Blekesaune & Barrett (2005)	– (women)	Sickness absence	Age	stronger for older persons (women)	Norway	Registers
	0 (men)			stronger for younger persons (men)		
			Children	stronger for couples with children		
Strohschein (2005)	–	Psychological distress	Gender	n.s.	USA	NPHS
Liu & Chen (2006)	–	Depression	Poverty	n.s.	USA	NLSY
Kalmijn & Monden (2006)	–	Depression	Marital quality	n.s.	USA	NSFH
Williams & Dunne-Bryant (2006)	–	Depression, life satisfaction	Gender Children	stronger for women[c] stronger for couples with children	USA	NSFH
Andreß & Bröckel (2007)	–	Life satisfaction	Gender	stronger for men	Germany	SOEP
Liu & Umberson (2008)[d]		Self-rated health	Cohort	stronger for recent cohorts	USA	NHIS
Mandemakers et al. (2010)	–	Psychological distress	SES of origin family	stronger for low-status persons	UK	NCDS
Kalmijn (2010)[d]	–	Life satisfaction	Religion (macro)	stronger in religious settings	Europe	EVS
Monden & Uunk (2013)	0	Self-rated health	Gender	n.s.	Europe	ECHP

[a] – means a decline in wellbeing after divorce.
[b] Stronger means a more negative divorce effect, n.s. means no significant interaction. In some instances, 2-way interactions could not be interpreted because of the presence of 3-way interactions. In these cases, we do not report on the interactions 2-way interactions. The same applies to some main effects.
[c] Different interactions were found for other types of outcomes such as alcohol abuse (see text).
[d] Cross-sectional design.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics for Outcome Variables*

	Full Sample[a]			Analytic Sample[b]		
	M	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*N*
Satisfaction with...						
Life						
Overall	6.98	1.81	352,259	6.65	1.94	35,056
Between		1.49	45,226		1.32	2,353
Within		1.28			1.46	
Income						
Overall	6.16	2.32	346,398	5.74	2.44	34,776
Between		1.99	44,852		1.70	2,353
Within		1.59			1.83	
Family Life						
Overall	7.69	1.97	89,645	6.94	2.39	8,271
Between		1.68	23,051		1.93	1,595
Within		1.21			1.57	

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984–2012, release 2013. [a]Including all observations up to age 60. Excluding high-income sample G. [b]Full sample restricted to individuals observed across the transition from "married and living together" to "divorced."

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics for Moderator and Control Variables (*N = *2,353)*

	M	*SD*	Min	Max
Moderator variables				
Children before divorce[a]				
None	0.35	0.48	0	1
Age 0–4	0.21	0.41	0	1
Age 5–12	0.27	0.45	0	1
Age 13–18	0.16	0.37	0	1
Male	0.46	0.50	0	1
Control variables				
Calendar year of divorce	1999.53	7.39	1985	2012
Age at divorce	38.42	9.03	19	60
Education[b]				
Low	0.38	0.49	0	1
Mid	0.45	0.50	0	1
High	0.17	0.37	0	1
East German[c]	0.23	0.42	0	1
Immigrant[d]	0.19	0.39	0	1

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984–2012, release 2013. [a]Children living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce; age refers to the age of the youngest child. [b]Low education = up to lower secondary vocational degree (CASMIN 1a-c). Mid education = up to higher secondary degree plus vocational training (CASMIN 2a-c). High education = lower and higher tertiary degree (CASMIN 3a-b). [c]Living in East Germany (Former GDR) in 1989. [d]First-generation and second-generation immigrant.

Table 4. *Sociodemographic Correlates of Having Children Before Divorce (*N = *2,353)*

Children before divorce[a]	Male	Calendar year of divorce	Age at divorce	Education[b] Low	Mid	High	East German[c]	Immigrant[d]
None	0.49	1999.24	39.53	0.36	0.44	0.20	0.19	0.20
Age 0–4	0.43	1998.80	32.45	0.43	0.44	0.13	0.20	0.22
Age 5–12	0.45	1999.62	38.13	0.41	0.46	0.14	0.24	0.19
Age 13–18	0.45	2000.97	44.36	0.32	0.48	0.20	0.33	0.15
Total	0.46	1999.53	38.42	0.38	0.45	0.17	0.23	0.19

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984 – 2012, release 2013. [a]Children living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce; age refers to the age of the youngest child. [b]Low education = up to lower secondary vocational degree (CASMIN 1a-c). Mid education = up to higher secondary degree plus vocational training (CASMIN 2a-c). High education = lower and higher tertiary degree (CASMIN 3a-b). [c]Living in East Germany (Former GDR) in 1989. [d]First-generation and second-generation immigrant.

Table 5. *Random-Effects Linear Regression Models for Change in General Well-being*

	Model 1 Divorce		Model 2 Divorce*Children		Model 3 Divorce*Children*Gender	
Divorce (ref.: > 1 year before) [a]						
Divorce	-.477**	(.054)	-.261**	(.066)	-.211**	(.077)
Duration	.135**	(.019)	.107**	(.021)	.107**	(.023)
Duration²	-.008**	(.001)	-.008**	(.002)	-.008**	(.002)
Children (ref.: No) [b]						
Yes			-.063	(.059)	-.009	(.081)
Gender (ref.: Female)						
Male					.089	(.095)
Children*Gender						
Children*Male					-.116	(.117)
Divorce*Children						
Divorce*Children			-.305**	(.054)	-.248**	(.074)
Duration*Children			.042**	(.013)	.030+	(.018)
Duration²*Children			-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Divorce*Gender						
Divorce* Male					-.119	(.087)
Duration*Male					.004	(.021)
Duration²*Male					-.000	(.001)
Divorce*Children*Gender						
Divorce*Children*Male					-.135	(.107)
Duration*Children*Male					.022	(.026)
Duration²*Children*Male					.000	(.001)
Controls						
Age at divorce [c]	.015**	(.004)	.015**	(.004)	.015**	(.004)
Divorce*Age at divorce	-.006	(.004)	-.007+	(.004)	-.005	(.004)
Duration*Age at divorce	.001	(.001)	.002+	(.001)	.001	(.001)
Duration²*Age at divorce	-.000**	(.000)	-.000**	(.000)	-.000**	(.000)
Year of divorce [d]	.012**	(.004)	.012**	(.004)	.012**	(.004)
Divorce*Year of divorce	-.004	(.004)	-.003	(.004)	-.003	(.004)
Duration*Year of divorce	.001	(.001)	.001	(.001)	.001	(.001)
Duration²*Year of divorce	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)
Education (ref.: low) [e]						
Intermediate	.154*	(.065)	.148*	(.065)	.150*	(.066)
High	.372**	(.084)	.362**	(.084)	.362**	(.084)
Divorce*Intermediate	.125*	(.059)	.106+	(.060)	.092	(.060)
Divorce*High	.155*	(.076)	.122	(.076)	.120	(.076)
Duration*Intermediate	.012	(.014)	.015	(.014)	.015	(.015)
Duration*High	.040*	(.019)	.044*	(.019)	.043*	(.019)
Duration²*Intermediate	-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Duration²*High	-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Immigrant (ref.: Native German) [f]	-.210**	(.073)	-.207**	(.073)	-.206**	(.073)
Divorce*Immigrant	-.047	(.067)	-.057	(.066)	-.065	(.067)
Duration*Immigrant	-.041*	(.017)	-.040*	(.017)	-.040*	(.017)
Duration²*Immigrant	.002*	(.001)	.002+	(.001)	.002*	(.001)
East German (ref.: West) [g]	-.882**	(.071)	-.874**	(.071)	-.874**	(.071)
Divorce*East German	.306**	(.066)	.334**	(.067)	.331**	(.067)
Duration*East German	-.029	(.019)	-.032+	(.019)	-.031	(.019)
Duration²*East German	.003*	(.001)	.002*	(.001)	.002*	(.001)
Constant	6.601**	(.066)	6.656**	(.077)	6.618**	(.089)
Observations	34,954		34,954		34,954	

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984 – 2012, release 2013. [a] Reference category comprises all observations up to one year before divorce; divorce is an indicator variable for the year of divorce; duration variables count the years after divorce (zero in the year of divorce). [b] At least one child living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce. [c] Centered at the mean. [d] Centered at 2010. [e] Low education = up to lower secondary vocational degree (CASMIN 1a-c), intermediate education = up to higher secondary degree plus vocational training (CASMIN 2a-c), high education = lower and higher tertiary degree (CASMIN 3a-b); centered at the mean [f] First-generation or second-generation immigrant; centered at the mean. [g] Living in East Germany (Former GDR) in 1989; centered at the mean. All models control for age in three-yearly intervals.

Table 6. Random-Effects Linear Regression Models for Change in Economic Well-Being

	Model 4 Divorce		Model 5 Divorce*Children		Model 6 Divorce*Children*Gender	
Divorce (ref.: > 1 year before) [a]						
Divorce	-.769**	(.068)	-.439**	(.083)	-.524**	(.098)
Duration	.118**	(.023)	.070**	(.026)	.111**	(.029)
Duration²	-.007**	(.002)	-.006**	(.002)	-.008**	(.002)
Children (ref.: No) [b]						
Yes			-.167*	(.076)	-.178+	(.104)
Gender (ref.: Female)						
Male					-.050	(.121)
Children*Gender						
Children*Male					.019	(.149)
Divorce*Children						
Divorce*Children			-.466**	(.068)	-.487**	(.093)
Duration*Children			.070**	(.017)	.039+	(.023)
Duration²*Children			-.002+	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Divorce*Gender						
Divorce* Male					.187+	(.110)
Duration*Male					-.082**	(.027)
Duration²*Male					.004*	(.001)
Divorce*Children*Gender						
Divorce*Children*Male					.070	(.135)
Duration*Children*Male					.058+	(.033)
Duration²*Children*Male					-.002	(.002)
Controls						
Age at divorce [c]	.024**	(.005)	.023**	(.005)	.024**	(.005)
Divorce*Age at divorce	-.011*	(.004)	-.012**	(.004)	-.014**	(.004)
Duration*Age at divorce	-.002*	(.001)	-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Duration²*Age at divorce	.000	(.000)	-.000	(.000)	-.000	(.000)
Year of divorce [d]	-.005	(.005)	-.005	(.005)	-.005	(.005)
Divorce*Year of divorce	-.006	(.005)	-.004	(.005)	-.003	(.005)
Duration*Year of divorce	.002	(.001)	.002	(.001)	.002	(.001)
Duration²*Year of divorce	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)
Education (ref.: low) [e]						
Intermediate	.410**	(.084)	.397**	(.083)	.395**	(.084)
High	.858**	(.107)	.835**	(.107)	.833**	(.107)
Divorce*Intermediate	.124+	(.075)	.093	(.075)	.109	(.075)
Divorce*High	.200*	(.096)	.149	(.096)	.154	(.096)
Duration*Intermediate	.028	(.018)	.033+	(.018)	.029	(.018)
Duration*High	.054*	(.024)	.061*	(.024)	.061*	(.024)
Duration²*Intermediate	-.002+	(.001)	-.002+	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Duration²*High	-.001	(.001)	-.002	(.001)	-.001	(.001)
Immigrant (ref.: Native German) [f]	-.364**	(.093)	-.360**	(.093)	-.359**	(.093)
Divorce*Immigrant	.093	(.084)	.075	(.084)	.077	(.084)
Duration*Immigrant	-.133**	(.021)	-.130**	(.021)	-.129**	(.021)
Duration²*Immigrant	.006**	(.001)	.005**	(.001)	.005**	(.001)
East German (ref.: West) [g]	-1.226**	(.091)	-1.207**	(.091)	-1.206**	(.091)
Divorce*East German	.379**	(.083)	.423**	(.084)	.423**	(.084)
Duration*East German	-.050*	(.024)	-.054*	(.024)	-.054*	(.024)
Duration²*East German	.003*	(.001)	.003*	(.002)	.003+	(.002)
Constant	5.793**	(.084)	5.923**	(.098)	5.946**	(.113)
Observations	34,672		34,672		34,672	

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984 – 2012, release 2013. [a] Reference category comprises all observations up to one year before divorce; divorce is an indicator variable for the year of divorce; duration variables count the years after divorce (zero in the year of divorce). [b] At least one child living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce. [c] Centered at the mean. [d] Centered at 2010. [e] Low education = up to lower secondary vocational degree (CASMIN 1a-c), intermediate education = up to higher secondary degree plus vocational training (CASMIN 2a-c), high education = lower and higher tertiary degree (CASMIN 3a-b); centered at the mean [f] First-generation or second-generation immigrant; centered at the mean. [g] Living in East Germany (Former GDR) in 1989; centered at the mean. All models control for age in three-yearly intervals.

Table 7. *Random-Effects Linear Regression Models for Change in Family Well-Being*

	Model 7 Divorce		Model 8 Divorce*Children		Model 9 Divorce*Children*Gender	
Divorce (ref.: > 1 year before) [a]						
Divorce	-1.140**	(.116)	-1.030**	(.168)	-.926**	(.213)
Duration	.216**	(.029)	.142**	(.038)	.127**	(.046)
Duration²	-.008**	(.001)	-.005**	(.002)	-.005*	(.002)
Children (ref.: No) [b]						
Yes			-.464*	(.197)	-.614*	(.261)
Gender (ref.: Female)						
Male					-.120	(.304)
Children*Gender						
Children*Male					.298	(.379)
Divorce*Children						
Divorce*Children			-.184	(.184)	.221	(.246)
Duration*Children			.102**	(.036)	.073	(.047)
Duration²*Children			-.003*	(.002)	-.003	(.002)
Divorce*Gender						
Divorce* Male					-.291	(.289)
Duration*Male					.040	(.057)
Duration²*Male					-.002	(.003)
Divorce*Children*Gender						
Divorce*Children*Male					-.899*	(.360)
Duration*Children*Male					.062	(.071)
Duration²*Children*Male					.000	(.003)
Controls						
Age at divorce [c]	-.003	(.025)	-.011	(.025)	-.012	(.025)
Divorce*Age at divorce	-.008	(.012)	-.007	(.012)	.002	(.012)
Duration*Age at divorce	.004+	(.002)	.005*	(.002)	.004+	(.002)
Duration²*Age at divorce	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)	-.000*	(.000)
Year of divorce [d]						
Divorce*Year of divorce	.389+	(.224)	.350	(.224)	.426+	(.224)
Duration*Year of divorce	.258	(.270)	.199	(.272)	.211	(.271)
Duration²*Year of divorce	-.332	(.212)	-.344	(.212)	-.464*	(.213)
Education (ref.: low) [e]	-.024	(.254)	-.036	(.256)	-.045	(.256)
Intermediate	.056	(.039)	.064	(.039)	.068+	(.039)
High	.028	(.050)	.038	(.050)	.037	(.050)
Divorce*Intermediate	-.003	(.002)	-.003	(.002)	-.003	(.002)
Divorce*High	-.003	(.002)	-.003	(.002)	-.003	(.002)
Duration*Intermediate	-.313	(.235)	-.277	(.235)	-.277	(.234)
Duration*High	-.371+	(.222)	-.353	(.222)	-.371+	(.222)
Duration²*Intermediate	.008	(.046)	.001	(.046)	-.002	(.046)
Duration²*High	.001	(.002)	.001	(.002)	.001	(.002)
Immigrant (ref.: Native German) [f]	-.466*	(.236)	-.459+	(.236)	-.479*	(.235)
Divorce*Immigrant	.291	(.225)	.295	(.225)	.283	(.225)
Duration*Immigrant	-.030	(.045)	-.032	(.045)	-.027	(.045)
Duration²*Immigrant	.000	(.002)	.000	(.002)	-.000	(.002)
East German (ref.: West) [g]	-.466*	(.236)	-.459+	(.236)	-.479*	(.235)
Divorce*East German	.291	(.225)	.295	(.225)	.283	(.225)
Duration*East German	-.030	(.045)	-.032	(.045)	-.027	(.045)
Duration²*East German	.000	(.002)	.000	(.002)	-.000	(.002)
Constant	6.914**	(.209)	7.299**	(.254)	7.366**	(.289)
Observations	8,244		8,244		8,244	

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984 – 2012, release 2013. [a] Reference category comprises all observations up to one year before divorce; divorce is an indicator variable for the year of divorce; duration variables count the years after divorce (zero in the year of divorce). [b] At least one child living in the respondent's household in the year before divorce. [c] Centered at the mean. [d] Centered at 2010. [e] Low education = up to lower secondary vocational degree (CASMIN 1a-c), intermediate education = up to higher secondary degree plus vocational training (CASMIN 2a-c), high education = lower and higher tertiary degree (CASMIN 3a-b); centered at the mean [f] First-generation or second-generation immigrant; centered at the mean. [g] Living in East Germany (Former GDR) in 1989; centered at the mean. All models control for age in three-yearly intervals.

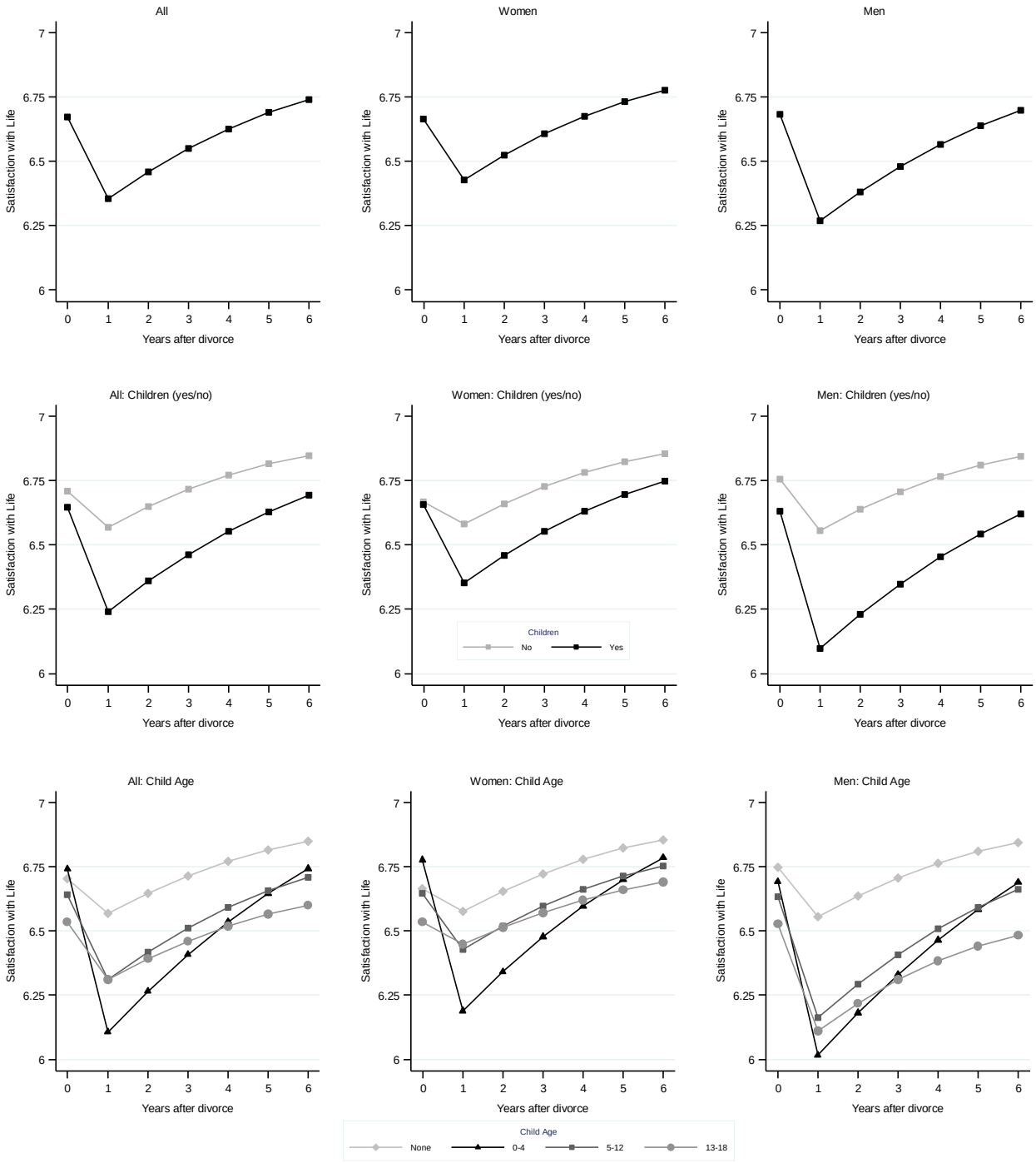

Figure 1. *Changes in Psychological Well-Being*

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984–2012, release 2013.
See Table 2 and Table 3 for details on the measures.

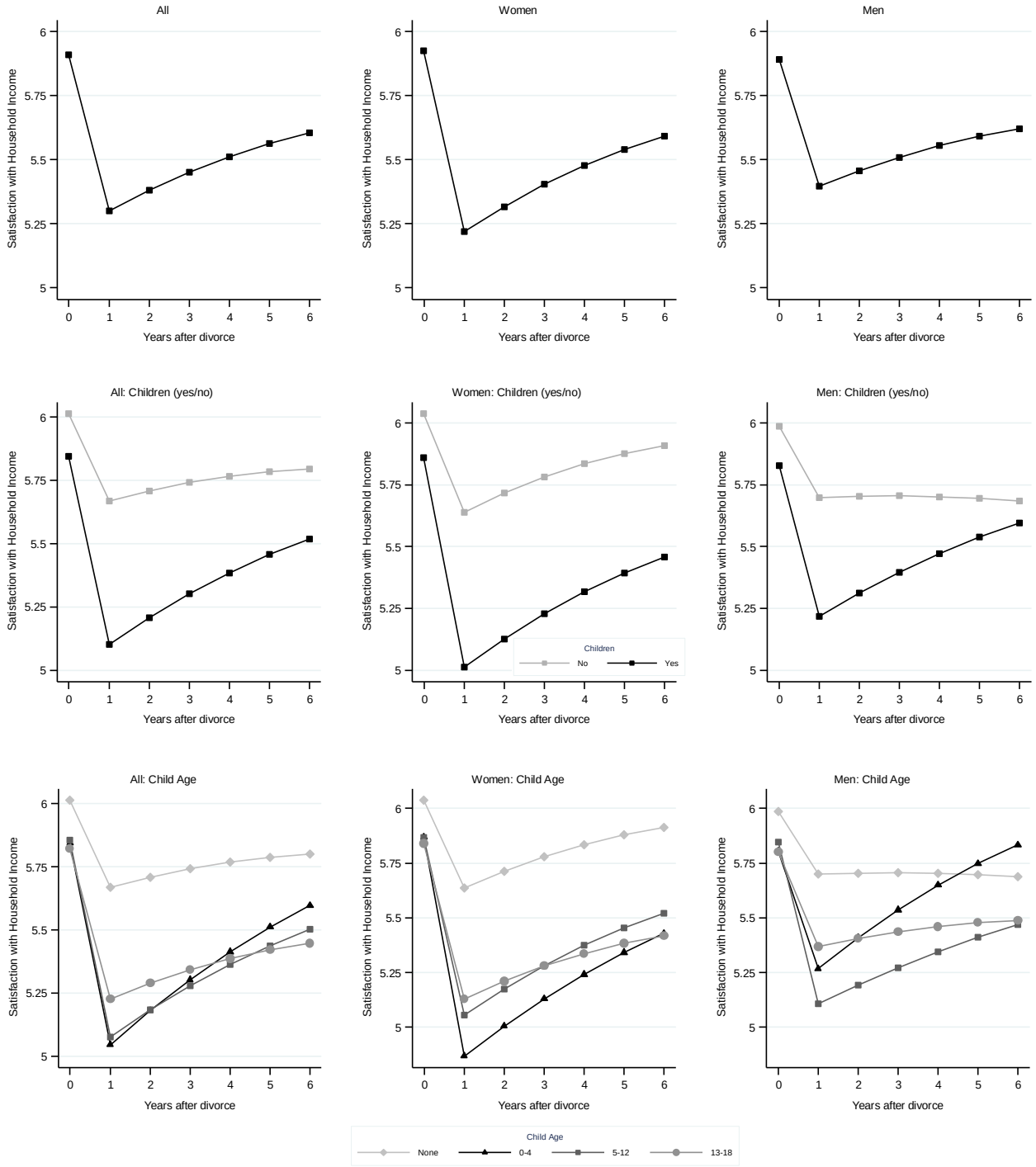

Figure 2. *Changes in Economic Well-Being*

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984–2012, release 2013.
See Table 2 and Table 3 for details on the measures.

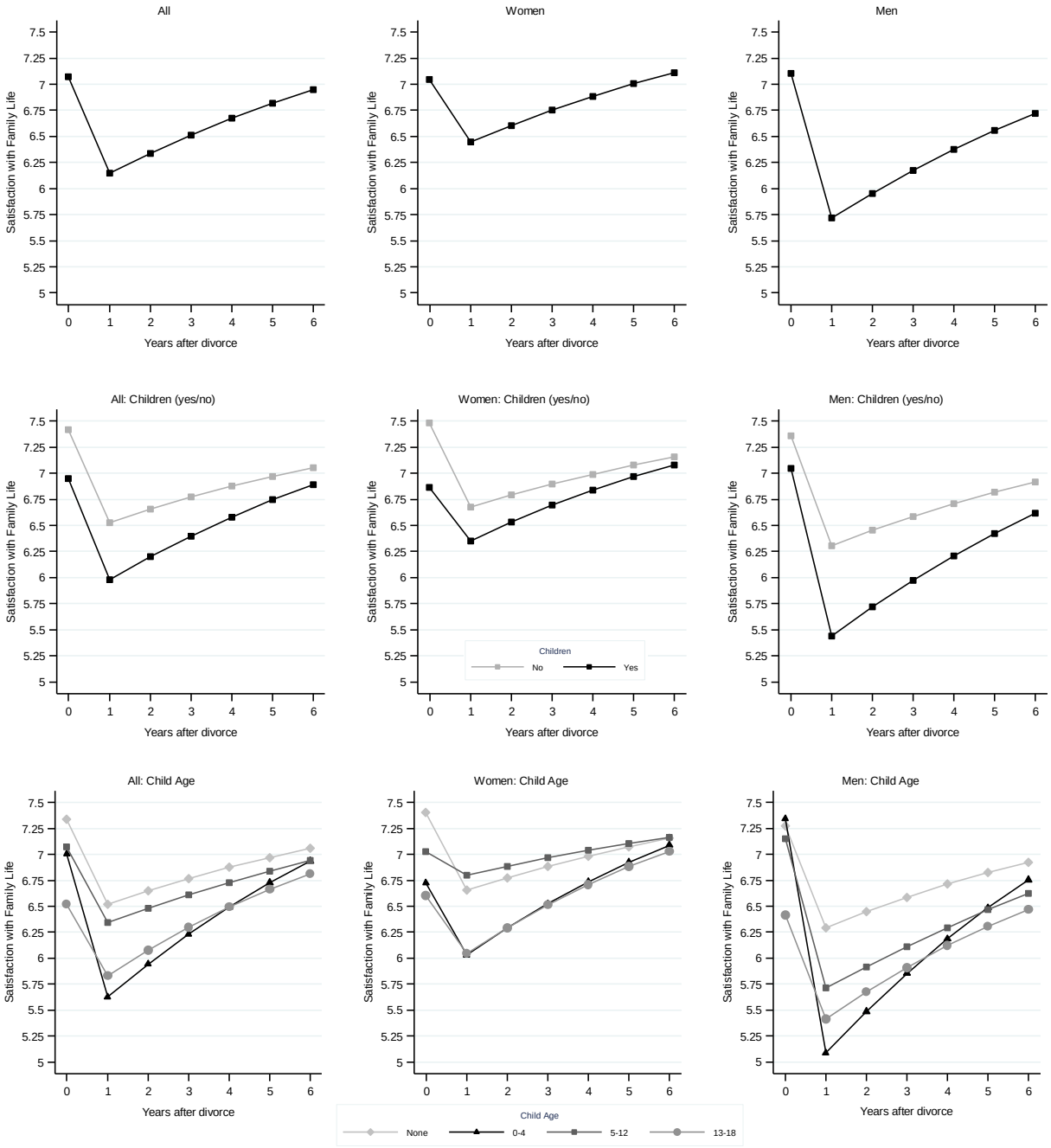

Figure 3. *Changes in Family Well-Being*

Note: Data are from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study 1984–2012, release 2013.
See Table 2 and Table 3 for details on the measures.