

MARRIED VS UNMARRIED LIFE, LEAD BY TERTIARY LEVEL STUDENTS: AN OPINION BASED SURVEY TO INTERPRET DIFFERENT ASPECTS AMONG THE UNIVERSITY GOING STUDENTS IN BANGLADESH



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Abstract

This study aims to know the perception and experience on marriage from the students who are married in tertiary education stage along with gaining statistical data of different aspects from the students who aren't married yet in student phase. To conduct this study, quantitative method is used and survey-based questionnaire was administered to the 60 university studying respondents by using convenient sampling method. Among the respondents, 50% are leading conjugal life in student phase and rest of the 50% aren't married yet at this stage. By scrutinizing of different aspects meticulously, it found from the married students that 70% of this category would like to suggest others to get married at this stage. On the other hand, 76.6% of unmarried students opine that they are likely to start conjugal life at this stage if family provides them support. On the basis of the stats, the underlying factors and students' opinion on different dimensions are analyzed to delve the study. Developing career through joint effort, loneliness issue, family support in student phase of conjugal life, reliability on relationship, percentage of the tendency to start conjugal life in tertiary stage, study hampering issues, relationship insecurity, preferable way to fulfill their needs, contradiction between academic and conjugal life, post marriage experience, supportive role of partners, impact of academic result and financial condition, tendency to experience motherhood at this circumstance and other different aspects of life among the married and bachelor students are taken into consideration for proper screening along with comparative analysis in the context of Bangladesh.

1. Introduction

Matrimonial relationship connotes socially recognized, value oriented and religiously permitted reciprocal commitment-based affair between a man and a woman to stay together as a part of each other. Marriage is defined as a legal-emotional attachment between two people to form a family (Kefalas et al, 2011). Fellow feeling, sharing attitude, supportive mentality and joint efforts toward the family goals are distinct features in married life where adolescent boys and girls fulfill their sexual demands as well as mental needs in the frame of legally and socially approved rituals, called Marriage. Marriage in the student life is a challenging phenomenon to make academic career shinier and more expected

from the perspective of students. On the flip side, leading unmarried and single life has also physical and psychological impact on personal phase which create unfulfilled needs, chaotic moral standards and resulting sexual, mental frustration in individual's adult period. Specially in conservative society live together, affairs prior to marriage, extra-marital affairs aren't allowed and these practices create value contradiction. Traditionally, after entering into the adolescent period, parents let their children get married in the social context of Bangladesh. In this perspective, female teenagers or adolescents in Bangladesh are holding the highest rate in Asia and fourth highest globally. About 59% of women in the country aged 20–24 years were

married in the student phase before they turned into 18 years (Afrin T, Zainuddin ;2021). This tendency was increased rapidly in covid19 period. A report shows that around 11000 early marriage occurred from March 2020 to September 2021 where most of the girls were school going (Roy P, Basher M; 2021). Besides, the number of general marriages had increased over 25 in 2022 (Ahmed; 2024). Retrospectively, it's simple to assume that large number of these married students got dropped out and entered into tertiary education stage along with conjugal life. Now question may arise, how they dealt with the situation simultaneously and what kind of changes they observed. Despite of getting mental support from the spouse, the situation could be trouble some due to hectic schedule of academic pressure. Imbalance may appear between the conjugal routine and academic schedule which creates life shaky and less dynamic (Thomas, 2019). So focal points of the study are here to evaluate the scenario of married students in tertiary stage, the academic performance of these students, their current condition from the financial aspects and so on.

On the other hand, most of the students at tertiary level haven't got married and lead single life which may cause mental dissatisfaction, loneliness and resulting value contradictory practices in the context of Bangladeshi culture. In liberal, western and Latin society, premarital sexual relationship is widely accepted and practiced. But in terms of conservative Muslim society like Bangladesh, it's a taboo and considered as obnoxious incident. On the basis of social structure and cultural values, fulfilling sexual needs among university students is easy to in different regions. For example, in Brazil a study represents that 85.16% university students have active sex life where 84.83% had sex with their steady partner, 47.86% had sexual relationship with their casual partners (Ramos. RCA et,al 2020). An Ethiopia based study shows that 54.3 % students have been involved in pre-marital sexual affairs (Akibu. M et,al 2017). Due to cultural lag and way of perceiving life, there are lot of differences exist here. That's why hook-up culture, consent based premarital sexual relation are considered as shameless tradition and practises. In that context, what kind of physical and mental impacts are appeared from leading single life in adolescent period as well as is there any correlation with academic performance of those impacts- are the focus of concern from inquisitive mind. Furthermore, how these people view the leading conjugal life in student phase at tertiary level and what's their opinion in respect of the relation between academic, married and single life are also the gray area in the frame of this study. Considering these factors, this study is focused to find out the experiences of married life in tertiary education phases i.e. support from life partner, joint effort to build up career, mutual understanding, academic performance, management skills, financial condition, family support at this stage. On top of that, the mental state of unmarried students, their

views on marriage in this phase and expectation to fulfill their needs in possible ways are the prime focus of this study in the frame of Bangladeshi culture, norms, life-style and standards. By taken into consideration all of these, this study is looking for getting the answers of these following questions:

- a) Do the students at tertiary level education appreciating marriage life simultaneously?
- b) What changes have come into the life of married students after getting married?
- c) How do the unmarried students deal with their adolescent period at this stage?
- d) What are the views of unmarried students regarding marriage in academic life?
- e) Which group of people are more advanced in terms of maturity and ancillary aspects?

1.2 Literature Review

A study, conducted by Hope Thomas on the students of Brigham Young University who got married and expressed the changes of their life. A graduate student named Sam Smith, shared his imbalance situation of time between his spouse and academic curriculum. Another student named Anna Affleck complained also about the life what she led where she isn't getting sufficient time due to the hectic schedule of academic life. But both of them also mentioned about mutual understanding and supportive role of conjugal life. Despite of mental support, preserving healthy relationship is tough due to the academic works which is addressed by Smith. End of the day it was founded that, marriage has great impact to make student life shaky and slower than previous days. But it also the root of support which is more reliable than unofficial relationship (Thomas, 2019). A cross-sectional survey was undertaken on King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia to know the affects of marriage on academic performance. The study analyzed the condition of 53 medical students and their result for being married in student phase. It was found that 39% Of female students in medical sector obtained less grade than pre marriage phase, while 30.5% obtained comparatively better grade, and the rest of the students did same result. This study evaluates the condition that through marriage, the academic performance isn't affected in big scale but it is correlated with the individuals, involved marital relation provides support them mentally and socially (Abou-Elhamd et. al, 2014).

Another study was done in Ogun State, Nigeria where researchers focused the challenges faced by married university undergraduate female students. Here, they tried to find out the post marriage condition to determine whether it's an asset or liability for female undergraduate. The study emphasized on the challenges faced by

marriage undergraduate female students. There are 150 students were selected as sample and 108 (83.1%) respondents expressed that family responsibility and school obligation lead to utmost pressure. No provision of adequate child care, dilemma of performing multiple roles, facing challenges due to the indifferent role of institution etc. facts were taken in consideration. According to the report, female students couldn't manage their time for study properly as they were busy and managed time for sleeping, commuting and eating. Study also showed that adult students were more capable in time management process than the older students which was about 63.1% and they didn't agree that time shortage was responsible to lead poor academic performance. Moreover, the conclusion was that the most common challenging fact was to manage multiple roles at a time properly (Losadea O. A. & Awotedu F. M., 2014).

Neamatullah Shomossi, Marizeh Torkmanejad, Mostafa Rad, Mostafa Amir researched on the lived experience and life satisfaction of students couple who started family in university life. The study was held in Iran. 16 students (8 couples) were selected as respondents through purposive sampling. The study expressed the positive outlook of the students on marriage life in spite of being a part of low-income family. It also expressed that the couple are being benefited from the socio-economic context. Evolution of conjugal life, social maturation, educational excellence etc. are the achievements of such marriages. Besides, stress also came from related sectors i.e. economic, housing problems, disapproval from family members, military services for men etc. The focus on university marriage insights the success and fear of failing marriages of couples who simultaneously studied and married in Iranian University. It was different from the traditional arranged married and other types of marriages. It's stated that university students who got married at this stage, leading successful life (Shomossi et. al, 2022).

Regarding that issue research was undertaken in Takhar University among 100 students to know the existing condition of married life in student phase. Noori & Orfan stated that Afghanistan female students who are married faced different problems in their education life. In terms of class, age, residential areas there was also significant differences among the responses of the students. The study suggests special counselling-based support from educational leaders and draws attention to the stakeholders to mitigate the area of concern (Noori A. Q. & Orfan S. N., 2020).

Another study conducted in Ghana where the married students were taken as sample to know the impact of marriage. The study focused on the impact of married life in school work, family of female students. Married students are exhibited the desire and determination to succeed in carrying out both roles. Some strategies are mentioned to make the roles and duties more

effectively. Time management, discipline-oriented life and other mechanisms are emphasized in the study to promote the working environment and efficient multiple roles (Jecty E. A et al, 2020).

The trends of early marriage specially in college life can be differed according to socio-economic and ethnic condition. The one factor like who are more stable can get married in college life. Other factor is ethnic factor which is related to norms, values, customs and tradition of any specific category on the basis of territory. Conflict based decision can be mitigated through the support of friend's decision (Neuback G, 1964).

Quinn addressed that scarcity of emotional support from Spouse may create the situation of negative behavior whereas strong support enhances the success in marital relationship among international students (Quinn, 2002).

Akers-woody (2004) stated that positive parental as well as family dynamics are involved in developing positive outlook regarding marriage. Married University students face difficulty and other problems with children at this stage (Alayi. Z et al, 2011).

The engaged women shared that using marriage as a path to fulfill the need for freedom, their wish to experience love in a culturally respectable frame. On the other hand, the married woman pointed the limited benefits of early marriage (Engelchin D.S. et.al, 2015). Single students hold comparatively standard grade points and academic result than married students which play pivotal role to create expected career (Jensen V. H et.al, 1958).

The married students are more capable to cope with emotional problems and tension than unmarried students. So, from this perspective of maturity they are in better condition. Lantage defined that there is participation in and enjoyment of more adult types of social functions. Rogers showed the negative impression on married students in participation of campus activities. According to Lee, the married women students were in trouble and pressures are the source of their problems they faced. That investigator mentioned counseling service for the married women students. Lontagne, another investigator provided the expected output of married students and his investigation said that, GPA of married men is higher and continue to improve than unmarried men. But study of another investigator also described the obstacles like financial problems in married life for the undergraduate students. The major source of married men was their part-time work (Marshall H. William, King P., 1966).

1.3 Study Gap

These are (aforementioned) the reviewed literature where the scenario of married and unmarried students from different regions is being attempted to portray. On the basis of reviewed literature,

it can be said that most of the researchers highlight the slopping, hectic and tough schedule of married students and their academic results. But the opinion of unmarried students regarding marriage in academic life, their psychological factors and holistic frame of married students aren't analyzed in many senses. For example, financial condition, income sources, family and partner support in married life at academic stage, sexual demand and its impact of unmarried students, time management factors, sex education, comparative analysis of academic result behind these two groups etc. Here's the study gap which drive the research to cover these gray and uncovered areas.

2. Scope of the Study

Aim of the study

This study is focused on the marriage life experience from the students of tertiary level education. It aims to analyze the simultaneity of marriage and academic life as well as understand the demands of unmarried students, their views on marriage and measuring the academic performance from both categories. Supporting attitude from life partner, financial condition, family cooperation, changes in married life in student phase will be represented in statistical way. Besides, preferable way from unmarried students to fulfill their sexual needs, their mental state and others aspects will be found out through the opinion-based survey. Moreover, the perception regarding marriage at tertiary stage education and its reality will be taken in consideration in this study.

The objectives of this study were:

- To know the condition of different aspects in life of married students at tertiary level education stage.
- Understanding the current condition and collecting the opinions of unmarried students regarding marriage in academic life.
- To comparative analysis and evaluate the current situation of both groups at this stage.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Description of the study area

This study is conducted in Rajshahi. Albeit, different public university students from different regions of Bangladesh were involved for the necessity of this research to cover the holistic scenario across the country.

3.2 Sampling technique

Using convenient sampling method, 60 university going students as respondents were selected. Due to unknown population in terms of married and unmarried status of the students, this sampling procedure was used. So, the sample size is about, $N=60$.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure & Analysis

Young (1966) said that, statistical sample is a miniature picture or cross section of the entire group or aggregate form which the sample is taken some formulae are used sampling, while selecting the sample for the study the population will be selected on the judgmental basis. This study is developed by taking 60 respondents through the convenient sampling methods who are married (30) and unmarried students (30) as well as studying at tertiary level. Among married, there are 15 male and 15 female students. For collecting the sample, some public universities were selected in Bangladesh. By taking consideration of literature review and pre-test of various factors, the questionnaire was designed and administered to the respondents through the google form. Basically, data is collected by using survey method. Most of the questions were close ended and structured. Literature is reviewed by self study method. Primary sources of data were collected through the survey from the respondents. Besides, journals, e-paper, newspaper were the source of secondary data .

Collected data is analyzed by using descriptive statistics. On the basis of nature, as data are represented as quantifiable form by calculating the mean values of different aspects; so, its quantitative research in nature. Opinion based data are represented in percentile form and analyzed as statistical way. By using SPSS IBM 20. version data are analyzed and presented through the tabulation.

4. Result & Discussion

Table 1 & table 2 are exhibiting the percentage rate of the different aspects of married & unmarried students respectively. On the basis of holistic frame, total 60 respondents have participated here where 50% are married and 50 % are unmarried students. Though in general sample size is $N=60$, I have analyzed these two groups by taking sample size $N=30$ for the perspective of each group and the acceptance of study.

Table 1. The percentage of different aspects in married life from married university students where total number of students is 60 and married students are about 30. (Male 15, Female 15)

Variables & Aspects	Frequency	N	Percentage
Married Students	30	60	50%
Male married students	15	30	50%
Female married students	15	30	50%
Got married after getting admitted into the university	25	30	83.3%
Willingly married	20	30	66.7%
Imposed by family to get married	10	30	33.3%
Having income source before marriage	17	30	56.7%
Having income source after marriage	27	30	90%
Better time management skill than earlier life	20	30	66.7%
Getting Supported by the parents in law for the female students in education after marriage	9	15	60%
Getting family supports to the male students	12	15	80%
Increase of income after marriage	23	30	76.7%
Presence of supportive partner to build career	28	30	93.3%
Proper concept about sex education	30	30	100%
Satisfied about sexual life	30	30	100%
Upgrade of academic result	17	30	56.7%
Downgrade of academic result	7	30	23.3%
CGPA of 3.00/ 3.50	24/6	30	80% / 20%
Facing obstacles to balance academic and conjugal life	26	30	86.7%
Conceived baby at this stage	0	30	0%
Have planned to take child at academic phase	0	30	0%
Considering current stage more methodical (mature)	28	30	93.3%
Regret to get married in academic stage	7	30	23.3%
Will suggest others to get married at this stage	21	30	70%

Among married students at tertiary stage, 50% of male and 50% of female have undertaken. 83.3% students from the married section had got married after entering into the university stage. Before turning into 18 rest of the student, that means 16.7% students had got married which shows the similarity of the study conducted by Zainuddin & Afrin as they showed in their study is that, 59% of women aged 20-24, got married before turning into 18 (Afrin, T, Zainuddin; 2021). In this study, the rate is less in proportion to that study. But the claim is not revocable as the similar thing is happening. 66.6% of students got married willingly whereas 33.3% said that they started conjugal life at this stage due to family pressure. From the perspective of financial capability and earning sources, study shows that 56.7 % of the students among this group had income sources prior to marriage. After getting married, the rate shows significant upward by leaps and bounds. Its about 90%! This rate can be correlated with the study conducted by Marshall H. William and King. P. as they stated most of the married students at undergraduate level face financial problem and do part-time job. But in specific sense, the percentage in this study is contradictory with that study as 76.7% have shared their opinion in respect of increasing income after marriage. So financially the married students seem like more stable and holding strong base in comparison with their earlier life (Marshall H. William & King. P ; 1966).

Another concerning aspect in marriage life was about time management issue as well as hectic schedule and pressure of performing multiple roles. All these things happen due to the lack of support, pressure from groom's family or financial violence. Most challenging issue was to perform multiple roles (Losadea O. A. & Awotedu F. M., 2014). But in this report, survey shows that 66.7% students have opined about better time management skill they maintaining than earlier life which is almost same to the study conducted by these authors as their report also expressed 63.1% were more capable in term of time management skill. From the sense of time management and well-disciplined life, the study shows that 66.7% and 93.7% of students have provided positive answers regarding these issues respectively. These rates are contradictory with the statement of Thomas who said that marriage life make student life more shaky and slower than previous life (Thomas, 2019). In married life a partner plays the pivotal role for making conjugal life more proactive by performing supportive role. As Quinn (2002) emphasized on her study about emotional support from Spouse which may create marital relation more durable. In this frame, the inquiry was to know the presence of having a supportive partner to build career. 93.3% of married students think that their spouse is supportive. Among female married students, 60% of them are saying that in academic sector they're getting support from parents in law. On the other side, 80% male students get support from the family after marriage.

The most important aspect in married life among tertiary level students is their academic performance and result. The study shows that 56.7% of married students academic result has been upgraded whereas 23.3% of married student's result has been downgraded. This rate supports the study conducted by Abou-Elhamd where it's stated that academic performance isn't affected in big scale through marriage (Abou-Elhamd et. al, 2014). In addition, the result of married students is developed by leaps and bounds which supports the opine of Marshall & King (Marshall H. William, King. P, 1964). But overall, dealing with the situation and performing multiple roles with responsibilities 86.7% of students said that they're facing pressure which supports the report of Losadea & Awotedu where it's found that 83.1% of students said that family responsibility and school obligation lead to utmost pressure (Losadea O. A. & Awotedu F.M, 2014).

On the basis of overall evaluation, 93.3% of married students considering current life more methodical than pre-marriage stage, 23.3% of them have regret for being married at this stage and 70% of married students will support others to get married at this stage. Here the important thing is that 0% of married students have conceived baby at this stage and the same percentage of this group haven't any plan to take child which may connect to consider current life more methodical as it supports the study conducted by Alayi. Z (2011) where it's stated that married students face problems with children.

In table 2, various aspects of unmarried students have taken to understand their current situation which may help to analyze the overall circumstances between married and unmarried students at tertiary level. 50% of total respondents were unmarried. 70% of unmarried students have said the feel loneliness for their current relationship status. For correlating with psychological aspect, the study envisages its impact on academic sector. In respect of this inquiry, its found that 80% of unmarried students opine that their study is hampered due to loneliness which means they feel necessity of a supportive life partner at this stage. Among the unmarried students, 20% have been involved in pre-marital relationship or affairs. Pre-marital physical involvement among the students was about 54.3% by the study of Akibu conducted in Debre Behran University (Akibu, M et al, 2017). In comparison with Ethiopian student's community, the rate of this practise is minimal. 66.7% of unmarried students think that pre-marriage affair isn't secure and stable. According to the report, 0% of students from unmarried group prefer live together to fulfill their needs though 80% of them shared the view that they are sexually frustrated. 23.3% of unmarried students don't appreciate to start married life at this stage. Albeit 76.6% of unmarried students have shared their view on starting married life in academic phase if they get family supports and this rate of tendency supports the

study conducted by Akers where family dynamics and positive parental were emphasized.

Now by comparing and cross analysis of data, we are going to see the current situation of both groups at this stage. In academic sector, unmarried student's result and performance were taken into consideration. 90% of unmarried student's CGPA is 3.00

whereas 10% of unmarried students are holding minimum 3.50 of grade points average. On the other hand, 80% of married student's CGPA was about 3.00 and rest of 20% were 3.50 holder. If we consider 3.50 a standard and academic excellency, then its undeniable to say comparatively married students are doing better academic result and performing well. This point of analysis is contradictory with the study conducted by Jensen (1964).

Table 2. Situation of unmarried students and their opinions (30) on leading married life in student phase at tertiary education stage

Conditions & Views from Unmarried students	Frequency	N	Percentage
Number of Unmarried respondents	30	60	50%
Feeling loneliness	21	30	70%
Pre-marital relationship/affairs	6	30	20%
Preference of live together from unmarried students	0	30	0%
Not appreciating marriage at this stage	7	30	23.3%
Thinking Hampered of study due to loneliness	24	30	80%
Will start conjugal life if family supports	23	30	76.6%
Considering marriage to make life more methodical	28	30	93.3%
Having frustration sexually	24	30	80%
Proper idea about sex education	14	30	46.6%
Insecurity regarding pre-marriage affairs	20	30	66.7%
Having income sources	17	30	56.7%
CGPA 3.00 / 3.50	27/3	30	90% / 10%

From economic aspect, 56.7% of unmarried students have income sources whereas 90% of married students shared that they have availability of income sources. In term of economic prospect, married students seem like more advanced.

In psychological factor, 70% of unmarried students are sufferer of loneliness and 80% of them think that their study gets hampered because of single phase. On the flip side, 93.3% of married students said that their partner is supportive for them to build up career. Regarding physical needs and sexual satisfaction, 100% of married students shared positive outlook whereas 80% of unmarried feel psychologically poor situation and consider them sexually frustrated. Besides, 46.6% of unmarried students have idea about sex education which exhibits the less than half of unmarried students where 100% of married students have said

they keep proper regarding this issue. After explanation of these issues, now inquisitive mind may seek to come to the decision regarding methodical life. On the basis of these, most of the respondents think marriage at this stage is more methodical as 100% of married and 76.6% of unmarried students prefer it.

5. Limitations

This study is confined due to three main limitations. First, the number of respondents represents the scarcity in proportion to huge population and the study is geographically held in Bangladesh. So, it may not depict the holistic scenario at international stage. Moreover, without any application of theoretical framework, the sagacious will face the gap of

theoretical background. Lastly, insufficient budget with lack of cooperation in the field level is another key factor of limitation to scrutinize the data more meticulously.

6. Conclusion & Policy Recommendations

Leading married or unmarried life at tertiary education stage denotes two different dimensions of life where impact, way of dealing capability, maturity, psychological-physical aspects vary from person to person. The core focus of the study was to depict the ongoing situation of married and unmarried students at tertiary education stage through statistical along with comparative analysis of both groups to evaluate the situation from each perspective. By analyzing comparative study of financial, physical, psychological, academic aspects respecting these two groups, it won't be biased declaration if married students at tertiary education stage are kept as pre-eminent. Moreover, this study has found the systematic life of married class through in pressure whereas exhibits the demands and needs of unmarried students along with their circumstances simultaneously. In conclusion, it can be stated that, in this stage the married students and their life-style express more advanced phase against unmarried students despite facing plenty of challenges where family support is underlying factor to overcome pressure.

According to the objectives of the study and in the light of findings, the following things can be taken in consideration : -

As most of the students want to develop their career through joint efforts if family provides them support, they can start married life in the student life. Besides, their hampered of study due to loneliness and depression, physical - psychological demand can be mitigated in this way.

On the basis of the study, unmarried couple don't prefer live together whereas they appreciate married life in the student life and emphasized on joint effort. But they're also thinking that it could be a matter of pressure as there is no enough financial backup. Some of them thinking its related with value-conflict. In this situation, govt. can provide special policy and family-career planning loan for those students who seek to start married life as there's not that much dependence.

The crucial part was about married students as one of the core wings of the study is broadly connected with them and their career. Married students expressed that there is positive impact on financial condition, academic result and the supportive role of their partner after getting married. According to the data, they've observed positive change and most of them will suggest others to

be married in the student life. But they also feel pressure and little bit tensed about future. In that sense, the government can provide the opportunity and scope for married students to become more skilled that help them to make themselves eligible for job market. According to the study, the negative aspect of married students is that they're feeling pressure to balance and coordinate married and student life simultaneously. Here the recommendations of the study are that these married people shouldn't be conceived baby prior to completion of their academic phase. Besides, they can pass conjugal life beyond going on as usual manner. Male and females can live with their respective family. But they can pass their spare time with each other, share their emotion and can motivate each other on career-oriented study which may lead to develop an expected future and ensure mental and physical support at this stage.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author announced that there were no potential conflicts of interest in respect to the research work.

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