

A Case Study On

**The Post-Pandemic Marital Situation of the People of
Bangladesh**

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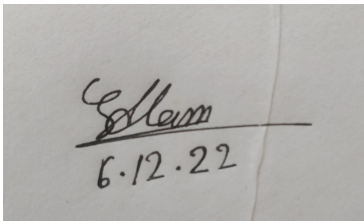
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Declaration

I hereby declare that this internship project has been done under the supervision of Ms. Farjana Yesmin, Lecturer, Department of English, Daffodil International University. I also declare that neither this project paper nor any part of this has been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree or diploma.

A photograph of a piece of paper with a handwritten signature and date. The signature is written in cursive and appears to be 'S. Alam'. Below the signature, the date '6.12.22' is written in a simple, bold font. A horizontal line is drawn across the signature and date.

Name; Shaikh Sadia Alam

ID: 191-10-1946

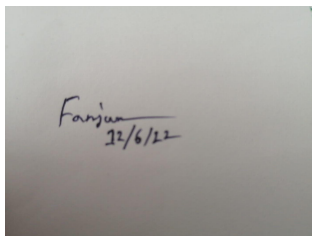
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Letter of Approval

This is to certify that, Shaikh Sadia Alam, bearing ID number 191-10-1946 is a student of the Department of English at Daffodil International University. I am pleased to state that she has completed her internship project under my supervision and worked hard in preparing this. The data and findings presented in this project paper seem to be authentic.

Shaikh Sadia Alam possesses a very good moral character and a pleasing personality. I wish her every success in life.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Farjana" with a horizontal line underneath it, and the date "12/6/22" is written below the signature.

Supervised by
Ms. Farjana Yesmin
Lecturer
Department of English
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Acknowledgement

First of all, I want to be grateful to Almighty Allah for His divine blessing through which it has been possible for me to complete my final year internship successfully. My parents also deserve cordial gratefulness. Their constant appreciation and motivation kept me going at the end of the day. After that, I am thankful to my adviser Farjana Yesmin mam. Her friendly advice and cooperative approaches really encouraged me to do my best in my internship. Finally, I am thankful to the Head of the chamber where I worked as an intern and observed legal clients.

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1st Chapter

1. Abstract

This paper aims to work on The Post-Pandemic Marital Situation of the People of Bangladesh. To complete the research, it was necessary to find a place where it would be possible to get access to real-life divorce cases. After pursuing the head of the chamber, and working with the lawyers, three divorce cases were studied through this project. The main purpose of this research is to learn about the declining marital situation of the present time, especially the post-pandemic situation. This paper gives some views of the major crises people are facing in their marriages. Besides, some possible aspects of improvement in the area are also included in the paper. In short, this paper conveys the scenario of the post-pandemic marriage situation and the crises. It also contains some solutions to strengthen the family fabric.

1.1 Background of the study

Social scientists say, “Marriage is the initial building block of society”. Marriage develops family. In a society where families are broken, people suffer ¹from different aspects. Vast urbanization, the industrial revolution, the development of individualism among people, lacking morality are contributing to the fragility of marriages nowadays. The situation got a lot worse after the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Multiple realities of post-modern human relationships are visible. Children are now more vulnerable than at any other time before. The fragility of families not just damages individuals, but also increases numerous crimes, increases suicides. According to a report by Prothom Alo, "At least 50,000 divorce applications were filed in Dhaka North and South City Corporations in the past six years, which means on average one divorce application was filed every hour," such a horrible reality.

The well-being of a human relationship depends on various factors. Mutual understanding, economic solvency, and concern for mutual needs. There are threats that can affect a relationship. American psychologist Paula Pietromonaco, a professor at the University of Massachusetts, whose prime research concern was to understand how interactions in marriage shape a partner’s emotional bond. She mentions unemployment, economic hardship, and work stress as external stressors of a relationship. In the presence of these external stressors, it is difficult for partners to be responsive to each other's needs. This study relates a lot to the reality of the pandemic situation.

Pandemics are a form of an external stressor for couples and families. Many families have lost their one and only breadwinners. Many kids have lost their fathers. A lot of people lost their job and took their own life by suicide. Apart from these brutal scenes, there were families where the economical condition was stable or at least they were capable to maintain

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a living. We can notice different types of crises in those families. Quarantine forced every individual to stay inside their house. Undoubtedly it was a suffocating experience for many of them. Domestic violence, torture, and arguments increased in the following circumstance. But the divorce rate was stable during the pandemic period. But after the pandemic period, the divorce rate in Bangladesh increased drastically. According to the North city corporation and south city corporation, in the last six years (2011-1016), 36,371 divorce cases were filed. Among them, 24,803 were filed by wives, and 12,018 files were reported by husbands. Among those 36,371 cases, 30,855 cases were executed. The divorces were executed mostly among people aged 30 to 35.

Now if we study the scene of the post-pandemic period, we can see such a hideous image. According to Dhaka South City Corporation, July 2020 had 878 divorce cases. At the same time, Dhaka North City Corporation executed 654 divorce cases. That means there were 1,532 divorce cases executed in July 2020. This was the highest number of divorces executed in Dhaka in one day. The following survey states that there was an average of 51 cases executed daily.

1.2 Objectives of the study

1. To scrutinize the current marital situation of people
2. To observe the number of divorces during and post-pandemic
3. To identify the key reasons behind the divorces
4. To understand how the industrial revolution, more specifically, technological advancement has damaged human relationships.
5. To define the male and female psychology of marriage and separation
6. To understand how the present situation can be resolved

1.3 Methodology

The methodology that I followed to do my internship

1. Meeting with the advisor - To be informed about the proceedings
2. Selecting a place of internship- I selected Uttara Law House to complete my internship
3. Taking the recommendation letter having the sign of the head of the department
4. Approaching the institute- Meeting with the head of the chamber, showing the recommendation letter from the department, and seeking permission to work with the law chamber
5. Receiving permission from the head of the chamber and meeting with other lawyers working with the chamber.
6. Consulting the clients and observing the cases

1.5 Organization details

Uttara Law House is a law chamber situated in Uttara, sector-9. It was situated in 2021 by a team of aspiring lawyers. Uttara Law House deals with clients with various legal issues. ULH provides various legal services including Tax consultations, Land Vetting, Company registration, Corporation documentation, Marriage & divorce consultancy, etc. There are 6 lawyers actively practicing in the chamber. Most of them graduated from the department of law, at Dhaka university.

2nd Chapter

Case Discussion

During my internship with Uttara Law Chamber, I accompanied the lawyers to consult some clients. I have witnessed numerous clients with divorce issues. In this chapter of my report, I will discuss 3 cases that I have observed during my internship. For the privacy concern of the clients, I will be using pseudonyms instead of using their real names.

Case 1:

This case starts with Maliha and Tonmoy. They were married for 3 years. Maliha is a well-educated girl from a middle-class family. She is 29 years old. Tonmoy also had higher education and his family is extremely rich. Tonmoy is 32 years old. Their marriage was going smoothly and eventually, they got a baby. After the corona period, the conjugal life of Maliha and Tonmoy was not going as smoothly as before. They had arguments over small issues. Tonmoy eventually became less responsible for Maliha and their baby girl. At the same time, Maliha was seeking a Ph.D. opportunity in china. All one a sudden Maliha noticed that Tonmoy is an extreme porn addict. This addiction of his gradually made him less interested in Maliha. His sexual behavior became vulgar day by day. Maliha was upset after knowing all this. She tried to help him get out of this addiction but Tonmoy was arrogant and was not ready to have a calm discussion with Maliha about this. Their mutual relationship became so worse that Tonmoy hardly talked with Maliha. Maliha sought cooperation from her mother-in-law about Tonmoy's addiction. But her mother-in-law was not ready to accept the reality. She accused Maliha of the addiction Tonmoy had formed. Being helpless, Maliha went to her father's house with her daughter. Tonmoy did not try to bring her back. Day by day Tonmoy became more irresponsible and unconcerned about Maliha and their daughter. Whenever Maliha tried to communicate with him, he used to talk harshly. After going through a lot, Maliha finally decides to divorce him.

On the other hand, Maliha got the Ph.D. proposal accepted by a Chinese university. Now she is in a dilemma. Because if she goes to china to pursue her Ph.D., her daughter will be alone in Bangladesh. She consulted with a lawyer at Uttara Law House about how she should proceed legally with her marriage and her daughter.

Case 2:

The second case I am going to discuss is a bit interesting. Here both the husband and the wife had their second marriage. Alamgir Rahman is a 37 years divorced man. He jobed in a private company. Covid-19 made him unemployed. He did not have any children. The financial crisis brought his marriage to an end. Now he is trying to establish a business. And gradually he entangled himself in an affair with another divorced woman. Her name was Afroja Binte Selim. She is a 35 years old pediatriist and in comparison to Alamgir, Afroja was comparatively more financially stable. She had a daughter aged 9. At this stage, they decided to get married. But Alamgir forbid Afroja to tell about their marriage to anyone, not even their family members. They married each other secretly and they did not register their marriage. So, there was no proof of their marriage. After several months, Afroja finds Alamgir uninterested in their marriage. As their marriage was secret, they were not living under the same roof. Both of them used to live in their own house. Alamgir promised that once his business was established, he would bring Afroja and her daughter near him. Alamgir borrowed about 2 lakh taka from Afroja for his business. As the day goes by, Alamgir was gradually becoming more uninterested in their marriage. Even the behavior with Afroja was becoming worse. One day Afroja came to know that Alamgir is having affair with another woman named Molly Jahan. She is a 24 years old university student and she is also desperate to marry Alamgir. Afroja felt that there was no soil beneath her feet. Then started the war to keep their marriage stable. Afroja tried so hard to communicate with Alamgir but he seemed uninterested. After some months, one day when they were having an argument, Alamgir confessed about his relationship with Molly to Afroja. He showed the screenshots where

Molly and he were having a romantic conversation. He said that marrying Afroja was necessary for him because he was optimistic that Afroja would help him to initiate his business. It was a sheer selfish and unforgivable decision Alamgir made. Afroja decided to divorce Alamgir. But it was very tough for Afroja to find a legal solution for her case. Because they did not register their marriage and there was no proof of their marriage. So, they finally ended up their marriage in front of a lawyer in Uttara Law House. After the divorce, Alamgir gave Afroja Fifty thousand taka as compensation.

Case 3:

This case was different from the cases above. Here the groom was Saifullah Chowdhury. He was a student of Dhaka university He was pursuing his master's degree from Dhaka University. His family was insisting him to get married to a girl they have chosen for him. Her name was Sabrina. They got married in May 2021. The girl was from the village Saifullah belongs to. She is a university first-year student. After marriage, she shifted to Dhaka to stay with Saifullah and his family. But Sabrina had a pre-marital relationship with a boy of her village with whom she kept her communication after her marriage with Saifullah. During the quarantine period, as both of them were staying at the home, Sabrina's dubious attitude made Saifullah doubtful about her. Eventually, he came to know about her affair. Saifullah wanted her wife to leave that relationship. Sabrina promised him that she will further not contact her former lover. For some days their relationship was stable. But after a few months one day, Saifullah discovered his wife is again texting that man secretly. This time Saifullah decided to divorce her. After completing the formalities, they ended up their marriage in February 2022.

3rd Chapter

Overall findings

3.1 Following Case Observation

The three following cases are unique from one another. An analysis of these cases will depict the crisis of these relations and at a time it will show us the crisis of most of the post-pandemic marriages.

In the first case, there was immorality, lack of respect, and disloyalty. Tonmoy, the husband was irresponsible about the welfare of their relationship. Maliha tried so hard but could not help sustain their marriage. The Pandemic period increased the usage of phones among the mass people. Over usage of devices and having a huge screen time reduces human energy and efficiency. It also rises irresponsibility inside a human which is vividly visible in Tonmoy.

The second case seems slightly more brutal. Alamgir married and deceived Afroja's emotions. As Afroja was a divorced woman, handling these types of situations is not easy, over, she had a 9-year-old daughter. There is no doubt that this will leave her with great trauma. Also, this case leaves a lesson for everyone. That marriage should not be performed. Marriage means social acknowledgment of a lawful relationship between two people. Everyone should keep this in their mind.

In the last case, we can again observe the presence of an immoral act, this time with betrayal. In this case, the suspect was a female. Trust and commitment is the primary building block of a relationship. Two people who are in a conjugal relationship should always be respectful of these two things.

3.2 Divorce Situation in Bangladesh: Law, Policy, and Procedures

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the separation rate among males in Bangladesh was 0.07% and it was lower than the rate among females, 0.49%. The dissolution of marriage according to Bangladeshi law holds three equations, 1) Written notice 2) Arbitration board 3) A 90 days lapse. After 90 days of lapsing, they take a recorder endorsement from the registered office. Pertinent of the three stages is the instance of a spouse. According to the Muslim Family Law Ordinance 1961, sub-section (1), if a man wants to divorce his wife, he has to give the chairman a notice about his decision and should supply a copy of the divorce letter to the wife. Subsection (3), says the talaq will not be effective until the expiration of ninety days from the day on which notice under sub-section (1) is sent to the Chairman. Sub-section (4) states, within 30 days of the receipt of notice under sub-section (1), the Chairman shall arrange an arbitration council with the purpose of bringing reconciliation between two parties. The arbitration council shall take all steps necessary to bring such reconciliation. According to sub-section (5) of the same section, if the wife is pregnant, the divorce will not be effective until the period stated in sub-section (3) or pregnancy, whichever be later, ends.

On the contrary, there is no established Hindu marriage Act where it permits the spouse to divorce the partner. If only the partner converts to another religion or the wife declare herself as a prostitute, then the divorce will be effective. According to the Hindu Married Women's Right to Separate Residence and Maintenance 1946, couples can live separately but that does not ensure their divorce. Even if they live separately, they will be considered husband and wife. During the time of separation, if the wife marries another man, the marriage will be considered illegal in the lens of law. If a woman separated from her husband marries another man and gives birth to kids, the law will consider those kids as illegal also. The previous husband will be able to case a file against the new husband. But the former husband will be able to marry as many as he wants during the period of separation. It is necessary for the

policymakers to bring reformation in Hindu Marriage Laws. And people of other religions go through the Special Marriage Act of 1872.

3.3 Causes of Increasing Divorce Rate in The Post-Pandemic Period

Present-day marriage dissolution includes a wide array of problems and can be seen from various viewpoints. Intolerant mindset, lack of patience, disloyalty, and irresponsibility towards relationships, were common traits of modern days divorces. Post-pandemic divorces add up some new addition to these crises. According to my observation on overall divorce cases, I do not think that pandemic has shown us the crisis developing rather than creating new problems. Also, it can not be denied that there were some problems that were created solely because of the pandemic. Some of them are financial instability, loss of family members, and imbalance of lifestyle. In 2020, a survey on divorce shows present-day reasons for the dissolution of marriage from both male and female perspectives.



The above infographic was published on Prothom Alo, on 21st December 2020. This shows male and female psychology and the percentage of divorce in Bangladesh. Especially in Dhaka, Sylhet, and Chittagong. It states that most of the women mentioned torture for dowry, husband's doubtful attitude, extramarital relationship, and drug addiction as the prime concern for issuing a divorce. On the other side, from the male perspective, they consider the wife's temper, negligence in the household, infertility, and disobedience as their prime concern for wanting a divorce.

4th Chapter

Recommendation

After going through these cases and my previous knowledge of marriage and human relationships, I prefer some recommendations that may help the couple to cope with the struggles of conjugal life. My recommendations are mostly influenced by the three cases I have examined. They are recorded below

1. Being responsible about own partner. The thought should be in mind that marriage does not always mean “beds of roses”. A large share of marriage stands on duties and responsibilities. And if both ends are aware of their own duties, these are the things that give life to a marriage.
2. Every newlywed couple should always register their marriage. As females are the more vulnerable side here, they should be more conscious of this matter.
3. Trust and loyalty are the roots of a relationship. If hardship comes partners should communicate more efficiently with each other.
4. empathetic and tolerance towards the other half is necessary.
5. Excessive usage of devices and social media is not just harmful to day-to-day life but also destroys any relationship. Before having the fear of missing out (FOMO) on social media, individuals should think about what they are missing in their real life.

5th Chapter

Conclusion

This observation was done to have an approximate idea of why the divorce rate has increased after the pandemic period. We have come through many conjugal crises in this paper. Actually, these things are not linear. Human psychology, relationship, people's demands, and sense of responsibility changes over the course of time and there are uncountable commodities that affect these things. We can see the drastic evolution of people's mindset after the industrial revolution, the development of gadgets is also affecting human relationships from both positive and negative perspectives. The Covid-19 situation was a lens that amplified the complications around us and made them visible to us. It showed us how our medical sector is nakedly corrupted, and it showed us how our defense against nature is still weak likewise, it also showed us how day by day we are being ignorant of the value of human relationships. A large number of people got divorced during the post-pandemic period and the numbers are increasing day by day. Among these couples, many have children. The main concern is they. No doubt these "future of the nation" will suffer greatly in their childhood because of the trauma their parents have gone through. It's high time every individual should be conscious of marriage and its sustainability. Otherwise, a traumatic generation has really dark future in front of them.

6th Chapter

Appendices

6.1 Questionnaire

1. How old are you and your spouse?
2. For how long have you two been married?
3. Do you have any children? If have any, how old is/are he/they?
4. Do you think your spouse is involved in any illegal activities?
5. Have you or your spouse ever attempted suicide?
6. Have you or your spouse even been hospitalized for an emotional or psychiatric disorder?
7. Have your spouse ever abused you?
8. Have you or your spouse had a sexual relationship during the marriage with someone other than own spouse?
9. How much time do you or your partner spend on social media?
10. How was the financial situation of your household during and after the pandemic period?

6.2 Certificate of Internship

Uttara Law House

House #08, Road #07, Sector #9, Dhaka-1230
Email:- uttaralawhouse2022@gmail.com

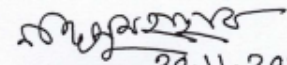


Certificate of Internship

This is to certify that, Shaikh Sadia Alam, Programme: BA in English, ID: 191-10-1946 is a final year student of the Department of English, Daffodil International University. I am pleased to state that she has completed her internship at Uttara Law House. She has observed different legal procedures and was a part of the consultation in three divorce cases.

Shaikh Sadia Alam possesses a strong moral character and a responsible personality. I wish her success in life.




20.11.2022

Md. Naimul Hasan
Advocate, Dhaka Judge Court
LL.B., LL.M.(Dhaka University)

Attested By
Md. Naimul Hasan
Head Of the Chamber
Uttara Law House

6.3 Plagiarism Report

Turnitin Originality Report					
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A Case study On The Post-Pandemic Marital Situation of the People of Bangladesh Submitted by Shaikh Sadia Alam ID:191-10-1946 Department of English Faculty of Humanities and Social Science Supervised by Ms. Farjana Yesmin Lecturer Department of English , Daffodil International University Faculty of Humanities and Social Science Declaration I hereby declare that this internship project has been done under the supervision of Ms. Farjana Yesmin, Lecturer, Department of English, Daffodil International University. I also declare that neither this project					

