

The impact of the unofficial relationship on the university student's studies, time and mental health

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Abstract

The unofficial relationships are described as “The commitment between the two people i.e. male and female supporting each other physically and emotionally without fulfilling any religious procedure or legal process defined under law and owning the social define responsibilities”. It has been considered that nowadays the institutions are changing into the dating hubs and students are getting involve with each other which is causing effect on their study, time, financial condition and mental health. The methodology which is design to conduct the research is in two phases; in the first phase of the study we have tried to assess the student's condition through collecting the questionnaire from the different institutes in the territory of Islamabad which is chosen due to the diversification. In the second phase we conducted the interviews with the instructors and educationist those have the direct linkages with the students and observing them on a regular basis. The assumptions of the research which were made depicts accurate to the assumption design upon the literature review. The students are going mainly through the issues of the mental health and time schedule disturbance. While students are facing the challenges regards to the studies and financial condition which are creating the challenges for their professional life. This study is going to gives exposure base understanding of the impact been faced by the students in the academic institutes and their disturbing their personal and professional life.

Keywords: unofficial relationship, academic institutes, students, mental health, socioeconomic, romantic relationship.

Introduction

It is really obvious in our life we need the different relationship to fulfill our emotional and physical needs, human is the social animal; it begins with the idea of the need of the human surrounded with the different people in their personal and professional life. All Abrahamic religion believes the world started with the two people i.e. Adam and Eve which is descriptively given in their rituals (“Surah Al Baqara (The Cow),”), (*Bible Gateway Passage*,). The world started with the relation of the Husband and Wife, later extended to blood relations, in laws relation, friendships, colleagues, mates etc.

This is natural the male and female are structured in such a way where they need each other and helps each other in their emotional and physical need of the human. In Pakistan, the majority of the Population is Muslim and people from the other religion based here too. The major part of the society considers marriage as an only possible way to have relationship between the male and female who are unknown to them. Even the love marriage is a really big challenge in Pakistan for the people to convince their parents due to the customs and norms issues.

In the west where it is common to have a relationship before marriage and it is acceptable in the society and they practice it normally. it is not considered as an issue while their society accept this thing and no one cares even during my experience living out there I saw unofficial couple use to support each other (economically and socially), living with each other it is been adopted as their part of culture while there is also social disturbance been noted by sociologists like early pregnancies unofficially as US is on top in this in western civilized world for this teenage unofficial relations (CDC, 2014).

We cannot say Pakistan do not have such a culture but it’s not open and taken as a taboo. Mostly the practice of this relationship majorly found in our youth, in my general observation where I have seen that its common in the population of Rural and Urban areas. Such relationship is called unofficial relationship. If we talk about South Asia this is considered as immoral because this region is having social structure bounded with culture and norms while still we can see there are love stories been highlighted belong to this region like Heer Ranjha is one of the famous for it (Asian Women Magazine, 2010). Mostly relationship like these are based on the attraction, crushes and initial friendship while mostly such cases seen that it effects their studies and their time which they should locate for their future sustainability.

It is defined as “The thing you do as people do in relationship but you are not dating out” (Patty B., 2016). It is need to understand that when you hear the term of unofficial relationship it defines that the two people define their self as a partner and committed to each other with the future planning but haven’t make anything legal”(GoMarry.com, 2019). If we constructively make statement about unofficial relationship, it defines as,

“The commitment between the two people i.e. male and female supporting each other physically and emotionally without fulfilling any religious procedure or legal process defined under law and owning the social define responsibilities.”

While looking to the area of discussion which seems having limited research base studies and considering a concerned issue for the youth and especially to the students are making efforts to grow in their career. Pakistan is developing country where the individual struggle matters a lot to improve their career and most of the students are facing challenges in their professional life which is having a lot of factor but one is losing the focus. Loosing focus have one reason students are more excited in the institute in Pakistan to develop a relationship beside focusing on their academic standard enhancement.

We see that the students those are working on the respectful place into relationship hub where they prioritizing their enjoyment on career. Disrespecting the efforts of their parents, because in Pakistan we have seen the parents make a lot of efforts and bear economic pressure to fulfill the education of the students. While the children earn by their self as they access the minor opportunities to fulfill their needs to bear their expenses they are independent. Even the children there are in a relationship even live together and bear their self responsibly, which is right or wrong is a contextual debate which we cannot make it here. But in Pakistan children are destroying the investment of their parents they are dependent upon their parents fully concerning to their tuition fees, university transport, stationary, notes etc. and they take all things in with disturbing their own life. To understand this issue it is really important to understand the consequences developing upon the students studying the higher educational institutes of Pakistan and understand the possible solution for developing extensive understanding of the stakeholders.

Research objective

To understand the impact of the unofficial relationship on the university students studies, time and mental health.

Literature review

Mostly students seen in the institutes are coming up with mindset of having good time rather than good career which is not even healthy for girl and boy by such immature activities they destroy their future with their own hands. People are looking up more for their relationship beside their career. The concept of the unofficial relationship where it is defined to become a partner to each other and become a support in any situation with respect to socioeconomic needs, but unfortunately the partners spends most of their time in the fun, hangouts and enjoyment. The student's educational status also gets disturbed where they have place more focus on their partner than the studies. Somewhere it is observed that the partners supports each other in the educational tasks and activities but it's rare to happen, because the prime focus of the both is to get the temporary leisure.(Schmidt & Lockwood, 2017).

The study upon the hook up changing the romantic relationship where the students are frequently getting involved in it because it doesn't involve any commitment and the students are getting into hook up culture where the culture of a one-night stand and side on partner taking up place. It mostly distresses the students and they get diverted from their educational to the relationships, the female students develop the linkages inside the institutes and also with the people using social media and other digital tactics. This culture is creating problem for them to ensure their focus on the education, with time most of them go through mental health issues. (Fielder et al., 2013).

The mental health challenges, rapidly increasing in the youth in every part of the world, while there are different social issues which stress them out. The students from the different parts of the world are facing different kind of mental health but in some they are common like depression, anxiety, stress, anger and frustration. The different social pressure like career, employability, financial stability etc. are also common to be built in developed or developing countries. Analyzing the human nature with respect to their natural needs which are in built in the human is common

everywhere, having a good partner is a wish for every students for which the universities are becoming the powerful hubs and can be stated as a dating hubs for the students. The students are more interested to get a partner than getting a good career opportunities, while in the relationship where in the custom bounded societies like African and Asian countries where the consent of the parents and the choice of the parents somehow obligatory for choosing a partner, in those societies mostly parents choose the partner for their male or female child. It develops different stress from this way where they have to give up their long term commitments. It develops mental health challenges for one or both to carry out their emotional attachment and they have to face the different challenges in the society because in the developing countries, it is considered embarrassing to visit the psychologist for your mental health condition (Valentiner et al., 2017).

Scope of the study

- Targeting the Secondary and higher education or tertiary students to compare the ratio of the students involve in unofficial relationships.
- Effect on the student's studies pattern and their educational record, their daily routine and time they are giving to their career development.
- Mental health challenges they face due to unofficial relationship.

Methodology

It is a taboo topic which really discussed even in the academic areas of the Pakistan for which it was really challenging to find the focused literature studied on the students of the Pakistan, studying in the Pakistan higher and secondary educational institute.

1. **First phase:** Taking questionnaire from students in which majority was of age bracket 18-23 and education standard is bachelors, both male and female equal ratio is tried to assure to make a standardize analysis and gender representation should be counted.
2. **Second phase:** Interview from the educationists and the instructors of the institutes to take up their review on the situation they empirically observed situation of the students, as they are having close link with the students and can easily relate the consequences been developing due to the unofficial relationships.

The methodology for the research will be adopted as a mixed research method to assess the findings qualitatively and quantitatively to assess the foundational issues and providing the recommended practices at the individual and the institutional level to cope up with the challenges faced by the students.

Finding and Analysis

As in our first phase as mentioned above to take the surveys from the students. We conducted this with the students from the universities of Islamabad, where we see a diversification in the student's enrollment around the different universities. For this we chose IQRA University Islamabad campus, Quaid E Azam University, Bahria University and International Islamic University in which we collected 500 samples from the audience to get the extensive understanding of the student's exposure for the unofficial relationships and how it's affecting their study time and mental health. We will analyze the data with the perspective of the empirical analysis and reviews from the educationist which also belong from the same universities on their demand their name been made confidential and haven't shared in the research for which we will use the words the Teachers while sharing point of view.

Relationship engagement ratio

The priority of the students in the universities is to get the partner in Pakistan where they consider it a source of motivation and make them able to deliver best in their career.

The above given figure 1, explains about the involvement ratio of the students which are focused to get into unofficial relationship and also we have mentioned the single students those are not having any unofficial commitment.

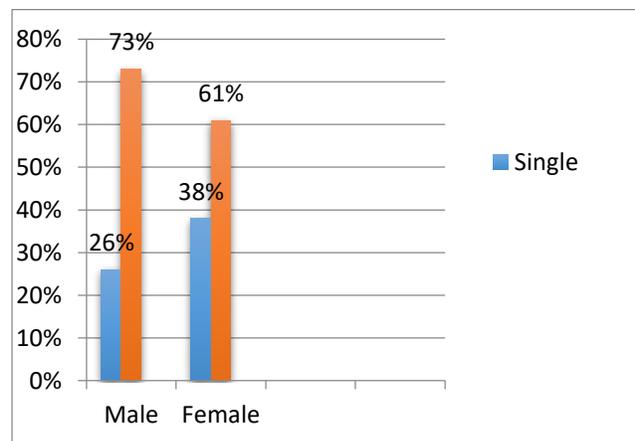


Figure 1: The quantitative scenario of the unofficial relationship commitments in the students.

If we see males about 73% are in unofficial relationship and females are around 61% which shows males are more involved in it, but it doesn't depict that the females are not involved in the

relationship. The data which we have collected based on the questionnaire where the factor of fear involves in which mostly don't share their personal situation openly and it is observed female are more shy to contribute in such activities. But on the other side if we see in the Pakistan, where we have society having religious impact which mostly replied by girl keep them away from such activities as it is not anyway in the Islam to make any kind of relationship beside the Formal procedural relationship known as Nikah (نكاح).

Also we see the attitude of the male in the institutes where they spent most of their time in the fun activities and taking the words from the teachers they observed the students are having prior focus on their enjoyment and the unnecessary things which are not going to impact their career anyway.

The male students were observed having low academic performance, in which we analyzed their CGPAs (Cumulative Grade Point Average). The main reason which is identified mostly the parents which are sending their children into the universities are just fulfilling the responsibility to pay for their university and colleges expenses.

The parents are not having proper understanding to understand their performance evaluation criteria where also, most of the parents are away from the students because they came from the far long areas and different parts of the Pakistan. While the parents those having access to the universities never visits the institute beside any serious concern been mentioned by the administration which is mostly disciplinary issue been explained by the teacher.

Developing initial sources

In our research while studying the literature review where we assumed that the mostly students develop their relationships in the institutes, in our survey we have collected the data which explains the figure 2.

If we look upon the figure 2, it explains that 63% of the relations starts from the institutions and while the 18% from social media and 18% from the family functions. The basic understanding which develops from the data is the institution, the institutions which are developed to provide the knowledge and exposure to the students to enhance their career to sustain their professional life.

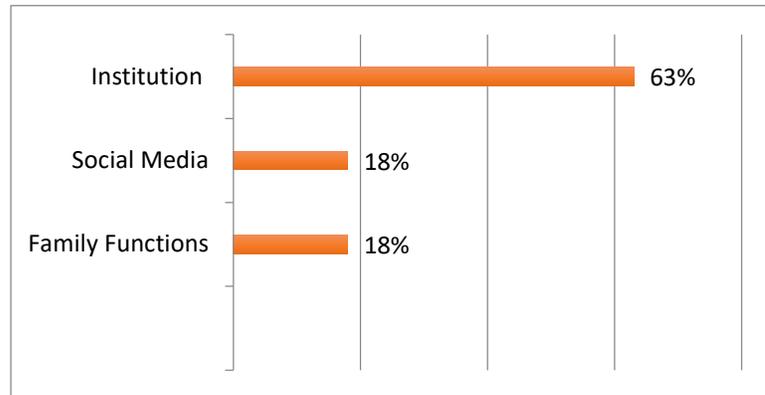


Figure 2: First meeting with their partners and opportunity to developing relationship.

The institution converting to the dating hub is not an issue we will identify in Pakistan, but everywhere around the world. But the main challenge faced by the Pakistani students that they do not have easily access to the income opportunities and get independent in their decision making. While interviewing the teacher we got a viewpoint in which one was the students are enough mature to deal with their things and we cannot have any direct restriction to guide them for their personal life as we are not having any control on them. One view was that the universities especially the place where students develop their emotional and professional intelligence for which they have to bear the different experience. The unofficial relationships are also the source of good and bad experiences which develops their focus to define their partner with the traits.

While if we analyze the situation, the point of view we got that; the students should define their goal of life and make effort for their future besides wasting their time in the other activities which are not going to make a beneficial impact on their life.

Relationship experiences and exposure

Experiences could be different, but the focus of the relationship of everyone is mostly unitary to get a peace and joy able life with the person, to whom their frequency matches to spend their whole life with them dedicatedly.

While promises are made to break as people says, but somehow we see the people who are experiencing their unofficial

relationship we can explain the situation by looking the data description in figure 3 are living confused 40%, 27% having awesome time, 18% with the good time and 13% are facing bad.

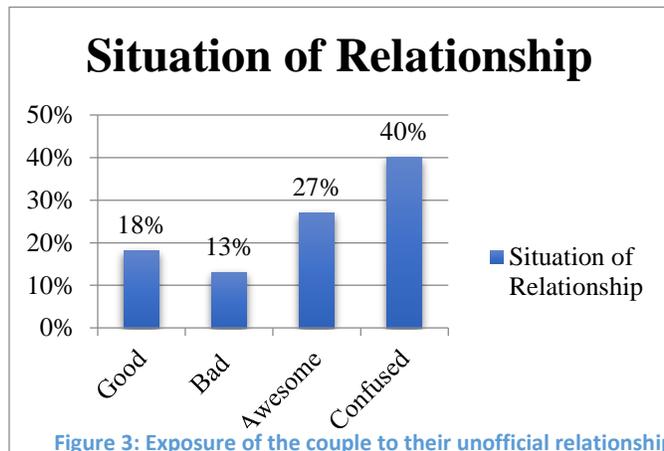


Figure 3: Exposure of the couple to their unofficial relationship.

Talking about the confused people which are facing the time where they are not able to decide what they are going through this relation. Looking to their condition and analyzing their data it depicts that the people are going through the challenging situation and disturbance between them. Someway there are thinking differences, social differences, economic differences, family pressures and doubting on the future of the relationship.

The people who are having awesome experience been seen majorly got newly in the relationship not more than a month, which explains that they are still in a way to experience the different things going to happen in the future. But it cannot be said as they all are going to have the same experience but yes the problem differs and many of them we saw tackling with them. The students those are feeling awesome do not have any direction but they are focusing the enjoyment. While their awesome experience include the late night chats, hangouts, dating etc. but nowhere we see them serious with their life goals which are ultimately getting disturbed due to their irresponsible behavior towards academics.

The people are having good and bad experiences gives different directions. The people with the good experience explain that their relationship is contributing to their academic life and also helping to boost their professional capabilities. While the bad experiences include the miserable behavior of the partner, in which mostly male feels that their female partners are less cooperative and they do not try to understand the situation and being demanded for the things all

the times besides looking to the situation. The females which feel bad is that they mostly found their male partner trying to access the others girls which do not make them feel good and they are having vibes of getting cheated.

Impacts on their socioeconomic life

It is really obvious that human has to live in the society to which they belong, they have to fulfill their needs and take up the responsibility of the nature and nurtured descriptive. In a society of the Pakistan where the male do not have only to bear their unit but they have to fulfill the needs of the family. Like they have to make out the things for their brothers, sisters, parents and even their first relation like paternal uncles too.

The assumption regarding the impacts on students having unofficial relationships which were made after studying the literature; study, financial conditions, mental health and time are mostly affected within relationship. The students which took the part in filling up the questionnaire in were also having other problem due to the government policies, social pressures and the professional challenges they are already imagining to get through.

Looking to the data we will the 36% of the subject i.e. students facing challenges to manage their time and mental health issues are effecting their student life. While the financial condition of the students gets effected about 18% and 9% feels their studies get affected.

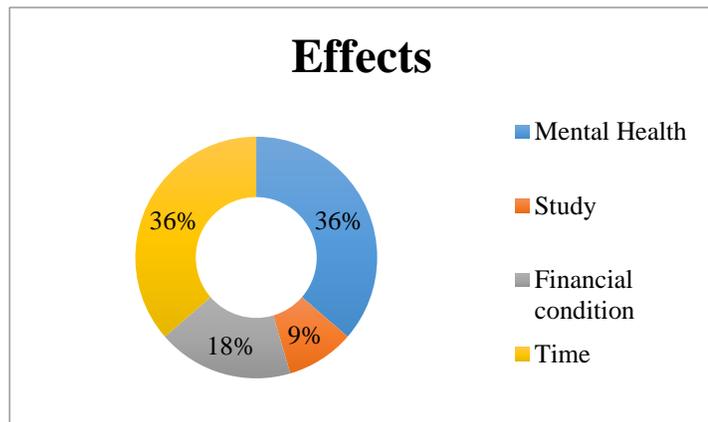


Figure 4: Effects on the student's socioeconomic life.

Discussing about the mental health and time, which is having correlation in the student life and the students, the mental health in any part of life cannot be neglected because for any task you require to have the focus and you will be able to get that through any task if you are mentally stable enough to cope up with that. The mentally challenged situation mostly students are facing the stress, taunts, aggressive and bullying behavior of the partner which divert their attention from the studies and also they are unable to lead their social life. Within discussion with the teacher they

says mostly we have seen that the mental health issues impact develop rapidly in the female students and they are under different pressures where in the normative society they have to struggle for their social image and they sometime been involve into undesirable activities include physical relationship, adultery (which is considered unlawful in Islam), making the vulgar pictures etc. which later on brings them into miserable situation they have to go through in different scenarios. While looking to the time when your mental health is not stable, you are unable to carry out your time and regulate your daily base functioning. The timing disturbance make situation challenging with regards to manage their assignment timelines, their classes routine, exams studies timing and maintaining between their socialization and academics. In the interviews we got the views mainly the students do not follow their deadlines and they are always demanding to have the extension in the deadline and upon the extension they need another extension. The challenge is that they do not manage their time and they are focus just to involve in one thing.

We do have developed the questions to know how much income students generate in a month or how many students have their own income resources. In Pakistan, where the students are mostly dependent upon their parents and the other sources which does not directly comes under their entity or ownership. We could see the 99% of the students do not have the income where we see the students have 1% which are having income source. This 1% of the

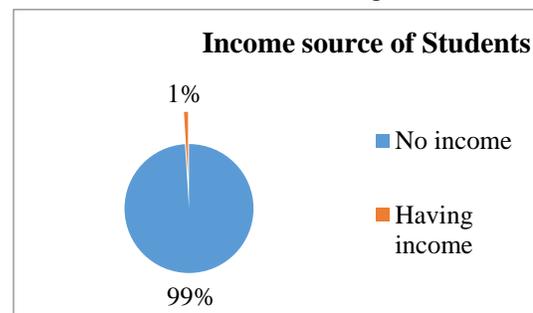


Figure 5: Income source condition of the students.

students are facing some financial issues from the family for which they have to struggle to make for their living and working to fulfill their needs. The 36% students those are having a financial pressure are due to using the money on hangout beside their academic needs. As in our interviews we came to know that mostly the students spend their tuition fees which they get from their parents or guardian spent upon their partner, mostly males are involve in it.

While talking about the studies which student thinks get affected 9% shows their priority towards their life. As they are not even considering their academic performance going to impact upon their professional growth and the challenges which are coming to them and developing silent consequences which are going to make long term challenges in their life.

The students which are going through these affects do have to analyze their situation and understand their actual needs to lead their life in a practical manner. The views which we gather from the interviews is that, the students involves in the unofficial relationship totally ignore their studies and they do not focus this anyway to move towards growth and ignoring their career needs.

Limitations of the study

The limitations which been faced in this study as follows;

- The topic was really sensitive to discussed and people were initially not ready to take the part in it.
- Still there is need to deeply study the mental health challenges to the students due to unofficial relationships.
- The extensive research work required to assess the role of the academic and social institution to provide counseling to the students regarding unofficial relationship and dealing with their mental health issues.

Conclusion

The unofficial relationships are having two way effects in which both male and female have to bear the consequences. Also in the traditional societies, if we talk about the females they have to suffer a lot due to the taunting attitude, honor killing, shaming in society and disrespect for their emotions from the parents. These things should be stopped and not favoring it but unfortunately changing the attitude of the society requires the decades where we have to take such measures to neglect any pressure.

The unofficial relationships needs a proper counseling and should be discussed openly. The students are unable to understand their emotional management and intelligence, because they have access to the things but do not have the proper guideline to understand their needs and leading their things in a better way.

Male and female contact with respect to social practice is not something a taboo, they can be better as friend besides making fake promises with each other on the time when they are dependent on their family to by a pen to write their notes.

Students are still living in their comfort zone and their parent trying to make it more comfortable which is not healthy for them. Parents should give these students tough time in their study period and try to build them for their professional ground. Nowadays making income is

really convenient like doing freelancing and online money earning opportunities which are indeed in access to ensure their daily base necessities to be fulfilled by their own efforts to realize the value of money which they waste on the unnecessary activities.

The teachers has to play a potential role in their situation, they can be a mentor for them because they can understand the contemporary needs of the students. The students are having more of their time in the institute where they can make close relation with the students and guide them properly in a direct or indirect manner. The institutions should try to make the established counseling centers for the students where they do have an access to be dealt properly with their situation, it will also help institute to assess the situation and take the regulatory measures to standardize the educational functioning and needs to their emotions.

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