

## Original Research Article

### **LIVED EXPERIENCES OF MARRIED POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS AT UNZA REGARDING MARRIAGE MATE SELECTION**

#### **ABSTRACT**

This research sought to find out the lived experiences of married postgraduate students at UNZA regarding marriage mate selection. The study used a qualitative research methodology as well as a Case Study as its research design towards data collection. The data was collected using a semi-structured interview guided questions. The sample selection was 16 in total of postgraduate students at UNZA which included 8 males and 8 female participants. The general literature overview of this research indicated that marriage is a fundamental social institution that exists throughout the world. And that marriage mate selection is one of the most important decisions of people's social life which determines their happiness in marriage. However, the findings in this study revealed that people looked for attributes or factors such as education in marriage mate selection because they believed that marrying a fellow educated person made it easy to relate as their thinking would be aligned to theirs. Secondly the financial stability of a potential marriage partner was also an important attribute that both males and females looked for in their prospective mate. Thirdly the study showed that a God-fearing partner was preferred unlike a non-believer because of the belief that Godly people were less likely to indulge in unholy conduct such as infidelity. The other perspectives includes some female preference of a man who is tall in height and dark in complexion, while some men preferred women who are beautiful with small and curvy body structure. Finally, the overall attributes in marriage mate selection included a man who is loving, caring and with good leadership qualities, while males preferred a woman who is respectful, intelligent, trustworthy, understanding and one who refrained from taking alcohol. For further studies, it is recommended that other research focus should be conducted in communities where there are less educated males and females.

**Key Words:** *Marriage, Mate Selection, Lived Experiences, Marital Expectations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a fundamental social institution that exists throughout the world. It is a social institution that is designed, among other things, to ensure the happiness and fulfillment of men and women who enters into it [1]. According to Girgis [2] marriage is a union of a man and a woman who make a permanent and exclusive commitment to each other with the hope of bearing and rearing children together. For marriage to take place mate selection is one of the most important decisions of people's social life hence they consider a number of factors in terms of what to look for in a lifelong partner [3]. This is because, research has shown that the possibility of happiness is low in marriage if people do not consider the related significant factors [4]. Marriage also involves the allocation of rights and obligations between parties to the agreement. A number of scholars such as Hanon and White (1997, cited in George et al [5], and Buss [6] outlined the rights and obligations which are allocated in marriage in different cultures. These include among others; a man's need for assurance concerning the paternity of his children, parenting style, chastity and house-keeping skills. Other scholars [7] argue that family and society are two important factors that can interfere with personal decisions and shape one's manners therefore, a combination of one's personality and socio-family factors play a role in influencing mate selection as well.

However, other studies have indicated that when choosing a marriage mate, there are some factors which also play a vital role such as physical attractiveness, educational background, financial status, religion, intelligence and socio-cultural perspectives [8,9]. On the aspect of culture O'Neil [10] explained that when people consider spouse selection, it is generally not only a personal matter but rather a cultural one as well. For example, in some cultures in the Western societies, Batabyal, notes that the person wishing to marry generally looks for a spouse for herself or himself [11]. In some African culture on the other hand, it is mainly the responsibility of a man's family to look for a woman and ask for her hand in marriage on behalf of their son [12]. Nonetheless, the cultural influence in marriage mate selection, does not do away with individuals own marital expectations prior to marriage

When it comes to the role of occupation in mate selection, Maliki, and other scholars generally argued that graduates prefer to marry someone with good educational background like themselves as it results in similar attitudes, values and beliefs among spouses [9, 3, 13, 14, 8, 15]. This observation aligns with a study undertaken by Abubakar [16] in Kenya which found that students had preferred occupations in mate selection and these occupations were

computer science, pharmacy, medicine, and banking and finance. Orisaremi and Alubo [17] further note that in African countries with less advanced economies, religion, race and ethnicity were influential factors in mate selection.

Studies undertaken have also indicated that men place more emphasis on physical appearance, but other scholars presented a contrasted view by stating that relationship desires and partner preferences of young men and women generally change as they move through emerging adulthood [18]. Young men and women become increasingly concerned with partners' internal attributes and less concerned with external attributes. This view was buttressed by Maliki [9] who pointed to character as an important internal quality that people consider in mate selection. This is because from the study the author conducted, participants said that people with good and pleasant characters could easily accept and attract other members of the family. So they easily adapted to new situation of life since people have different backgrounds. These perspectives in marriage dynamics are not exceptional to Zambia.

Statistics indicates that Zambia is one of the countries in Africa where marriages occur relatively early in terms of age. It is estimated that 42% of females aged 20-24 were married by age 18 [19]. The two forms of marriage practices in Zambia includes: Customary and those under the Marriage Act. The overarching research question of this research was to find out the attributes that influenced marriage mate choice among married University of Zambia postgraduate students and the motives for marrying their partners. In terms of literatures on Postgraduate students on marriage mate selection in Zambia, there is a dearth of literature on factors that influence marriage mate selection. Hence, aim of the current study focus which seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on factors that influence marriage mate selection among postgraduate students.

### **AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

The primary aim of this study was to find out the attributes that influenced marriage mate choice among married postgraduate students and the motives for marrying a partner with those attributes.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

To find out the attributes that postgraduate students looked for in a potential marriage mate prior to their marrying or getting married.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research made use of a qualitative research methodology. It is an approach which uses a small sample selection for quality purposes in data collection. Therefore, the research explored UNZA Postgraduate individual narratives and experiences, but at the same time situates these married postgraduate students within the context of the prevailing Zambian sociocultural, historical, political and economic milieu not to mention their personal contexts that enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of their needs, views and opinions.

### **Research Design**

The study used a Case Study research design under the qualitative methodology. A purposive sampling was applied in formulation of a Case Study group for data collection through semi-interview guided questions.

### **3.2 Sampling**

Male and female postgraduate students at UNZA were chosen for this study. This included 16 Postgraduate students that is 8 males and 8 females. The selection of these students was based on such criteria as their marital status, that is, those who are married. Preferably, those who had been married for a year and above were better suited for this study. These were considered as people who could express their views from their lived experience and also one (1) year and above was considered enough time for them to have settled in their marriage hence knew the pros and cons of their partners.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The researcher used semi-structured interview guided questions to explore the meaning participants attached to selecting a marriage mate.

## **Data Analysis**

Interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. The audios were then transcribed and uploaded into the qualitative research software called NVIVO version 11. The categories were then grouped to form sub-themes and then eventually, the sub-themes were grouped to come up with main themes.

Firstly, participants were provided with information sheet and consent form before taking part in the study. The participants were informed about the potential ethical issues of the research and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. This step was taken to ensure that the participants were fully informed of the nature of the research that they were engaged with and as well as issues of anonymity and confidentiality. All the collected data was kept and used for scholarly purposes only.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **Attributes looked for in a potential marriage partner prior to marriage**

The data presentation was based on the themes identified through the information collected from the participants. These themes includes: Socioeconomic status of marriage mate, their religious perspective, physical appearance, internal attributes as well as

#### ***a. Socioeconomic status***

From the verbal accounts of the participants, socioeconomic status seemed to have played a significant role in the choice of a marriage partner and under this, various sub-themes emerged. Thus, the socioeconomic attributes that were brought out in this study included education, financial stability and type of profession of a potential marriage partner. For example, 9 (4 males, 5 females) participants out of 16 said that they needed a man who was educated hence they had this to say;

*“I wanted a man as educated as I was that is, someone who would have completed his grade 12 and made it to university because by then I had completed my grade 12 and was about to enter university” Ireen*

Similarly, Harry and Anold also felt that education mattered to them when it came to mate selection although in terms of the level of education their preference differed from those of their female counterparts thus, they said;

*“I was looking for a lady who at least had some basic education such that with the passage of time she would advance. I also needed someone who could understand issues and be able to reason on them and resolve.”* **Harry**

While on the other hand, 6 females out of the 16 study participants said financial stability had a greater influence in determining their choice of a marriage partner and this is evident from the verbatim below:

*“Having been brought up by a single mother, I did not really have the father figure to emulate in my life [...] However, I needed a man who could provide and not only I being the one to provide because I saw how much my mum struggled to provide for us as a single parent. Not that I wanted a man with a lot of money no, but at least someone who could meet our daily needs.”* **Racheal**

Study participants were also asked as to whether they had any occupational preferences in their choice of a marriage partner and results indicated that 10 out of 16 did not have any occupational preferences while 6 said occupation mattered to them. The views of those who did not have any occupational preferences were noted in the following verbal accounts;

*“ No I did not have occupational preferences in that needs and desires change as people grow. So for me what is more important is does this person have a vision of doing something in future [...] So really, what matters is someone doing something at the end of the day.”* **Davis**

Other students had this to say on the reason as to why they did not have any occupational preferences;

*“In my case I did not take that one seriously because my thinking is that life is just what you make out of it because mostly people choose to get married to people with certain occupations because they want some monetary benefits attached to certain occupations [...].”* **Janet**

For other students, occupation mattered to them in mate selection and they had their reasons for having those occupational preferences and this is what they had to say;

*“I preferred marrying a teacher who would work during day time hence less mischievous as opposed to a nurse who would work in the night hence I could not trust such a one. But also I didn't mind marrying a Social Worker because I believed people in such professions have a heart for people thus, she would make our home a warm place for visitors.”* **Roy**

*“I wanted to marry a banker because their job demands for certain outlooks of people like dressing smartly all the time and not being in casual so just that smartness was a plus for me.” Racheal*

On the other hand, other study participants felt that they could not marry someone in certain occupations like the medical field, police officer or soldier but were okay with the rest of the other occupations. Their reasons for not wanting to marry partners in the mentioned occupations were given in the following verbatim;

*“I did not want anyone in the medical field because of the issue of being on call at any time meaning that he would be leaving me in the middle of the night sometimes to go for work. Aside that, I do not like the smell of medicine [...]. But I was okay settling with a man in other professions aside the medical profession.” Naomi*

*“I did not have issues with marrying someone from any occupation except a policewoman, nurse and a soldier because all these involve night shifts in their duties and as for soldiers and policewomen, when they go for operation elsewhere chances of being unfaithful are high.” Jack*

The above presentation alluded to the fact that when looking for a marriage partner; socioeconomic status was not overlooked by the participants. Some of those socioeconomic factors included education where the overall experience of female participants was that they needed a man who was more educated than them while the male participants said they only needed a woman with some basic education. While on financial stability, only female study participants said they needed a financially stable man who could meet the needs of the family. Additionally, some students did not have occupational preferences in their partner choice but others said occupation mattered to them thus, some said they preferred marrying a teacher, banker or social worker. These includes male study participants who said that they did not necessarily need a very educated lady rather someone with basic education was okay for them for so long as she could speak basic English with the children at home. For others, they said they could not marry someone in the medical field, a police officer or a soldier.

#### ***b. Religiosity***

Study participants highlighted religiosity as another important attribute they looked out for in a potential marriage mate prior to their marrying or getting married. Therefore, 11 participants out of 16 expressed their views on how religiosity mattered to them as echoed in the following verbal accounts;

*“I needed a God-fearing man but I was not so strict that he should be of the same faith because in every church there are people who do bad and those who do good so what mattered to me was simply someone who was committed to God.” Naomi*

*“I wanted someone who was committed to God regardless of religion because I know that such a person would be trustworthy hence she would live a life in line with bible principles such that she cannot commit adultery because she learns that such is condemned in the bible and more especially that we live in the world where HIV is widespread so I needed someone who could be faithful hence could not betray me.”*

**Daniel**

*“She was from a Christian background which is something I liked because I knew that as a wife she would be respectful and submissive to me as her husband which is in line with our Christian values.” Daniel*

Although God fearing was one of the attributes that study participants looked out for in a potential marriage partner, two varying views emerged in that for some participants, religious affiliation did not matter for so long as someone was God-fearing but other participants felt that they needed someone of the same religion. For men, they said that marrying a God-fearing woman was good for them as she would be trustworthy hence could not commit adultery, and that a woman with a Christian background would easily respect and submit to her husband. Females on the other hand said it was easy to resolve differences amicably if both partners were being guided by Godly principles which they believed lead to a long lasting marriage. Overall, one central point that stood out was that, they looked out for someone who was God-fearing.

**c. Physical appearance**

Physical appearance also came out as one of the important factors that influenced choice of a marriage partner among participants in this study. The physical attributes that were brought out by participants included height, complexion, beauty, body size, HIV negative and a non-hairy body. For instance, height seemed to be of serious consideration on the part of the females in that 5 females out of 16 participants said height mattered to them and this is evident from their views.

Still females seemed to take into consideration the aspect of complexion in mate choice. Thus, 4 females out of 16 pinpointed complexion as an important attribute they looked for in a potential marriage partner as echoed in the following verbatim;

*“I did not want a man who was light in complexion. I wanted someone dark in complexion to torn down the skin colour of my children.”* **Racheal**

**Naomi** shared a similar thought with Racheal regarding complexion preference by stating that;

*“I needed a man who was dark in complexion to dilute my lightness as I am light-skinned, and also not a” wow” guy.”*

*“I also needed a taller man and my husband met that criterion because I did not want to bear short children but aside that also I feel like short people have a certain negative attitude that irritates me and I don’t know maybe it is because they feel ‘vertically challenged.”* **Naomi**

*“On height, he was taller than me and that was a plus to me because I did not want to bear short children.”* **Diana**

On the other hand, beauty was not left out in that 4 males out of 16 participants said it mattered to them thus, they had this to say;

*“I wanted a beautiful woman both physically as on the face and with curves.”* **Jack**

**Ben** and **Davis** shared a similar view and pointed out that,

*“Physical beauty like a beautiful face and curvy body and also I needed a lady with a small body size.”* **Ben**

*“Beauty also mattered but to a minimal degree because it was just an entry point to getting to know someone.”* **Davis**

*“I needed someone beautiful so that at least when we have formal gatherings for instance at work I can be able to introduce my wife to my friends with confidence because shortly after I started working and I had not married yet, I observed that some of the people when invited for a function they normally used to leave their wives behind because they were not proud of them.”* **Anold**

When it came to physical appearance, female study participants seemed to have had their own demands while males had theirs too. Most females preferred a man who was tall in height and dark in complexion, HIV negative and not with a hairy body while the men mainly focused on having a partner who was beautiful on the face, with a curvy body structure and of course a small body size. One of the other attributes that were brought out by the study participants was that of beauty as they attached a particular value to it and this was mainly brought out by 2 of the male participants out of the 16 participants.

**d. Internal attributes**

The internal attributes were also contemplated upon in marriage mate selection. For instance both male and female students admitted to the fact that they also looked out for internal attributes in a potential mate as it mattered as well. Therefore, they highlighted a number of internal attributes that they looked for and these were; loving, understanding, respectful, patient, well-disciplined in terms of behaviour, intelligence, good leadership qualities, caring, mature, honesty. On the aspect of understanding, for example 3 (2 males, 1 female) participants out of the 16 participants voiced out on how it influenced their decision to marry their partner. Below are further examples:

*“I wanted a man who would love me and would not leave me because I saw how much my mother could be lonely at times.”* **Racheal**

*“I needed someone who could accept my being meaning, my family and my background, and someone who could love me for who I am.”* **Davis**

On the other hand 7 males and 1 female out of the 16 participants said that their focus was on woman who was patient, respectful and understanding hence, they echoed the following words:

*“I needed someone who was respectful, someone who could understand me as a man and someone who was patient.”* **John**

*“As for me, I needed someone who could understand me and whom I could understand as well, someone who could respect my being.”* **Davis**

*“I preferred a man who was respectful and understanding.”* **Natasha**

*“I married her because she was disciplined and could not unnecessarily pick fights and this was vital for me because I grew up in a home where my father and mother were always fighting so I did not want my own marriage to be like that.”* **Jack**

While **Roy** had this to say:

*“My wife was well-disciplined and less of a talker so I knew that someone who does not talk much can protect my dignity by not embarrassing me in front of people and she will not go out there to tell my mistakes to others.”*

*“I was once married, and then we divorced so this is my second marriage. Thus, in terms of understanding, I needed someone who could understand me because usually when a woman has had a history of divorce, there is that stigma that comes with it saying “why did she fail in her first marriage?” and even if we give excuses it is difficult for people to understand since they were not there but this was not the case with my current husband because he understood my situation and loved me for who I am.”* **Janet**

**Sarah** uttered these words on why good leadership qualities won her heart;

*“He had a vision for our relationship meaning he was serious about us hence was able to drive the relationship in a particular direction which was really impressive to me as I saw that with such an aspect he can lead his family as he had good leadership qualities.”*

**Naomi** expressed how her partner’s honesty and humility impressed her and uttered the following words;

*“He was down to earth and did not come to me with a lot of promises that I would even start doubting because by then he only had a certificate and I was pursuing a degree but he openly told me his educational qualification, that was a plus to me because he was real and true to himself and did not want to make fake promises. Given this, I felt I would be secure with him. He was honest.”*

Other study participants however stressed on how much they looked out for someone who was well-disciplined in terms of behavior:

*“I also needed a well-disciplined lady meaning, a lady who was not into alcohol or clubbing because such makes one lose self-control hence becoming promiscuous.”*

**Ben**

Therefore, from the results generated above, a number of internal attributes were brought out by the study participants as they felt like internal attributes mattered in the choice of a marriage partner as they affect marriage either in a positive or negative way. Internal attributes that came out included loving, understanding, respectful, patient, well-disciplined in terms of behaviour, intelligence, good leadership qualities, caring, mature and honesty.

*e. Social life and communication*

Social life and communication was another important aspect that could not be ignored in marriage mate selection. In this study, participants were thus, asked if there were any attributes that were specifically vital for social life and communication that might have influenced their decision to marry their current marriage partner, and several attributes were brought out as evident from the following verbal accounts;

*“She was good towards people in that she could help the needy for instance which is a good aspect of social life. Also, she was respectful, making communication easy even when differences arose.” Roy*

While **Janet** echoed these words;

*“He was respectful, was able to have healthy conversations with people during interaction in that even if he met someone for the first time he could manage to strike a conversation and respect that person regardless of who that person was. For example, I could at times observe when we meet people like a security guard and he is instructing him to park in a certain way, he would respectfully obey and do as told so that showed me how much he could respect people regardless of who they are and what job they do.”*

For **Racheal**, open communication is what made her get drawn to her partner as evident in this verbatim;

*“He’s the kind of a man who calls a “spade a spade” in that if it means he has to be vulgar to explain or tell me something, he would do that because he is so open and I felt it was a positive trait because I knew this is the person who would frankly tell me if am wrong and correct me and in a marriage if there is open communication like this it is a good thing because you will not bundle mistakes.”*

Therefore, social life is another aspect which motivated the study participants to settle for their partners. In that regard some felt their spouse was good-hearted which was shown through helping the needy. Additionally, open communication was another aspect that spouses discovered in their potential partner which made it easy to resolve differences and to correct each other when one partner did something wrong. Humility was also another aspect which was deemed good for social life as one participant said she was drawn to her partner because she saw how good and respectful her partner treated others. Thus, according to study participants all these attributes were good reasons to motivate them to marry their partner.

### **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS:**

The sections below discussed the findings of the research in terms of the attributes which postgraduate students looked for in a potential marriage mate prior to their marrying or getting married:

On socioeconomic status, study participants brought out a number of attributes and these included education, type of profession of a potential marriage partner and financial stability where females emphasized that they needed a man who was financially stable so that such a one would be able to provide for the family, and these findings align with what other scholars found [8, 20, 21, 22]. When it came to education however, female students preferred a man who had a higher education qualification than them while male students preferred a partner who had lower education qualification than them. These results are similar to what some studies reported that female college graduates tend to prefer potential male marriage partners who had higher education than them while males were found to be more willing to marry someone with less education [23, 10, 24].

In terms of occupation, the majority of the students said that it did not matter as people's desires change as they grow older hence, what was more important was having a partner who was financially stable, responsible, able to make money and with good expenditure habits. Despite this however, there were still a few of them that felt that occupation mattered. For those with occupational preferences, some said they could marry someone from any occupation except a soldier, policeman/policewoman or anyone from the medical field. The reasons they gave were that, they did not like the idea that such professions involved night shifts in their duties and as for soldiers and policewomen when they go for operation

elsewhere, chances of being unfaithful would be high. Findings from this study show similarities with the studies done by Abubakar [16] in Kenya and Zondi [25] in South Africa whose results also showed that occupational preferences played a role in mate selection among graduates even though their studies did not give the participants a voice to explain why they preferred partners with certain occupations.

Religion was another vital aspect that influenced mate choice however, there were two varying views in that some of the students preferred a partner of the same religion and these findings are similar to what Maliki [9] found in his study that students preferred to marry within their religious group. On the other hand, others said religious affiliation did not matter as they said what was more important was simply a partner who applied God's word in their life. These findings confirmed indeed that religion had an influence on mate choice as buttressed by Orisaremi and Alubo [17] who said that in African countries with less advanced economies, religion is one of the influential factors in mate selection.

Study participants also said that physical appearance mattered to them and in this study some of the physical attributes they brought out included height where females preferred a man who was taller than them and darker in complexion and with a non-hairy body. Males on the other hand were more concerned about having a woman who was beautiful and with a small body size. These study findings align with those of other scholars [9, 26, 27] who also found that complexion, physical beauty and height played a significant role in determining the choice of a marriage partner.

As noted by other scholars, people take into consideration the internal qualities of the person they would want to marry [18, 9] and this was found to be true in this study as participants brought out some internal qualities they looked out for in a potential marriage partner prior to their entry into marriage. In this study, participants said that they looked out for such internal attributes as humility, honesty, understanding, not too talkative, a good heart, intelligence, mature, respectful, patience, caring and with good leadership qualities. These findings show similarities with what other scholars found in their studies for instance, a caring heart, intelligence and trustworthiness were found to be among important internal qualities that influenced people to marry their partners [28, 29, 21]. Therefore, the above discussion led to the conclusion and further studies recommendations below.

## **CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE STUDY**

This research indicated that marriage mate selection is a serious matter in terms of choosing a lifetime partner. Owing to this, people did not pick on just anyone as a lifetime partner rather, they came up with attributes which they used as a yardstick to determine the kind of person they wanted to spend the rest of their life with. Findings from this study brought out a number of attributes that study participants looked out for in a potential marriage mate which includes: Education, which was to enable them marry a fellow educated person. They believed that an educated partner was easy to relate with in terms of reasoning. Financial stability was another important factor. This was regarded as an important factor in terms of making it easy to provide for the family. In terms of religion, a God-fearing partner either of the same religion or different religious affiliation was preferred to avoid infidelity and conflicts as both would be guided by Godly-principles. On physical appearance, most females preferred a man who was tall in height for the sake of children's height advantage and dark in complexion so that children would not be very light. While the men mainly focused on having a partner who was beautiful on the face, with a small and curvy body structure so that they would feel confident to be seen in public with her and freely introduce her to their friends, workmates and relatives. Internal attributes that came out included loving, understanding, respectful, patient, well-disciplined in terms of behaviour meaning someone who was not into alcohol or clubbing, intelligence, good leadership qualities, caring, mature and honesty. In addition others said they could marry someone from any occupation except a soldier, police officer or anyone in the medical field because chances of cheating were high.

In response to factors that influenced marriage mate selection the participants shared their own experiences by indicating that not everything that people expected from their partners tend to be fulfilled in an actual marriage set up. However, among the things achieved were having happy families and well-disciplined children, satisfaction of sexual needs, partners being supportive both emotionally and in career pursuits and relatives not visiting regularly as the participants thought it would be the case when they entered marriage which could have been a burden. Despite this however, a number of unfulfilled marital expectations were brought out and these were, failure by men to adapt to married life such that they continued spending more time and confiding in their friends instead of their wives and this complaint was lodged by the female participants. Discovery of negative traits in a partner such as being moody, ill-tempered and talkative was another aspect that emerged in this study. Unmet financial expectations where females expected to be showered with lots of money which they

would spend on personal luxuries but it did not turn out that way. Additionally, differences emanating from partners' immediate family members could not be avoided as participants lamented. Of course for the males, they confessed that they thought they would no longer feel like they would want to maintain privacy in marriage but things did not turn out in that manner and such created unnecessary suspicions and conflicts in their marriage. Female participants on the other hand complained of not spending more time with their husbands as they had wished so prior to marriage. Differences over religious affiliation was also pinpointed in that wives agreed to join their husband's religion prior to marriage but such became a source of conflict as the wives were resistant to fulfill that promise after marriage.

In summary therefore, it was noted that not everything that people were initially looking for in a mate were what made them marry their partner, some of the traits that drew them to their partner were discovered while courting. However, study participants acknowledged that the institution of marriage is an enjoyable one but that did not mean that it did not have problems rather it was about mates making adjustments because not all marital expectations get to be fulfilled according to people's wishes. Therefore, through their marriage experiences some students recommended that if one is to enter a successful marriage, it would be better not to exaggerate marital expectations in their thoughts. Instead people ought to be realistic and they should be ready to make adjustments in order to accommodate the unexpected occurrences in marriage. And that way, it may reduce chances of divorce among the young men and women contemplating marriage. Finally, the study's recommendation for further research are that there is a need to consider carrying out another research within the communities where both couples are less educated and have diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

### **Consent**

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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