#PERSPECTIVE

# Why are men taking their time to get married?



Ask a young man in Dhaka why he is still single and you may get a pause before the answer. It is rarely because he has no interest in marriage. Marriage is still the milestone that makes a man a grown-up in the eyes of his family and neighbours. What has changed is the checklist he must tick before he says yes, and for many men that list keeps growing.

The first item is simple: where he is in life. A student still finishing his degree or a fresh graduate chasing that first job knows a marriage is not a small thing. It means a household, a wife's expectations, possibly children, and the bills that come with all of it. Taking that on before he can carry it feels irresponsible, however loudly the aunties insist otherwise.

Then comes money, and this is where the conversation gets uncomfortable. Families speak of stability as the most important quality in a groom. A steady job, a salary that covers rent, maybe a flat of his own. Yet most people are living with rising costs and wages that have not kept up. A job that looked respectable a decade ago now barely covers a small household in the capital.

The wedding itself makes things worse. Prestige in urban middle-class life often depends on an elaborate ceremony in a hotel or community centre. For a man still building his career, that is less a celebration and more of a loan he will be repaying for years.

Then there are the parents. A son is still expected to support his own household, and if his parents are ageing, their medical bills can become his problem too. One hospital admission can wipe out months of careful saving. A man already carrying that weight struggles to picture adding a wife, a home and eventually, children to the list.

Family is another hurdle. A marriage is rarely just two people. It is two households joining together, each with its own opinions about who should live where and who gets the final word.

Freedom of choice can sound like a fancy phrase once the family council sits down. Many men decide the marriage may be theirs, but the negotiation belongs to everyone else.

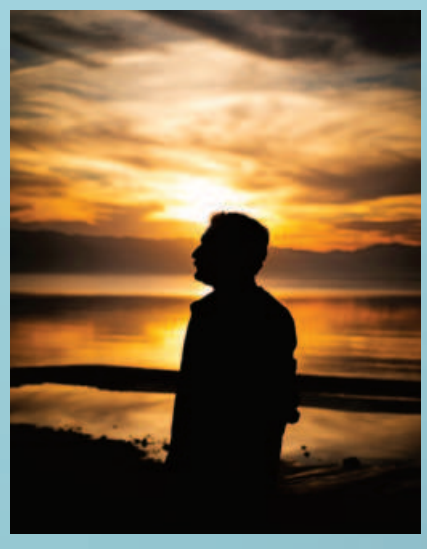
The way people meet and interact has also shifted, and modern technology has played a major role in changing the landscape. Matchmakers and family introductions have given way to dating apps and social media platforms. On paper, having a sea of choices directly at your fingertips seems like an advantage. In reality, it breeds a relentless decision fatigue. You swipe, you connect, you go through the motions, only to realise the other person might not be looking to settle down either. You wind up right back at square one, exhausted by the cycle.

These same platforms have made the idea of the "greener grass" constantly visible. Infidelity is not new, but technology has made the path to it faster and far more accessible. More importantly, it has changed how people react when a marriage hits a rough patch. When the illusion of endless alternative options is constantly flickering on a screen, the willingness to stay, fight, and do the hard work required to fix a marriage erodes quickly. It becomes far easier to give up and walk away, leaving many men wary of investing their heart and future into something that feels increasingly fragile.

Finally, there is a subtle shift happening inside the home itself.

For generations, men relied on marriage for the basic logistics of daily life. But something changed with millennials and the generation following them. Encouraged by mothers who wanted to ease their own heavy daily loads, young men learned to cook, clean, manage a household, and take care of themselves. Armed with these essential life skills, a new generation of men has realized they are entirely self-sufficient. They do not need to marry simply to have a functional home life. They can cook their own meals, run their own errands, and maintain their own spaces without depending on anyone else.

When you add it all up — the crushing economic pressure, the duty to ageing parents, the loss of personal privacy, the fear of fragile commitments, and a newly discovered personal independence — the choice becomes clear.



The old question still has its place. But the men answering it are asking a few of their own.

**By Intisab Shahriyar**