Deanship of Scientific Research

Yarmouk University Students' Perceptions towards their Future Marital Life

Ali Saleh Jarwan[1]* [iD], *Basem Mohammed Al-Frehat* [iD] [2], *Zaid Saleh Bani Ata*[1] [iD]

[1]Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology, College of Educational Sciences, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan
[2]Department of Educational Science, Ajloun University College of Al-Balqa Applied University, Ajloun, Jordan

* *Corresponding author:*
ali.saleh@yu.edu.jo

Abstract

Objectives: The current study aims to demonstrate Yarmouk University students' future perceptions toward their marital life and to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in these perceptions based on gender and college.

Methods: The study applies the descriptive survey method and a scale of 'youth attitudes toward marriage' to a sample of 1,071 students, who were selected using the convenience sampling method.

Results: The results showed that Yarmouk University students' perceptions regarding their future marital life are positive in all dimensions and in the overall score. Attitudes toward marital independence ranked highest, followed by attitudes toward the marital relationship, inclination toward marital happiness, and finally attitudes toward the partner. There was a statistically significant difference in the gender variable in terms of 'attitudes towards the partner' and 'attitudes towards the marital relationship' in favour of females, while the domain 'tendency towards marital happiness' recorded a higher score in favour of males. The results also revealed a statistically significant difference in the 'attitudes towards the marital relationship' domain attributed to the college variable, with a higher score in humanities.

Conclusion: The study underscores the need to organize workshops that promote positive awareness about marital life and support the positive perceptions demonstrated by the students in the current study.

Keywords: Marital Life; Future Perceptions; Students; Yarmouk University

تصورات طلبة جامعة اليرموك المستقبلية نحو حياتهم الزوجية

علي صالح جروان [1]* ، *باسم محمد الفريحات* [2] ، *زايد صالح بني عطا* [1]

[1] قسم علم النفس الإرشادي والتربوي، كلية العلوم التربوية، جامعة اليرموك، إربد، الأردن.
[2] قسم العلوم التربوية، كلية عجلون الجامعية، جامعة البقاء التطبيقية، عجلون، الأردن.

ملخَّص

الأهداف: هدفت الدراسة الحالية الكشف عن تصورات طلبة جامعة اليرموك المستقبلية نحو حياتهم الزوجية، وما إذا كانت هناك فروق دالة إحصائيًا في تصوراتهم تبعًا لمتغيري: الجنس، والكلية.

المنهجية: اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي المسحي، وطبق مقياس اتجاهات الشباب نحو الزواج على عينة قوامها (1071) طالبًا وطالبة، اختيروا بالطريقة المتيسرة.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج أن تصورات طلبة جامعة اليرموك المستقبلية نحو حياتهم الزوجية إيجابية في جميع الأبعاد والدرجة الكلية، وجاء مجال الاتجاهات نحو استقلالية الزوجين في المرتبة الأولى، يليه مجال الاتجاهات نحو العلاقة الزوجية، يليه مجال الميل نحو السعادة الزوجية، وأخيرًا مجال الاتجاهات نحو الشريك. وأظهرت النتائج وجود فرق دال إحصائيًا تبعًا لمتغير الجنس في مجالي "الاتجاهات نحو الشريك، والاتجاهات نحو العلاقة الزوجية" لصالح الإناث، وفي مجال "الميل نحو السعادة الزوجية" لصالح الذكور، ووجود فرق دال إحصائيًا في مجال "الاتجاهات نحو العلاقة الزوجية" تبعًا لمتغير الكلية لصالح الكليات الإنسانية.

الخلاصة: خلصت الدراسة إلى ضرورة تنظيم ورش عمل تعزز الوعي الإيجابي حول الحياة الزوجية، ودعم التصورات الإيجابية التي أظهرها الطلبة في الدراسة الحالية.

الكلمات الدالة: الحياة الزوجية؛ التصورات المستقبلية؛ الطلبة؛ جامعة اليرموك.

Introduction

Planning for the future is one of the priorities for university students who strive towards achieving psychological and social equilibrium that prepare them to integrate into family life and workforce. Awareness of the future is crucial for facing challenges that require concocting purposeful plans, paying attention to capabilities, and using scientific methods to solve problems (Khazali & Moumni, 2017).

University students' future life planning is expectedly constrained by the givens of the current self-image and the perceived image of their future potentials of financial capabilities and therefore independence. Future perceptions underlie values, opinions and attitudes toward the academic, professional, familial and societal integration. It expresses understanding and knowledge directed to achieve feasible future goals, and falls under the umbrella of identity, self-affirmation, and the desire to plan in accordance with the individual's principles and perceptions (Zerouali, 2011).

The Oxford Dictionary defines future perceptions as a cognitive system that aims to collect information and raise the level of methods and procedures on light of which decision-making rules and principles processes for the future are constructed. Zimbardo & Boyd (1999) define them as the individual's attitudes and needs towards having future goals and achieving premeditated aspirations. Ahmed (2011) defines it as expectations that concern the individual's future plans and goals aimed to bring about self-realization and success, or the state of an imagined perfection that s/he wishes to have. Curran, cited in Karim (2019), defines it as a mental aspiration and a subjective potential constrained by present needs and future demands (Karim, 2019). Seginer, cited in Rasheed & Ali (2012), defines it as the individual's personal opinions about events that may occur in the future, and includes how anticipation, planning and self-guidance take place in different life arenas.

Perceptions are divided into mental and social perceptions. Mental perceptions are the by-product of human mental and psychological activities that the individual acquires over the course of time. This acquired encyclopedic knowledge is what enables the individual to form a unique view of the world. Social perceptions, on the other hand, express the individual's psychological and social structure, so that his behaviors and practices are often directed not only towards the patterns and philosophies which he embraces, but also his future aspirations (Farraj, 2022).

Future perceptions underlie the individual's opinions and ideas regarding her/his future, which s/he acquires from the experiences s/he undergoes while interacting with the people surrounding her/him. Past and present expertise lend warnings for the individual towards the making of the future, i.e. to achieve long-term goals. According to Zimbardo's & Boyd's taxonomy of future perceptions, as cited in Nasser (2019), five axes are acknowledged: negativity of the past (the individual's pessimism); aversion to the past (a consequence of his exposure to bad situations); positivity of the past (the individual's feeling of nostalgia for his past associated with good situations); enjoyment of the present (the individual's enjoyment his current time); challenges of the present (individual's general sense of despair about his current and future life); and the future (individual's interest in his future goals and his moving towards them positively).

Many theories have so far attempted to provide logical explanations about future visions. The following is a brief summary of the basic tenets of the most influential.

Kelly's theory: Kelly explicates his theory of the positive image of personality and of human nature through the system of character structures, which is a system of expectations that could explain the behavior performed by the individual. The theory underlies the assumption that people make predictions about the future and live accordingly. Increasing future perceptions largely depends on the individual's unique experience the individual has acquired over the course of time. Kelly believes that these perceptions stem from the person's philosophies, beliefs, values, self-esteem and ideas about life. The main principle of this theory was that the processes that the individual seeks are constrained by the ways he expects the events to take place (Jasim & Mahmoud, 2015).

Seginer's theory: Seginer believes that the individual's future perceptions strongly influence his future plans. For this, Seginer uses alternative technical terms as future expectations and orientation towards the future. In his theory, the basic processes of future perception are motivation, planning, evaluation, and their relationship to one's goals and interests. Seginer has shown that these processes are all influenced by both the end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood

phases, indicating that individuals' tension and fears about the future decrease as they grow older. Signer classified future perceptions into three main types: short-term future perceptions, extended future perceptions, and long-term future perceptions.

Adler's theory: Adler contends that one's behavior is guided by his thoughts and beliefs. The most important of which is the individual's pursuit for excellence. From this perspective, one's behavior is driven more by perceptions of the future than by his real life experiences. One of the most important concepts that Adler puts forward is feeling of deficiency (Al-Jumayli, 2020).

Rogers' Theory: Rogers claims that future perceptions do not depend only on what is gained from the environment surrounding the individual, but include his perception of himself, too. What this means is that one's his self-esteem (appreciation) and the potentials he has are intertwined, a possible cause why Rogers adopts the principle of the deductive verbal approach to explain the individual's psychological powers determined by one's perception of himself, his surroundings, his environment, and the way he responds when events evolve (Al-Mansouri & Attiya, 2017).

Given the experiences and expertise an individual gains from his surrounding environment, and given his reactions to pleasant and/or painful situations that will be echoed in his present and future behavior, daily events can then be looked at as the primary measure for drawing our vision of future life. Hence, families that suffer from disagreements and conflicts are overwhelmed by an atmosphere of anxiety, fear as well as insecurity and misunderstanding, a condition that will be reflected in their psychological and social compatibility. The more positive their interaction with their children is, the greater their ability to get along becomes. Parental treatment styles are also determined by their educational level. Parents may mistreat their children as a result of lack of informed information about marriage, childbirth, raising children and caring for them (Brissem & Al-Hassnawi, 2012).

University students' future perceptions of marriage is one of the topics that have received special attention in psychological research. The primary goal of these studies is to figure out the quintessence of these perceptions. For university students, to get married is a daring step to take because of its great imports on their future lives, and hence its determining role in building the lives of individuals and groups. As marriage contributes to achieving the personal compatibility for the individual, it brings him happiness, satisfaction, and optimism, and thus has many goals that would bring benefits (e.g. stability, independence, forming a private family, having children, achieving happiness, love, and self-reliance) to the individual and society (Kumer, 2015; Al-Dahri, 2016).

In this context, (Al-Zoum, 2019; Abu Aita, 2019) stresses the need of those about to get married to be fully aware of the fundamentals and workings of a successful family including, but not limited to, choosing a life partner, dealing with the spouse, raising children, managing family resources, and handling family crises – factors that together contribute to achieving family stability.

After reviewing research available to date, the researchers of the current investigation have found some relevant past studies on the subject matter. For example, Akers-Woody's (2003) study aimed to find out the attitudes of young women who had never been married towards marriage. The Marital Attitudes Scale (MAS) was administered to (9) young females in California -USA. The results showed negative attitudes among the respondents toward marriage.

Barsim's & Al-Hasnawi's (2012) study aimed to uncover future perceptions about family life among (200) male and female students at Al-Mustansiriya University in Iraq. A measure of future perceptions of family life was applied, and the results showed neutral perceptions among the study sample. At a greater level of details, it turned out that there was no statistically significant difference in university students' perceptions due to the gender variable.

Ismail's (2015) study aimed to reveal the attitudes of students at the Faculty of Information at the University of Baghdad towards marriage. To achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of (160) male and female students. The results showed positive attitudes towards marriage among members of the study sample, yet that there was no statistically significant difference in the sample's attitudes towards marriage due to the gender variable.

Al-Nouri's study (2015) aimed to identify the attitudes of young Saudi people who were about to get married towards family life in light of the social changes under way in the Kingdom. To achieve the objectives of the study, a measurement

tool was administered to a sample of (120) young people from the Family Development Association in Qurayyat Governorate. The study findings revealed average levels (of awareness) among those who were about to get married. Statistically significant differences were detected in their attitudes specifically in the domains of "*attitudes toward the partner*" and "*attitudes toward the marital relationship*" due to the gender variable. The differences were in favor of the male participants.

Radulovic and Avirovic (2016) conducted a study aimed at presenting the youth's views on marriage in the Republic of Macedonia in Southeast Europe. To achieve the study's objectives, they applied the Future Perceptions of Marriage and Family Scale to a sample of (120) university students. The results showed that the participants consider marriage a natural progression in their lives, reflecting maturity, success, and prosperity.

Al-Rahman's (2017) study had to main objectives. On the one hand, it tried to reveal the perceptions of both Algerian women and men about their life partners. On the other hand, it tried to reveal the difference between them due to the variables of gender and civil status. Relying on the descriptive approach, the researcher used a measurement tool for life partner perceptions. The study sample consisted of 60 participants from the Wilaya of Mostaganem, Algeria. The results showed positive perceptions about the life partner for both women and men on the one hand, but no statistically significant difference in perceptions about the life partner due to the gender variable, on the other.

Hussein (2017) conducted a study that aimed to identify achievement motivation and its relationship to future ideas among a sample of (200) university male and female students at Mustansiriya University - Iraq. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used both a scale measuring future idea and another measuring achievement motivation. The results showed that although university students do have future ideas, no statistically significant differences in future ideas among university students due to the variables of gender and specialization (sciences vis-à-vis humanities) were found.

Hajar's (2018) study aimed to identify the psychometric properties of youth attitudes towards marriage. To achieve the objectives of the study, a scale of youth attitudes towards marriage was administered to a sample of (200) Algerian university students. The results showed varying trends towards marriage among the study sample.

Al-Suwaiti's (2020) study was designed to find out the attitudes of (598) young men and women in the Hebron Governorate towards marriage. The results showed two main findings. First, there were moderate attitudes among young people towards marriage. Second, there was a statistically significant difference due to the gender variable in favor of males in the sample's '*motives for marriage*', '*ways of choosing a life partner*' and '*attitudes towards the partner*'.

Al-Matalka (2020) conducted a study that aimed to reveal Jordanian youth's attitudes toward marriage relative to some variables. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher administered a measure of youth's attitudes toward marriage to a sample of (1,882) respondents. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the attitudes of Jordanian youth towards marriage due to the gender variable.

Ningrum et al. (2021) conducted a study aimed at exploring the key factors affecting marital readiness among university students. The study sample consisted of (120) university students from Jakarta Province, Indonesia. To achieve the study's objectives, the marital readiness and family life scale was used. The results showed that marital readiness is significantly influenced by age, involvement in family life preparation programs, family life knowledge, and emotional intelligence.

The study by Fiskin and Sari (2021) aimed to evaluate the relationship between youth attitudes towards marriage and motivation for childbearing. The sample of the study consisted of 820 students from the midwifery and nursing departments at Van Yuzuncu Yil University in Turkey. To achieve the study's objectives, two scales were used: the Marriage Attitude Scale and the Childbearing Motivation Scale. The results showed positive attitudes towards marriage among the participants and a positive relationship between the students' attitudes and their motivations for childbearing.

More recently, Al-Ghamdi et al (2023) conducted a study that aimed at revealing (1) young Saudi people's attitudes towards marriage and (2) the psychological problems those about to marry suffer from. The study sample consisted of (150) visitors to the blood bank in Tayif – Saudi Arabia. An Attitudes Towards Marriage scale was administered, and the results showed that there was a statistically significant difference due to the gender variable in favor of males.

Previous studies have focused on exploring students' attitudes toward marriage and their relationship with various

variables in different environments including (the United States, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Southeast Asia, Algeria, Jordan). The current study builds on these previous works by utilizing their theoretical frameworks, formulating its problem, confirming its significance, and discussing its results. While the current study shares the same objective as these previous studies, it distinguishes itself by attempting to reveal the future perceptions of Yarmouk University students regarding their marital life and by investigating whether there are statistically significant differences based on variables such as gender and college.

The problem of the study and its two questions

The problem of the current study was initially raised by the university student population who suffer from tension, instability, and conflict, a state of affairs which would in turn cause a state of anxiety and fear in them regarding their future perceptions towards their marital life. The subject of marriage in general and choosing a life partner in particular are topics preoccupying young people on university campuses. Changes at the social, political and economic levels in the region heighten the debate among the youth population. As one of the crucial issues in the future lives of young people, marriage decision has been the focus of social and psychological studies. From their place as teachers at Yarmouk University and at Balqa Applied University, the researchers detected some transformation in university students' future perceptions of their marital lives. The observation was triggered by high divorce rate in the Jordanian society and by a number of social and psychological problems haunting the setting. These include, but not limited to, weird concepts about marriage among young people before they get married and not taking full responsibility after they get married. Therefore, the current investigation set itself the goal to find out some answers to the following two intertwined questions:

1. What are Yarmouk University students' future perceptions about their marital life?

2. Are there statistically significant differences among Yarmouk University students' future perceptions about their future marital life due to the variables of gender and college?

Objectives of the study

The current study aimed to uncover Yarmouk University students' future perceptions toward their marital life and to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in these perceptions based on gender and college.

Significance of the study

Theoretical significance: The significance of this study lies in its ability to descriptively reveal the future perceptions of Yarmouk University students toward marital life, as well as in its explanatory power to identify the variables that influence these perceptions. While the topic is universal, it remains a social phenomenon with unique characteristics in the Jordanian context.

Practical significance: The findings could help shed light on the phenomenon from different angles to make recommendations that would raise awareness among families, social institutions and counseling services at Jordanian universities about the need to educate young university students on the negative effects of wrong future perceptions about marital life. Suggested remedy strategies would include holding seminars and lectures and designing preventive counseling programs to correct negative perceptions about future marital life among the study population. In addition, the study may provide valuable insights and pave the way for further research in this field.

Terminological and procedural definitions

For methodological and logistic reasons, the following terms are technically and procedurally defined along the following lines.

Future perceptions: individual's attitudes and needs towards having future goals and achieving preplanned activities (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). Procedurally, they are defined as the total scores obtained by the respondent on the scale of future perceptions towards marital life as used in the current study, consisting of four domains:

- Attitudes toward the partner: the attitudes, opinions, and beliefs that one holds toward the partner they agree to marry.

- Attitudes toward the marital relationship: the nature of the relationship that one expects from their partner, and how

well it fits with the compatibility between them.

- Attitudes toward the independence of spouses: the tendency of spouses to stay together, live for each other, and prevent outsiders from interfering in their personal lives.

- Tendency toward marital happiness: the partner's desire to continuously achieve happiness and satisfaction for their spouse.

University students: They were bachelor students enrolled at Yarmouk University in various academic disciplines and at different academic levels, and they were registered in the summer semester in the academic year 2022/2023.

Study limits and limitations

The current study was constrained by a number of difficult-to-pin-down external forces:

Human limitations: The current study was limited by the available sample of Yarmouk University students.

Time limits: The current study was applied in the summer semester 2022/2023 AD.

Spatial boundaries: The current study was conducted on Yarmouk University campus.

Objective limits: The current study is predetermined to measure future perceptions towards marital life; constrained by validity and reliability measurements; conditioned by objectivity of the study sample members in answering its question items.

Methods and procedures
Study Approach

The descriptive survey method was adapted to suit the objectives of the current study.

Study population and sample

The study population consisted of all undergraduate students at Yarmouk University registered in the summer semester 2022/2023 AD, numbering (25,756) male and female students. The figures were obtained from the Admission and Registration Department at Yarmouk University on August, 6, 2023. The study sample consists of (1071) male and female students, who were selected using the convenience method. Table (1) below shows the distribution of the study sample members according to the variables of gender and college.

Table (1): Distribution of study sample members according to the variables of gender and college

Variable	Categories	Repetition	Percentage
Gender	Male	595	55.6
	Female	476	44.4
College	Humanities	570	53.2
	Sciences	501	46.8
	Total	1071	100.0

Measuring future perceptions towards marital life

To achieve the objectives of the study, the Youth Attitudes Toward Marriage scale, already prepared by Abu Asaad (2011), was used. The scale consisted of (24) items that were divided into four Domains: *attitudes toward the partner* (6 items), *attitudes toward marital relationship* (6 items), *attitudes toward independence of the spouses* (6 items), and *tendency toward marital satisfaction* (6 items).

Scale Validity and reliability
Scale Validity

Regarding the validity procedures of the original scale, Abu As'ad (2011) verified the scale's validity using two methods: content validity, by presenting the scale items to a number of specialists, and construct validity.

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To verify the validity of the scale, two consecutive actions were taken. First, the scale was presented in its initial form (24 items) to a number of professors specializing in psychological counselling. They were asked to express their opinions on the scale paragraphs in terms of their appropriateness to the fields, their clarity, their correctness in terms of meaning and wording, and their suitability to the study sample members. They were cordially asked to delete, add, or modify any paragraph, and provide any comments they deemed appropriate. When revising the scale, the comments were taken into account, so some of the items were modified to fit the sociocultural context of the study.

Second, the scale which was initially refereed by specialists in psychology counselling was also verified by administering it to an exploratory sample of (50) male and female students from the population of the study who were not part of the study sample. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between each item score and the total score for its field on the one hand, and the total score for the whole scale on the other. Pearson correlation coefficients between the item and its field ranged between (0.52-0.76) for the domain "*attitudes toward the partner*", (0.42-0.75) for the domain "*attitudes toward marital relations*", (0.50-0.75) for the domain "*attitudes toward marital independence*", and (0.37-0.74) for the domain "*tendencies toward marital happiness*". The correlation coefficients between the score of the item and the total score of the scale ranged between (0.39-0.83), a strong indication for the validity of the scale construction.

Scale reliability

Regarding the reliability procedures of the original scale, Abu As'ad (2011) assessed the scale's reliability using the test-retest method as well as calculating the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha).

To verify the reliability of the scale, it was applied to a survey sample consisting of (50) male and female students from the study population who were not part of the sample. The scale was re-applied to the same sample two weeks later. The reliability of the scale was then calculated by using the test and retest method. When calculating Pearson correlation coefficient between the two applications, it was found that the repeatability coefficients ranged between (0.81-0.85) for the four domains, and (0.89) for the whole scale. The internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach alpha), on the other hand, ranged between (0.74-0.80) for the four domains, and (0.85) for the whole scale – strong indications that the scale had a high degree of reliability.

Correcting the scale and statistical criterion used

A five-point scale was used for proving answers to each item of the scale. The weights were like this: "*strongly agree*" (5) degrees, "*agree*" (4) degrees, "*neutral*" (3) degrees, "*disagree*" 2 degrees, and "*strongly disagree*" 1 degree. The scale was corrected by giving the previous rating the numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) in case of positive items, and by reversing the weights in case of negative items. To judge the arithmetic means, the following statistical criterion was used: Range: 5-1=4, the range value is 4/3=1.33, thus 1.00 - less than 2.33 was a negative perception; 2.33 - less than 3.67 was a neutral perception; and 3.67 - 5.00 was a positive perception.

Study variables

The study included some independent and dependent variables. As for the independent variables, these included:
Gender: males versus females.
College: humanities versus sciences.
As for the dependent variables: it was mainly Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life.

Statistical treatments

For the first question of the study, the means and standard deviations were calculated, and for the second question, two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and two-way multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) were used.

Findings and discussion

The first question of the study was "What are Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life?". Given the respondents' answers to this question, the means and standard deviations were calculated. The findings are presented in Table (2) below.

Table (2): Means and standard deviations of Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life, arranged in descending order according to the arithmetic means

Rank	Domains	Mean	Standard Deviation	Perception
1	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	3.83	.548	positive
2	attitudes toward marital relationship	3.78	.584	positive
3	tendency toward marital satisfaction	3.75	.455	positive
4	attitudes toward the partner	3.73	.508	positive
	Total Marks	3.78	.345	positive

Given the figures in Table (2) above, it is clear that Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life are overall positive. At a greater level of detail, the field "attitudes towards the independence of spouses" ranked first place, followed by the field "attitudes towards the marital relationship", which in turn is followed by the field "tendencies towards marital happiness". The field "attitudes towards the partner" was ranked the last on the scale.

The discussion of these findings requires that one should look for some explanations for why Yarmouk University students hold relatively positive perceptions towards their future marital life. From an emic point of view, the researchers contend that this could be due to a constellation of factors. These include the desire among the youth to marry and build a family, positive image about future partner, changes occurring in the social system, increased awareness among this population about the importance of cooperation between husband and wife and about the need to distribute roles coupled with an awareness of the importance of consultation to make constructive decisions and therefore achieve a successful family model. All of these are factors that play an important role in creating positive perceptions among university students regarding their future marital life in this sociocultural context.

These positive perceptions may reflect their optimism and readiness to face life's challenges with a hopeful outlook. This optimism could be driven by the education and training they receive, which provides them with positive information about marriage and marital relationships, as well as by social and cultural influences that promote equitable and independent models of marital relationships. Additionally, their desire to achieve a balanced and happy life, along with open communication with peers, may further enhance their positive perceptions and encourage them to adopt an optimistic view of marriage.

Our main finding is consistent with that obtained in Ismail's (2015) study which showed positive attitudes among students of the Faculty of Information at the University of Baghdad towards marriage, and with that in Al-Rahman's (2017) study which also showed positive perceptions about the life partner for both women and men in Algeria. However, the same finding differs from that obtained in Akers-Woody's (2003) study which showed negative attitudes towards marriage among the participants, and that of Barsim's & Al-Hasnawi's (2012) study which showed neutral perceptions of family life among students at Al-Mustansiriya University. Our finding does not support nor refute the finding obtained in Al-Nouri's (2015) study which showed average levels appreciation towards their family life by those approaching marriage, nor that obtained in Aqib's (2018) study which showed relatively varying trends towards marriage among members of the study sample, and that obtained in Al-Suwaiti's (2020) study which showed average inclinations towards marriage among young people.

The second question of the study was: "Are there statistically significant differences in Yarmouk University students' perceptions about their future marital lives that could be due to the variables of gender and college?" To answer this question, the means and standard deviations of the respondents' answers about their perceptions of future marital life were calculated for both variables: gender and college. Table (3) below displays the figures.

Table (3): Means and standard deviations of Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life according to the variables of gender and college

Variable	Categories		attitudes toward the partner	attitudes toward marital relationship	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	tendency toward marital satisfaction	Total Marks
Gender	Male	M	3.67	3.69	3.84	3.80	3.75
		D	.513	.615	.552	.435	.344
	Female	M	3.81	3.90	3.83	3.70	3.81
		D	.494	.521	.544	.472	.343
College	Humanities	M	3.72	3.81	3.84	3.77	3.79
		D	.502	.583	.545	.430	.339
	Sciences	M	3.74	3.75	3.82	3.73	3.76
		D	.516	.583	.552	.480	.350

M= Mean   D= Standard Deviation

Given the information in Table (3), it is apparent that there are some differences in the arithmetic means and standard deviations of Yarmouk University students' perceptions of their marital life that could be due to the variables of gender and college. To verify one of the assumptions of the multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) related to the presence of statistically significant correlations between the domains of the study scale, Bartlett's Test for Sphericity was used (displayed in Table 4).

Table (4): Bartlett's test for sphericity and the intrinsic relationship between them

Barlett's Test	Chi-Square Value for Bartlett's Test	Degrees of Freedom	Statistical Significance
	618.424	9	.000*

* Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table (4) shows a statistically significant correlation between the domains of the scale, with a Chi-Square value of (618.424). Consequently, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the scale as a whole (shown in Table 5 below), and a multivariate two-way analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on the domains (displayed in Table 6).

Table (5): Two-way analysis of variance of the sexual impact of Congress on Yarmouk University students' perception of their expectations towards marital life

Source of variance	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean of squares	F value	Statistical significance
Gender	1.524	1	1.524	12.983	.000
College	.817	1	.817	6.961	.008
Error	125.382	1068	.117		
Total	127.095	1070			

Table (5) shows that there is a statistically significant difference in Yarmouk University students' perceptions of their future marital life due the gender variable in favor of females, and there is a statistically significant difference due to the college variable in favor of the humanities.

Table (6): Multiple two-way analysis of variance for the effect of gender and college on Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life

Source of variance	Domains	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean of squares	F value	Statistical significance
Gender	attitudes toward the partner	4.991	1	4.991	19.630	.000
Hotelling=.097	attitudes toward marital relationship	16.747	1	16.747	51.609	.000
h=.000	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	2.65E-005	1	2.65E-005	.000	.993
	tendency toward marital satisfaction	1.912	1	1.912	9.338	.002
College	attitudes toward the partner	.428	1	.428	1.685	.195
Hotelling=.021	attitudes toward marital relationship	6.744	1	6.744	20.784	.000
h=.000	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	.083	1	.083	.274	.600
	tendency toward marital satisfaction	.006	1	.006	.029	.865
Error	attitudes toward the partner	271.516	1068	.254		
	attitudes toward marital relationship	346.560	1068	.324		
	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	321.454	1068	.301		
	tendency toward marital satisfaction	218.675	1068	.205		
Total	attitudes toward the partner	276.592	1070			
	attitudes toward marital relationship	364.309	1070			
	attitudes toward independence of the spouses	321.555	1070			
	tendency toward marital satisfaction	221.090	1070			

It is clear from Table (6) that there is a statistically significant difference in Yarmouk University students' perceptions towards their future marital life in the domains of "*attitudes towards the partner and attitudes towards the marital relationship*" due to the gender variable in favor of females. There can be a number reasons for this state of affairs. First, females are relatively more open to social life and therefore could mingle with other groups either directly or through other means of communication (e.g. social media platforms). Second, it could also be due to the psychological makeup of females which qualifies them to adapt to others (e.g. life partner) easily. Third, females in this sociocultural context had beliefs that life partner should bear responsibility and assume leadership roles. Fourth, for social, physical and biological pressures, females could have an overwhelming desire to have the opportunity to marry at a relatively earlier age than males. For all

this, females have turned to value married life and thus prefer to have a life partner more than males. The lack of a statistically significant difference in the domains of 'attitudes towards the independence of spouses' and 'marital happiness' based on gender suggests that both genders express a similar desire for mutual independence within the marital relationship and a pursuit of marital happiness. This may reflect a growing general awareness of the importance of independence and happiness as key elements in marital relationships, leading to a consensus between genders on these values. Additionally, the influence of social and cultural changes that promote equality and mutual respect may have contributed to narrowing the gap between them.

The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in Yarmouk University students' perceptions of their future marital life in the field of "*inclination toward marital happiness*" attributed to the gender variable in favor of males. Perhaps this is due to socialization reasons. To illustrate, the upbringing of males differs from that of females – an undisputable fact about the nature of the societal culture in which members of Jordanian society are raised: Whereas it is acceptable for young males to express their desire and love to get married, this is considered disadvantageous for females.

This result is consistent with that obtained in Al-Rahman's (2017) study which showed that there was no statistically significant difference in respondents' perceptions about a life partner that could be attributed to the gender variable, and that obtained in Mutalqa's (2020) study which also showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the attitudes of Jordanian youth towards marriage that could be due to the gender variable.

However, our finding in this respect differs from that obtained in Barsim's & Al-Hasnawi's (2012) study which showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of students at Al-Mustansiriya University for family life that could be due to the gender variable, and the study of Ismail (2015) which showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the attitudes of students of the Faculty of Information at the University of Baghdad towards marriage that could be due to the gender variable. Our study finding also differs from Al-Nouri's (2015) study which showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of young people who were about to get married towards their family life in the domains of "*attitudes towards the partner, and attitudes towards the marital relationship*" that could be due to the gender variable in favor of males. Likewise, Al-Suwaiti's (2020) study showed there was a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of young people towards marriage in the Hebron Governorate in the domains of "*motivations for marriage, methods of choosing a life partner, and attitudes towards a life partner*" due to the gender variable in favor of young males. Al-Ghamdi et al.'s (2023) study showed a statistically significant difference in the attitudes of young people towards marriage due to the gender variable in favor of males – findings that were not corroborated in our current study.

The findings of our study showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the field of "*attitudes toward marital relations*" attributed to the college variable in favor of the humanities. Perhaps the reason for this is that students in humanities colleges take a number of courses related to marriage and family life. Subjects in sociology and psychology classes are just few examples. What this means is that their study of these topics could have contributed to expanding their mental perceptions, and to developing their future perceptions of their marital life. Students in scientific colleges have, on the other hand, future aspirations to continue their specializations, state of affairs that requires more time and effort which in turn decreases the likelihood to adopt unique perceptions towards their future marital life. This finding differs from that obtained in Hussein's (2017) study which showed that there was no statistically significant difference among university students that could be attributed to the specialization variable (sciences versus humanities).

The lack of a statistically significant difference in the domains of 'attitudes towards the partner,' 'attitudes towards the independence of spouses,' and 'attitudes towards marital happiness' based on the college variable can be explained by the fact that values and concepts related to marriage are more influenced by personal and general social factors rather than by the students' academic specialization. All students, regardless of their academic background, are exposed to similar cultural and social influences that enhance their shared understanding of these issues. Additionally, educational and training programs at the university may provide equal information and experiences that impact all students, thereby reducing the influence of academic specialization on their perceptions of marriage

Recommendations

In light of the findings of the current study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

- Organize workshops that enhance positive awareness about marital life and support the positive perceptions demonstrated by the students in the current study.

- Develop gender-specific awareness programs to enhance understanding and appreciation of each gender's perceptions towards marriage. These programs should address differences in expectations and needs for each gender and help build balanced marital relationships.

- Conducting future studies on students' perceptions of their marital lives and figuring out the impact of other variables such as academic qualifications, age, and place of residence.

Conclusions

The current study concluded that Yarmouk University students' future perceptions of their marital life are positive, with a statistically significant difference attributed to the gender variable in the 'attitudes towards the partner' and 'attitudes towards the marital relationship' domains, favoring females. On the other hand, the 'tendency towards marital happiness' domain had differences favoring males. The results also showed a statistically significant difference in the domain of 'attitudes towards the marital relationship' attributed to the college variable, favoring the humanities colleges.

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