

## LIVING ALONE IN THE CITY: EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITIES OF SINGLE YOUNG ADULTS HOUSING IN THE URBAN CONTEXT OF DHAKA

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### ABSTRACT

Worldwide renting and sharing is very common among cities, especially for single-person households. But the living environment is not always welcoming in most developing countries due to the lack of policy-level intervention. Dhaka, a rapidly urbanizing city, attracts people from various regions, but it also presents a range of challenges, particularly for those who live alone. These people, often students or migrant workers, come to the city with aspirations for higher education and better employment opportunities. However, their dreams often clash with the harsh realities of urban life. The study focuses on the difficulties the single-young households, highlighting the living environment and their specific needs due to their independent lifestyles. Most of these individuals are excluded from state welfare and housing support and depend on both formal and informal private rental housing sectors where the main housing typology includes the shared flats and private hostels. Often these housing options provide poor living conditions and are further complicated by social and political challenges. By analyzing multiple case studies in Dhaka, the research uses qualitative methods to gather in-depth insights into the lives of these young adults. Through photographs, drawings, and open-ended interviews, the study captures the nuanced experiences of this population, shedding light on their struggles with isolation, the difficulties of urban living, and their pursuit of meaningful social connections. It also examines how they adapt the shared living arrangements including spaces, utilities, furniture, and food. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to a growing body of knowledge on single living in urban environments, particularly in the context of developing cities like Dhaka. The insights gained from the study may help in creating more supportive and responsive housing policies and social structures thereby improving the quality of life in the city.

**Keywords:** Adult Household, Living Environment, Shared Life, Single-Young, Dhaka.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, challenges to the global housing market have been associated with fast urban growth, migration patterns, reduced housing stock, quality and affordability, and government policies. In Dhaka, the public sector still needs to meet the demand, and housing supply mainly depends on the private rental sector. The development of the rental sector is a neglected topic, as is the case in other

developing countries. In Dhaka, around 80 % of people live in rental houses since most of the people migrated more than 60 %. (Statistical Yearbook Bangladesh 2022, 2022). There exist lots of informal settlements, and around 10.2 million people live in informal settlements (Statistical Yearbook Bangladesh 2022, 2022). Renters in informal settlements have to pay more rent per sqm than in the formal sector due to high demand and scarcity of space for the poor. Here, around 70% of the land is occupied by higher

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and higher middle-income groups, with only around 30% of the total population in the city. So, lower- and lower-middle-income people always need help to gain access to the housing market (Dhaka Structure Plan 2016-2035, 2020). Like other megacities, due to the space crisis and lower affordability, renting and sharing are very common in Dhaka. However, there is very limited research in this context on the field of the rental market in the housing sector, especially on 'shared typology.' This research deals with a sub-market of the private rental sector focusing on single people 18-34 years old who come to the city with the hope of self-establishment by higher education or an excellent job. Due to the lack of accommodation facilities like student hostels or workers dorms in different government and private colleges, universities, and other institutions, rental house is the only option for these students and migrated workers. Since these groups of people are mainly single people, they often share their rental house with another single adult household to reduce the house rent. Locally, these people are known as 'bachelor' people, and their shared house is called a 'mess house.' Often, these single people are neglected as tenants. Besides, they have to face other social and political difficulties. The most common phenomenon is that house owners do not want to rent out their flats to bachelors; sometimes, family households are very reluctant to accept them as neighbours due to having different lifestyles and independent attitudes. Sometimes, extra pressure is created upon them by imposing different rules and regulations regarding the timing of back home, rent payment date, extra bills for using different electronic devices, etc. Often, security forces raid mess houses for political reasons as a kind of fascist attitude. Sometimes, mess houses turned into places of political activity or terrorists' place.

The research will highlight the emerging typology of shared rental houses (known as Mess houses in Dhaka) as a distinct urban form, drawing from middle-income households in Dhaka, Bangladesh. From the reconnaissance survey, research identifies they can be found in all parts of Dhaka and are deeply interlinked with the city's urbanity. Mostly, they are situated near the educational hub, work centers, and any university or college. Its spatial location gave cues about the entwined dependency of the single students and employees. These can further be categorized into two central units – private hostels for men/women and shared houses for men/women. Each of these categories has a distinct process of functioning and living experiences of people. Though initially, to gain economic benefits, people adopt a shared premise, the physical environment of these shared houses has an impact on their mental well-being. The negotiation of privacy and personal space is a major concern

in shared houses, and it is associated with behavioral and psychological issues.

At first, research fixed some selection criteria from the findings of the initial reconnaissance survey. To investigate and collect data regarding the selection criteria, three zones were selected in Dhaka: Tejgaon, Moghbazar, and Motijheel (figure 2). In the next step, the research follows convenient random sampling to select fifteen cases from those three specified zones for qualitative analysis. All the houses accommodated single-young households, including students, job holders, or job finders aged between. The questionnaire survey included only the single young adult households aged between 18 to 34 years. The analysis excludes public housing provided by the government to public servants and low-income private accommodations in the form of slums and squats.

Based on the preceding background, the research question is to know how the specific group of people, single adult households, experience shared living away from the parental home in a highly populated city like Dhaka. To answer this question, the research addressed the following research objectives:

First, to narrate the housing circumstances of the shared house.

Second, to explain the nature and extent of the multifaceted problems with which they live.

### **Background Study**

Prevalence of single person household has been increasing worldwide due to different reason which is also associated with urbanized development and shared living arrangement. This section highlights the current trend of single living worldwide.

### **Prevalence of Single-Person Households Worldwide**

The prevalence of single-person households has been amplified in several developed countries (Mackie, 2016). The statistics of prevalence of single person household among European countries shows it varies markedly due to housing support policies, social and political norm regarding independence (Billari & Lifbrore, 2010). In England and Australia the number is increasing day by day (De Vaus & Richardson, 2009; Qu & Vaus 2011). The frequency is relatively high in Japan where 29% households are one

person (Fukuda, 2009). In India, there also emerged the trend of single living which enhances the trend of young people moving to urban areas followed by reforming living arrangements (Dommaraju, 2015).

### Housing Challenges of Single Living Worldwide

Studies on Europe and East Asia identify two key housing policy issues for young people. First, policymakers must ensure equal opportunities for young people to leave home and live independently, recognizing the political, economic, and cultural barriers (Mackie, 2016). Second, housing needs to be more accessible and appropriate for young people, especially with the rise of the private rental sector and house-sharing (Mackie, 2016). In Europe, economic constraints drive shared housing, which brings mixed experiences (Gentile, 2016; 2016). In contrast, cultural norms in China and Hong Kong limit independent living, with policies needing to better support young people's access to housing (Li & Shin, 2013). Addressing these challenges is crucial to avoid broader social and economic impacts (Mackie, 2012). As a consequence of recent years housing challenges, young people have been particularly affected as governments have not always kept pace with contemporary social change. Housing regulations haven't always addressed the barriers that prevent young people from having equitable access to independent living possibilities (Mackie, 2016). Young adults are currently compelled to live in shared housing arrangements with varying experiences due to a lack of housing options (Clark, et. al., 2018), though sharing spaces is not always a happy medium despite the economic benefits (Bricocoli & Sabatinelli, 2016). This scenario is common in developing countries and some developed countries like the UK and the USA (Baek & Kim, 2022).

### House Sharing by Single Young Households

In simple terms, home-sharing is an arrangement by which

two or more unrelated people share a dwelling within which each retains a private space. However, no two home-sharing situations are alike; each is tailored to the needs and desires of the people involved (Oh & Choi, 2014). The term "shared housing," also known as "collective living," has gained widespread acceptance across the globe and has its roots in boarding houses and urban migrants from the 19th century. In areas throughout the U.K. and Europe, inner-city and shared housing developed in response to workers' and students' demand for flexible and affordable accommodation (Uyttebrouck, van Bueren, & Teller, 2020). The idea of 'Shared living' is associated locally in Bengali with the term –'Messbari', or 'boarding houses.' 'Messbari' is an urban Bengali coinage (Bhattacharya, 2024). Boarding houses sprang up in and around the major educational institutions and business areas to accommodate fortune seekers' never-ending paths (Frear, 2012).

### Scenario of Dhaka

Every year a considerable number of students come to Dhaka to study at different educational institutions. Not only for education, another group come to the city to search for a better career. Besides every year, many students come to the city for admission coaching. With the rapid increase of the educational institutions in the city, the students' rush towards the over-crowded capital is also increasing. A very few institutions have hostel facilities for students. The students who can live in those hostels find a convenient and havoc-free shelter with some facilities. However, most of the city's colleges and universities do not have sufficient seats or no hostel for their students. As a result, most students have to go for the private rental sector. These migrated single-young people come to the city, leaving their family for a better future, and most of them are students who are economically dependent on their family or young professionals. Considering mainly economic reasons, shared rental houses or hostel/board in rented flats are the only options. In this situation, private hostels in rented flats are



Figure-1: From Left; Mumbai 'Chawls' Kolkata's Diverse Boarding Houses.



springing up randomly through the city but offer a poor living environment. Messes or board in rented flats in different areas of the city face many complexities and harassments due to social and political difficulties.

Dhaka's phenomenal growth makes Dhaka an economic hub and educational hub with a resultant 63% total growth due to migrated population in 2015 when the housing delivery system mainly depends on the private sector (Ahmed & Johson, 2014). Local builders in Dhaka have been feverishly constructing temporary accommodations to meet the high demand for affordable, centrally located, and stigma-free housing. They created a stock of small rental apartments in mid-rise buildings that met migrant students' demands and workers away from their families. These structures are modeled on student housing and derive their name as 'shared/mess housing.' This specific typology is part of an old lineage of urban housing, such as the Mumbai 'chawls'—workers barracks. A research on Dhaka's student hostel highlights that when students share their rooms with others, shared spaces produces problems in terms of territory and private space (Siddika & Ferdous, 2018) which is also supported by another research in newzeland by Khajehzadeh and Vale (Khajehzadeh and Vale, 2014).

### Methodology for investigation

The present research has been designed in two parts: a theoretical part based on a literature review and an empirical investigative part based on field surveys and interviews. The research will start with a literature survey conducted on published data (e.g., newspaper report, research papers, books, standards, codes, and websites) to know the present situation of the single young household worldwide. This research follows a qualitative methodological framework through interviews and observation as a means to acquire data on individual life experiences. In this study, the unit of analysis is individual persons and shared house where they live. The study employs open-ended methods to allow all types of experience and observation to be connected.

The field survey involves collecting photos and drawings, and the questionnaire survey investigates the household's socioeconomic and demographic structure to understand better the lifestyle domain. It has also investigated the patterns of sharing (spaces, utilities, furniture and food). The response to the questionnaire was collected from the individuals who were present during the field survey. Field survey conducted after working hour to ensure the presence of maximum households.

### Sample Selection

Following convenient random sampling, fifteen houses were selected from three different parts of the Dhaka city corporation area. An initial reconnaissance survey of the present housing situation of study groups helped set up their selection criteria; later, the shared houses were identified in terms of particular criteria in discrete locations in Dhaka. These criteria led to the formulation of two types of shared accommodations to determine as cases (Table 1). Representative cases from each type will be selected for detailed case history analysis for qualitative investigation. The selected case histories will be analyzed in detail for the identification of the overall experiences of single young people with physical and social problems faced in their shared accommodation. Including males and females, a total of 62 participants' responses were considered, with 25



Figure-2: Selected Zone for Field Survey.

students and 17 professionals. Field survey conducted both on holiday and working to get different viewpoints. Cases within the selected criteria were selected to get maximum variations with building type and male-female domain.

### Limitations

This research explores the housing circumstances of single young individuals within shared rental houses, focusing on behavioral, functional, physical, and social aspects. However, certain limitations exist. Firstly, it was conducted within a limited area of Dhaka city due to time and resource constraints. Secondly, surveyed shared houses were selected based on the availability of known individuals, limiting the scope for extended observations and comprehensive data collection. Thirdly, while the study addresses architectural aspects, gaps exist regarding the psychological impacts of living away from family. Despite these constraints, the research offers valuable insights into the dynamics of single young adult households in shared rental housing.

Ethical consideration: During the field surveying time, researchers took photographs of personal spaces while obtaining their proper consent. Research has maintained proper consideration to hide their real identity.

### Analysis

This section analyze the profile of the study group single young adults and their living arrangements in a shared premise out of family.

### Leaving Home and Living Alone

The cultural trend in Bangladesh for young is staying with their parents until marriage or even for several years afterward. This trend attributes by the factors such as economic insecurity, high youth unemployment, extended education periods, unaffordable housing etc. It seems to discourage youth adults, especially daughters, from living independently. In survey, three main reasons of leaving the parental home are found:

- Parental house is out of the city, so moving and living alone for education or a job.
- The long-distance between the parental house and working place or educational institution.
- To enjoy proper educational environment and independent life.

The majority of the people, living in shared houses around 81 percent come from out of the city. The long-distance working or educational place with huge traffic congestion of the city leads to leaving the parental house and their proportion is 16 percent while the rest 3 percent of young people shared house seeking better educational environment than their home. This result indicates that young people in Dhaka city choose this single living lifestyle only when they face a situation of crisis or urgency rather than for enjoying an independent lifestyle or a better environment as seen in many developed countries.

**Table-1:** Sample Case Selection Criteria.

Reconnaissance survey	
Types of shared accommodation	
A	
Private Shared House / Mess House	
A1 Self-catering premises	A2 Premises providing common meals
B	
Private Hostel / Dormitory	
Premises providing common meals	

Field Survey	
Criteria for site selection	Selected zone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The area should be within the urban boundary and have characteristics of Dhaka city's general urban fabric.</li><li>• The site should be located near numerous educational or other institutions.</li><li>• The house should be a rental house where more than one non-family household lives together as a shared household.</li><li>• The house may be hostel-type where the number of students or professionals live together, sharing some common facilities as a payment basis.</li></ul>	<p>Based on the criteria following three zones are selected in Dhaka. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tejgaon</li><li>2. Moghbazar</li><li>3. Motijheel</li></ol> <p>From each zone, 5-samples of shared accommodations with 15 numbers of accommodations are selected for the study. Individual participants are selected randomly from each accommodation.</p>

**Table-2:** Types of Cases (Shared House) Concerning Male and Female Domain.

Case Type (Type of Sharing)		Female Domain (Number of Case)	Male Domain (Number of Case)
A (Private shared / Mess house)	A1 (Self-catering)	2	0
	A2 (Common meals)	2	2
B (Private hostel)		4	5

**Table-3:** Types of Cases Concerning Building Types in Different Zone.

Rental House Type (Building Type)							
Flat as the old-type building (total 9 houses)				Multi-storied Apartment (total 6 houses)			
Case type		Selected zone		Case type		Selected zone	
Type	Number of cases	Zone	Number of cases	Type	Number of cases	Zone	Number of cases
A1	1	Tejgaon	2	A1	1	Tejgaon	3
A2	2	Moghbazar	2	A2	2	Moghbazar	3
B	7	Motijheel	5	B	2	Motijheel	0

### Socio-economic Profile

Single young adults in a Shared houses have represented a product of economic constraint rather than choice, their growth attributed to rising housing costs, low incomes, and the relative scarcity of social housing. Figure 3 shows most of the students are economically dependent on their family and self- income when only a few students are fully economically self-dependent. Students who are dependent on both these mainly earn money from private tuition, tuition in a coaching center or online business, etc. Most of the professionals are economically fully self-dependent and more than 50% the professional supports their family. Last of all it can be said that students are mainly dependent on their family and cost of living is important toward them rather than professionals.

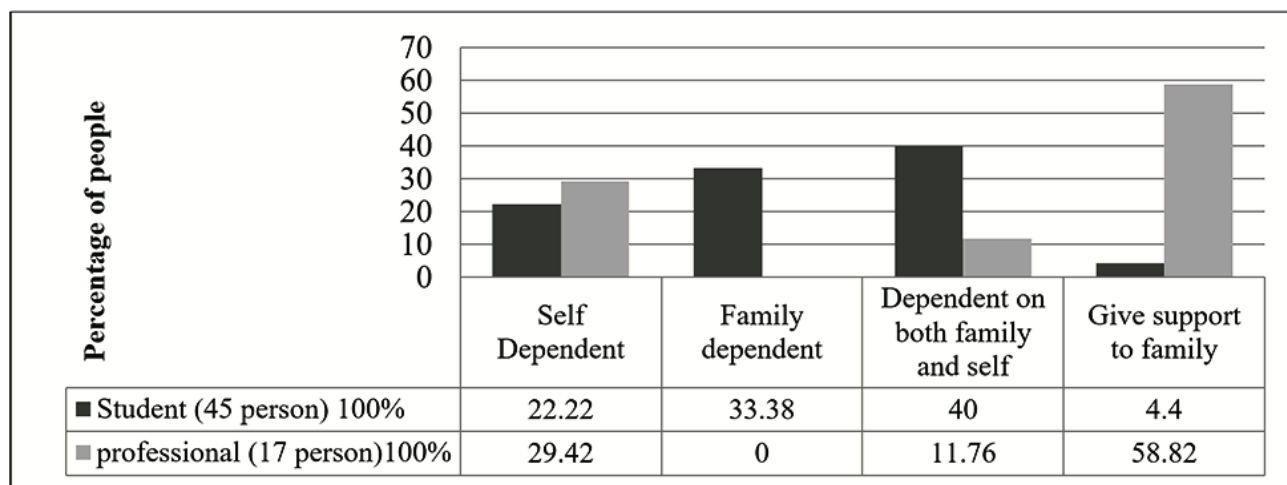
### Rental Profile

The survey found a wide range of varieties in the rental system when per capita living costs are associated with multiple factors such as house quality, the number of sharers, allotted space per person, sharing type, etc. There are also variations in reasoning to become a sharer rather than to live alone. In this issue, economic constraints and unavailability of the single-person apartment are the major causes followed by other reasons i.e. safety, to avoid social difficulties as living alone, etc. Detail analysis shows that the number of occupants who don't share their bedroom though live in a shared premise is not so little, about 37.10

percent of the total participant. In that case, their rental cost is two to three times of those who share their bedroom with two-three other occupants. For these single rooms occupying person the unavailability of single-person apartments or safety issues or other options rather than economic constraints lead to choosing a shared premise. Table 4 shows that most of the participants share their bedroom with two other occupants within 3-5 sqm. Bedroom space when per capita rental space is 8-12 sqm. for most of them. So for most of the cases, bedrooms are too much-congested. The 'sharing status' is the amount of 'sharing' taking place within the households, and in the survey, four situations found that are; shared bed, toilet, and kitchen; shared bedroom, toilet, and kitchen; shared toilet and kitchen; only shared kitchen whereas maximum participant share the toilet, kitchen and bedroom and only few share their bed with other.

### Forms of Sharing

In surveying shared houses there are mainly two types of sharing occurs that is a private mess/shared house (A-type) or private hostel (B-type) when mess house is further subdivided into the self-catering system (A1-type) and providing common meal system (A2-type). The survey result shows that only female households are using the self-catering system (A1-type); maybe there subsist any psychological issue so that females are sometimes comfortable with self-catering rather than sharing common meals. The survey result also shows that most of the private hostels are in a



**Figure-3:** Economic Status of Single Young Person Household in Surveying Population.  
**Source:** Field Survey

renting flat of old buildings maybe because of low house rent and to get benefit the scope of internal modification toward multiple single households. The living cost sometimes may be higher in A-type sharing rather than B-type (Table 5).

#### Shared Rental House (Mess house)

In this house sharing type, a private house/flat is rented with its rooms as they were designed without any changes to the floor plan by some unrelated adult households. As the apartments are mainly designed for family-type households, here, the dining space, bathroom, and kitchen are usually shared spaces for all residents, and bedrooms are allotted to the individual resident or multiple residents. The research found the following four states to lead a shared house.

- Shared houses made up of friends who have come together to live with one another.
- Shared houses of 'random' who all found each other through means such as websites and are sharing a property;
- Friend/random hybrid households where some people are friends but have since had to enter random to fill gaps to maintain the tenancy of the property;
- Owner-occupied shared households where the owner is a resident and shared with one or more tenants, usually to afford to own the property.
- This type of arrangement rents out a flat for a long time or a short time and includes diversified living arrangements.

#### Private Hostel

In this type of sharing, landlord or head tenant rent a house from a landlord and then further rent out the house toward many sub-tenants with overall control. This type is a profit-making business, and sometimes the landlord runs the business own-self. Usually, this type of hostel is built for a long time for many tenants living together with low rent, and often floor plan is modified with temporary partition walls. In this situation, the large room is divided into several separate rooms or dining spaces, and living spaces are moderate, with partitioning to a bedroom.

#### Comparative Analysis of Shared Rental Flat (Mess House) and Hostel

The internal layout (figure 3 and figure 4) shows no significant difference in the layout plan of shared house and hostel because both are a rental flat, but considering the overall living pattern, there is a considerable difference.

Mess house and hostels offer a sharing lifestyle, but the considerable difference started with profit-making. Private hostels were happening with planning of profit gain and shared houses forms to benefit economically/socially through sharing. At some instant, hostels are a formal set-up wherein most of the cases, and this is a long-time establishment. Hostel fees are also a fixed payment, including all services. On the other hand, mess houses are very informal in terms of the distribution of spaces, foods, responsibilities, etc. often this informal arrangement seems like a family within a limited number of occupants rather than hostels with a

**Table-4:** Rental Profile of Single Young Households.  
Source: Field Survey

Attributes		Frequency (n= 62)	Percentage
<b>Sharing type</b>	- Private rental house (mess house)	34	54.8
	- Private hostel	28	45.2
<b>Sharing status</b>	- Shared kitchen	6	9.72
	- Shared kitchen and toilet	16	25.81
	- Shared kitchen, toilet, and bedroom	38	61.29
	- Shared kitchen, toilet, bedroom, and bed	2	3.22
<b>No. of occupants in one bedroom</b>	- Single	23	37.10
	- 2 people	10	16.13
	- 3 people	27	43.55
	- 4 people	2	3.23
<b>Per capita rental space</b>	- Less than 8 sqm	12	19.35
	- 8 sqm-12 sqm	30	48.39
	- 12 sqm- 16 sqm	12	19.35
	- More than 16 sqm	8	29.03
<b>Per capita bedroom space</b>	- Less than 3 sqm	8	12.9
	- 3 sqm-5 sqm	34	54.8
	- 5 sqm- 10 sqm	14	22.58
	- More than 10 sqm	6	9.72
<b>Per capita rental cost including meal charge and other services</b>	- Less than 3000 tk/month	2	3.23
	- 3000-5000 tk/month	16	25.81
	- 5000-8000 tk/month	36	58.06
	- More than 8000 tk/month	8	12.90
<b>The motivation for sharing toward the rental house</b>	- For lowering rent	25	40.32
	- For safety	7	11.29
	- For not being alone to avoid social difficulties	10	16.13
	- For the unavailability of single-person apartments or other options	20	32.26

**Table-5:** Rental Cost for Different Types of Sharing at Selected Zones (Per Capita Rental Cost).  
Source: Field Survey (2018)

House type	Rent type	Tejgaon (Tk/month)	Moghbazar (Tk/month)	Motijheel (Tk/month)
<b>A1</b> (Self-catering)	House rent excluding meal charge	4000-6000	-	-
<b>A2</b> (Common meal)	House rent+Meal charge+service charge	(4000 to 6000 + (2000 to 3000 + (300 to 500)	(2000 to 5000 + (2000 to 3000) + (300 to 500)	-
<b>B</b> (Private hostel)	House rent including meal charge and other	3000 to 6500	6000 to 6500	3000 to 6500



large number of occupants with unknown flat-mates. The most advantages of hostels are offering all things in a package where one newcomer to the city finds a place to live with necessary furniture (bed and table), including meals and other services with minimum responsibilities to manage everything. However, sometimes because of profit-making attitude, hostels offer a poor environment with crowding rather than mess house where informal arrangement always tries to achieve a better environment economically.

### The Process of Finding Shared Accommodation

Finding a room/seat in shared accommodation may seem straightforward, involving browsing ads, making calls, and viewing rooms. However, the reality can be more complex, with considerations such as proximity to work, environment, and compatibility with housemates. Shared living involves a laborious process for both seekers and advertisers, as it involves establishing routines and practices for harmonious coexistence. Advertisements vary based on the type of accommodation, with hostels using commercial approaches and private shared houses often preferring familiarity among residents. Specific requirements, such as non-smoking or

employment status, are often mentioned in advertisements.

### House Rent

Different houses adopt different approaches to managing house rent. In shared, rented house rent is distributed to all shared members. The process of distribution can be configured in multiple ways.

- House rent is uniformly distributed to all shared household. There are no considerations of space allocation. For example, there may be a small or large room in one flat, and each household may not be uniformly benefited, but house rent will be equally distributed to all members (Figure 3 & Figure 4).
- House rent is distributed according to the seat. At first, the house is divided into several seats, for example, three seats in the large room and two seats in a small room. If one sharer wants to occupy two seats, he/she has to pay rent of two seats. Sometimes share of house rent is fixed according to some values like the small or large room, room with attached veranda, room with attached toilet, etc.



#### Legend

1. Bedroom
2. Converted bedroom from living space.
3. Dining or multipurpose space
4. Kitchen
5. Toilet
6. Veranda



**Figure-4:** Private Mess House (From left, Type A1 & A2, Flat 3B, R#6 @Niketon, Flat A3, Green Nahar Villa, Mogbbazar, Dhaka).

It is common in the case of shared house that if one seat is vacant for one month, then rent of that seat will be distributed to all those residing within it. In private hostel house rent including 2-3 meals is fixed by the authority

### Food

Food arrangement includes food purchase, storage, distribution, shopping, shelving, cooking, and eating. In the hostel case, all the process of food is done by hostel authority, and individual households have no other responsibility without collecting food from shared dining or kitchen. In a shared house, most of the cases food is prepared commonly, but the self-catering system also found. In the survey, it seems that the self-catering approach was only adopted by female domain, maybe because of the females' attitude. Different approaches are also found in shared food systems which are shown below:

- Food arrangement responsibility is given to one or two enants (called mess manager) by rotation.

- Food responsibility is given upon specific one household, and he benefitted with meal charges,
- All households are responsible for food arrangements.

At the point of food arrangement, the housemaid is an unavoidable issue, and often it seems to housemaid has a significant contribution. High dependency on housemaid arises problems when housemaid makes absent for the reason of illness or other. In that case, usually, they prefer the nearest cheap hotels or self cooking.

### Discussion on Opportunities and Complexities in Shared Premise

#### *Shared living and opportunities: Connection and support*

According to respondents, although they chose to live in shared accommodation with no other suitable options, the residents shared a vision of sustainability (social and

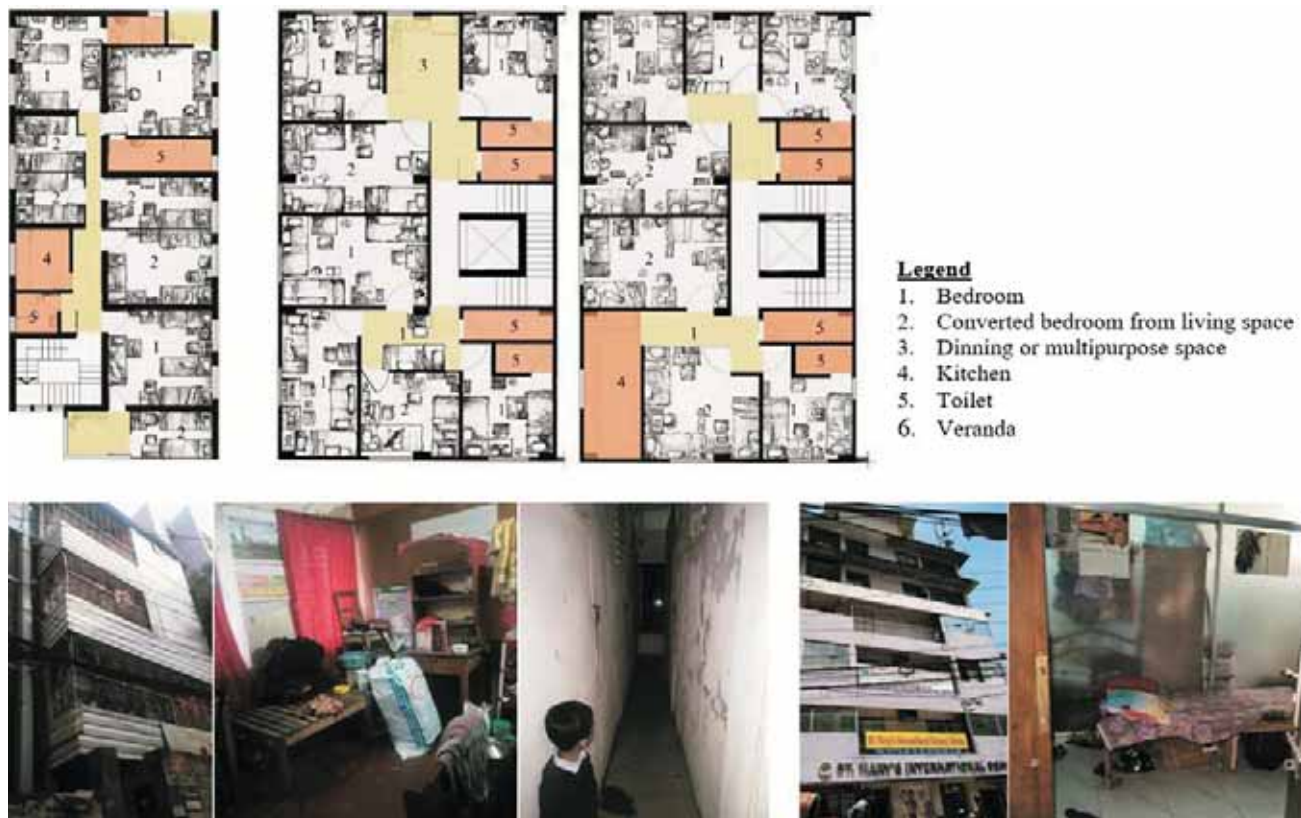


Figure-5: Private Hostel; Type B (From Left, Roja VIP Chattri Hoste, Ramna Chattri Hostel-2nd Floor).



Figure-5a: Tejgaon Area.



Figure-5b: Moghbazar Area.





Figure-5c: Motijheel Area.

economic), which instantly created a commonality between them. This vision connected various people from diverse backgrounds and developed strong social network and social bonding toward social sustainability. Aside from the instant connection formed through sharing, residents had sudden or regular events to meet, greet, and get to know one another.

At this point, frequent interaction between residents is essential. Although conflict sometimes arises, informal space demarcation responsibility distribution increases the level of interaction.

As stated by the residents, they enjoy lots of practical and moral support in shared living. In the premise of a shared house, though everyone lives out of their own family, there is evidence of a family environment within the home. The issue of support is also related to how the residents are connected.

### ***Shared living and complexities: Social and physical problems***

The research found the diversity and complexity of 'sharing'

arrangements within two basic different types of shared houses: private shared/mess houses and private hostels. First of all as a group of single young households, it is difficult to find potential houses due to social misperceptions and politically unstable situations. In this regard, the choice goes to private hostel.

In a mess house, different informal systems for 'sharing arrangements' exist that arise spontaneously to address multiple issues or sharing problems. Basically, what system will be followed to manage a shared house depends on the interpersonal relationship between the households; that is how a group is formed to live in a shared house. In mess house, all problems mainly occurred because of informal ways of management and using a single-family house for multiple shared households. First, difficulties to find potential housemates, and this problem is heightened when existing housemates have to share extra house-rent to fill the gap of one sharer. Second, there are challenges to getting equal space distribution within the households when the house is not designed for multiple households. Third, complexities due to fixation of house rent, when all the residents do not get equal facilities such as an attached toilet or attached



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veranda, same room space, etc. Fourth, to run a mess house, the head tenant or mess manager must take multiple responsibilities regarding the management of food, funds etc. A problem arises within the selection of mess managers with the reluctance of households to take responsibility as an extra burden, and sometimes mismanagement and misunderstanding occur. Fifth, complexities due to adjustment with variance in daily routine, lifestyle, food habits, etc., and the amount of this problem depends mainly on the 'sharing status' and interpersonal relationship between households.

In the case of a private hostel, the situation is not too different, but the fundamental difference is here; a shared accommodation is run by following a management team's rules and regulations. So households get all facilities in a package system within seat fare and are bound to accept the hostel rules without any negotiation. The first problem of mess house regarding sharing extra house rent does not exist here because each is responsible for only his or her occupied seat. The second and third problems of equal distribution of space and facilities are also present here since private hostels are also situated in single-family residences with or without small conversion. However, here residents have no right to say anything about this problem, so there is no scope of the chaos and no negotiation between residents. The fifth problem regarding different lifestyles and issues of sacrifice is constant for shared living depending on their sharing status. However, the private hostel's main problem is the poor quality of food, services and space crowding because of the landlord's profit-seeking attitude. As a result, it has seen that most of the hostel raise their seat fare, considering increased demand.

With some exceptions, most participants narrated a more individualistic approach to sharing space and goods that gave primacy to individual taste and routine over time. How sharing was managed was not an easy task for those involved, often problematized by the length of stay (how long someone has been in the house). The problem between one household versus many households under one roof is a constant feature of 'sharing' practices. 'Sharing is inherently rational and interpersonal, so the form and quality of the interpersonal relationships within which sharing occurs fundamentally affect the nature and success of sharing within shared households. Besides, these psychological things are essential within sharing, such as self-perception, behavior, privacy needs, etc.

Overall problems occurred mainly on two sides, i.e., supply-side and demand side. There are an overall housing shortage and unwillingness of suppliers (landlords) due to social

misperceptions on the supply side. On the demand side, multiple problems occurred due to shared living with different lifestyles and choices, converted family houses for sharing, and different space requirements. Their living arrangement often short term and they consider economic accommodation with In the solution, there required planning strategies regarding specific urban schemes and housing typologies.

## CONCLUSION

Though the number of young single-person households is increasing day by day, they are still a minority group of people. So, our society and government are not wholly concerned about the issue. Since accurate statistics are also missing so the private sector is not also interested in, providing for this group of people. Unlike many Western developed countries where the younger generation is living away from the parental family to seek greater independence and freedom, the situation is quite different in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in terms of culture and the housing market. Here single individuals live independently to build their career started from student life to job career where city centric development acts as a fuel.

Shared living appears to be particularly suited to young adults who are strongly committed to their future careers and the labor market. It is a flexible household form, that can provide 'professional standard' accommodations and ready access to a social life for time-constrained and geographically mobile people. The study has used the empirical case study of shared accommodation as a context and means to know about the perception and problems of living away from the parental home by focusing on 'sharing'. While domestic 'sharing' has been examined thoroughly in different researches, little research has explored such sharing

practices amongst peer-shared accommodation. A diverse picture is seen in the evaluation of different shared households. Mainly, the problems arise with the quality and quantity of space. These issues are also related to other social issues such as the relationship with society, dealing with conflict and 'moving on', and personal issues like feelings of crowding and privacy. It is argued that "sharing" consume less and make an attitude toward sustainability. However, this research found the presence of critical situation at different level of sharing, the conclusion wants to highlight the scope and opportunities of sharing. Beside the space crisis, shared houses provide a compact and well-networked living environment that is significant for sustainability. The research findings contribute to knowledge regarding the experiences and barriers to successful sharing which have

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been largely unexplored. The essential factors of 'sharing' that should be considered while designing are the following:

- Who is sharing, what is the quality and the form of sharing, and what is the relation between the sharers?
- Why is the sharing taking place (is it elective or necessary)?

- What is being shared (space, goods, and responsibility)?
- How is sharing taking place?

At this point, this research does not try to generalize the findings however scope and opportunities of shared living provides valuable indication toward sustainable living worldwide.

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