Research Article

Why does Marriage Improve the Well-Being of Some and Diminish that of others? A Gender Analysis in Togo

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Abstract

Marriage is considered in the literature as a means of pooling risks and improving the well-being of couples. Thus, this article aims to analyze the relationship between marriage and the well-being of couples in Togo. To do so, we apply the ordinary least squares (OLS) method. Using data from the Enquête Harmonisée sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (EHCVM) Togo 2018. We arrive at the results that, marriage positively affects the well-being of married women under monogamy and polygamy, but the well-being of women in common-law unions decreases. However, our results show that marriage negatively affects the well-being of married men in Togo, regardless of their marital status. Furthermore, we find that marriage is a decreasing function of education level in Togo, but that marriage contributes to improved household well-being in the Togolese context. Our results suggest that the provision of social assistance, such as affordable healthcare or employment assistance programs, could help improve the well-being of married men. Further policy implications are proposed in the light of our results.

Keywords: Marriage, Well-Being, Couple, Household, Togo.

1. Introduction

In many developing countries, especially in Africa, marriage is of crucial importance to individuals, both traditionally and religiously. Considered a central institution within communities, marriage is a form of risk hedging between the couple (Burgess and Locke, 1945). People who marry hope to increase their marginal utility, in particular their level of well-being, through the union. The theoretical literature reveals two opposing theories on the relationship between marriage and economic well-being. The first, by Becker et al. (1977) and Becker (1991), argues that marriage improves the situation of families through the specialization of the individuals in the family, leading to greater productivity on the part of the father and mother. Moreover, the specialization and sharing of economic and social resources in marriage generates economies of scale and offers protection against unexpected events (Waite, 2000; Oppenheimer, 1994). However, the second theory supports and demonstrates the disadvantages of marriage for couples who unite. For Umberson et al (2005), there is an inverse relationship between the number of years married and the benefits of marriage.

Empirically, analyses by Akerlof (1998) have shown that young married men are more likely to enter the job market than single men. Also, companies prefer married men and consider them more responsible and in better emotional health (Waite, 2000; Waite and Gallagher, 2000), so they are more productive and less likely to quit. Furthermore, Blekesaune (2018) work argues that cohabitation offers similar happiness benefits to marriage, but not how never-married people perceive their overall life satisfaction. However, Addai et al. (2015) disagree with their predecessors, arguing that marriage is associated with negative subjective well-being among Ghanaians. The benefits of marriage may diminish after years of marriage (Liu and Umberson, 2008). Also, Gove et al. (1990) have shown that the marital relationship is highly personal and private, so tends to be unstable, and this instability compromises many of the benefits derived from marriage.

What emerges is a lack of empirical consensus on the relationship between marriage and well-being. Recent previous work analyzing this relationship has failed to take certain aspects into account. For example, Blekesaune (2018) does not distinguish between the different types of matrimonial regimes in his study, which makes it impossible to assess the effect of each category on couples' well-being Furthermore, the author uses happiness as a proxy for well-being, which limits his results. However, the present article uses

a well-being indicator that takes into account food consumption, non-food consumption of non-durable goods and services, the use value of durable goods, and the imputed rent of owner-occupied households, providing more relevant results compared with previous work that has used proxies to capture well-being. Furthermore, this article will contribute to the existing literature on the relationship between marriage and the well-being of married couples.

In Togo, marriage is governed by legal and customary provisions.

In Togo, marriage is defined as the act by which a man and a woman establish a legal union between themselves. and lasting. Two forms of union are recognized by law: monogamy and polygamy. However, common-law marriages are becoming increasingly common in the country. The law also recognizes the practice of dowry payment, which must be symbolic. Statistics show that in Togo, married people make up a large proportion of the population. Beyond culture, this means that people who marry hope to benefit from the marriage through improved well-being.
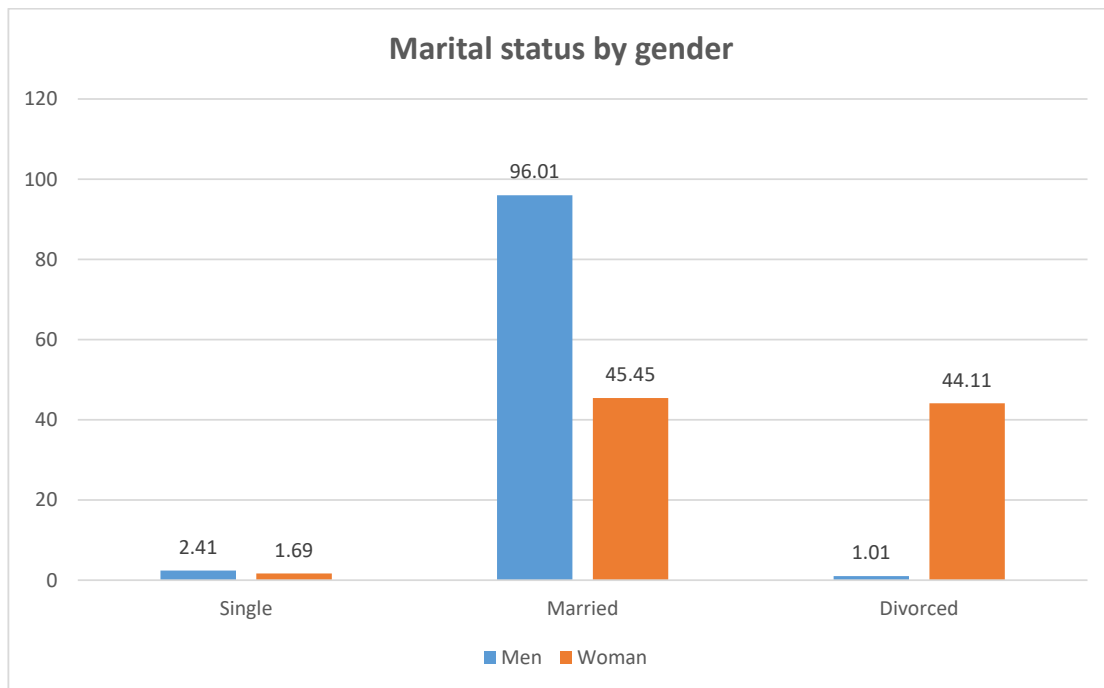

Figure 1: Marital status by gender in Togo (percentage)

Fig. 1 gives a brief overview of the marriage situation by gender in Togo. Indeed, 96.01% of men are married, compared with 45.45% of women. This is understandable insofar as, in the Togolese context, women marry between the ages of 15 and 30, but beyond this age, they find it difficult to get married. Also, culturally, society is still dominated by traditional norms. Women have to wait for men to pay a dowry (a symbol/synonym of marriage) to their families before they are considered married. As a result, they are less likely to marry than men. However, men can marry at any age.

This article therefore aims to analyze the effect of marriage on the well-being of married couples in Togo. Our article is based on the following hypotheses: marriage improves the well-being of married women in Togo, and marriage contributes to improving the well-being of married men. Marriage is a central element of Togolese social and cultural life, defining community life and being at the heart of individual and family concerns. However, despite the importance of this institution, to our knowledge there are very few studies on the link between marriage and the well-

being of couples in Togo. Moreover, most of the articles analyzing this relationship have been published in Western countries. Few articles have been produced in the context of African countries in general and Togo in particular. It is therefore important to see whether marriage, as a central element of social life, contributes to improving the well-being of couples in Togo. To do this, we use the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method, given the nature of our data. OLS allows us to minimize the impact of experimental errors by "adding information" to the measurement process. Our results show that marriage improves the well-being of women and reduces that of men. Naturally, discussions and explanations of these results have been presented in this article, notably in the results and discussions section.

The rest of the paper is presented as follows: section 2 presents the well-being indicator in the different regions of the country. The methodology and data are presented in Section 3. The results and discussions are presented in section 4 and the last section concludes.

2. The Well-Being Indicator in Togo

The basis used in this article is the welfare indicator. Using this indicator, we calculate an indicator of average well-being per region in Togo. This calculated indicator is then presented in Fig. 2.
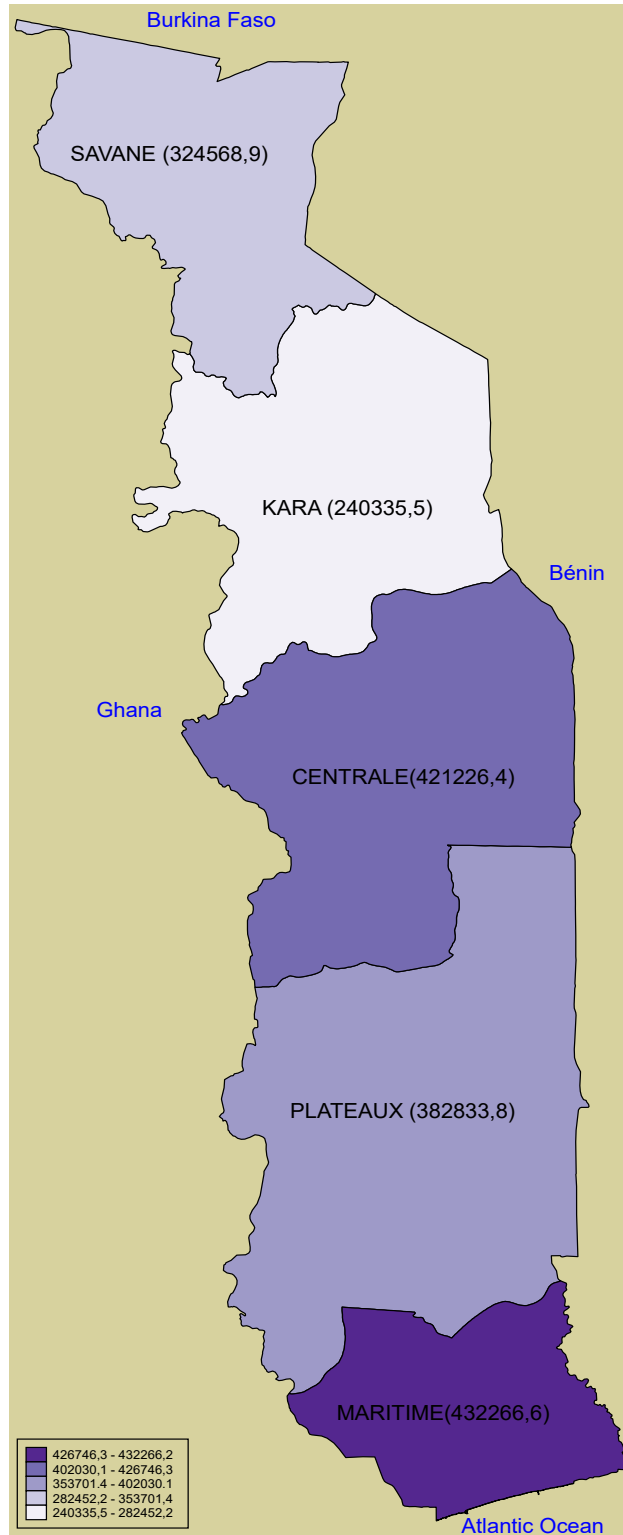

Figure 2: Welfare indicator by region in Togo

Fig. 2 Observation of the Fig. 2 shows a divide in terms of average well-being between the northern regions (Savanes and Kara) and the southern regions (Centrale, Plateaux, and Maritime). This shows that the northern regions have a relatively lower average well-being indicator than the other regions. We can therefore see that the Maritime region has a relatively higher average well-being indicator than the other regions. The Maritime region is home to more households with a high level of well-being. The first plausible explanation for this result is that the region is the country's capital, and the capital is often the main economic and commercial center that attracts large numbers of investments, businesses, and jobs, creating an environment conducive to economic growth. Residents of the capital therefore generally have more opportunities to find well-paid employment and enjoy financial stability. Added to this is the presence of public services and infrastructure such as hospitals, universities, public transport, parks, and so on, giving capital residents better access to quality services, which contributes to their overall well-being. However, the northern regions, such as Kara and Savanes, have the lowest average well-being indicators, followed by Savanes. These two regions are among the poorest in the country. The INSEED (2020) report reveals that the poverty index was highest in these regions, with an incidence of poverty of 65.1% and 56.1% respectively in the Savanes and Kara regions. Added to this is the security crisis affecting the north of the Savanes region, causing disruption to the region's socio-economic fabric.

3. Methodology and Data

In this section, we present the methodology, the data used in this article, and their sources.

3.1. Methodology

We have adopted an estimation technique consistent with the nature of our data structure. Thus, following the work of Asongu and Asongu, (2018), we advocate the ordinary least squares (OLS) model.

We first estimated equation (1):

$$lnPcexp_f = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1\, Maritus_f + \alpha_2\, X + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$
$$lnPcexp_m = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1\, Maritus_m + \alpha_2\, X + \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

The $lnPcexpf$ and $lnPcexp_m$ respectively represent the indicator of women's and men's well-being, captured here by their logarithms, Maritus is marital status categorized as follows: married (which includes monogamous, polygamous and common-law), monogamous married, polygamous married and common-law. X is a vector of control variables and ε_i is the error term. Equation (1) estimates that of women and equation (2) estimates that of men.

3.2. Data and Source

To carry out our analysis, we used data from Togo's 2018 Enquête Harmonisée sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages (EHCVM). Indeed, this is a nationally representative survey and is the most recent in the country. It covered 6 171 households and was carried out by the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques et Démographiques (INSEED). The survey contains data on the well-being index calculated by INSEED, as well as variables relating to the following characteristics socio-demographics. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of our variables used in this article.

Women					
	Observations	**mean**	**Standard deviation**	**minimum**	**maximuim**
Logarithm of well-being	2013	12.808	0.548	11.009	14.921
Age	2013	41.727	11.700	15	92
	Modality				**Proportion**
Married (total)	1 if married (regardless of marital status) 0, otherwise				45.45 54.55
Marry (monogamy)	1 if married monogamously 0, otherwise				56.68 43.32
Marry (polygamy)	1, if married polygamously 0 otherwise				1.89 98.11
Common-law union	1, if married (but common-law) 0, otherwise				0.25 99.75
Primary Education	1 primary education 0, otherwise				23.50 76.50
Secondary education	1 secondary education 0, otherwise				64.03 35.97

	Modality	Proportion
Tertiary education	1 higher education 0, otherwise	2.43 97.57
Animist	1 animist 0, otherwise	3.48 96.52
Other religion	1 Muslim 0, otherwise	3.53 96.47
Muslim	1 she belongs to another religious congregation 0, otherwise	2.48 97.52
Rural	1 rural 0, otherwise	49.48 50.52
Category socio-professional (unemployed)	1 unemployed 0, otherwise	13.07 86.93
Agricultural sector	1 a farmer 0, otherwise	59.36 40.64

Men					
	Observations	**mean**	**Standard deviation**	**minimum**	**maximuim**
Logarithm of well-being	4158	12.649	0.545	10.736	15.713
Age	4158	41.722	11.524	15	99

	Modality	Proportion
Married (total)	1 if married (regardless of marital status) 0, otherwise	96.01 3.99
Marry (monogamy)	1 if married monogamously 0, otherwise	89.75 10.25
Marry (polygamy)	1, if married polygamously 0 otherwise	4.09 95.91
Common-law union	1, if married (but common-law) 0, otherwise	2.16 97.84
Primary Education	1 primary education 0, otherwise	52.81 47.19
Secondary education	1 secondary education 0, otherwise	19.26 80.74
Tertiary education	1 higher education 0, otherwise	1.37 98.63
Animist	1 animist 0, otherwise	26.29 73.71
Other religion	1 Muslim 0, otherwise	26.33 73.67
Muslim	1 she belongs to another religious congregation 0, otherwise	13.71 86.29
Rural	1 rural 0, otherwise	81.87 18.13
Category socio-professional (unemployed)	1 unemployed 0, otherwise	12.82 87.18

| Agricultural sector | 1 a farmer | 5.41 |
| | 0, otherwise | 94.59 |

Note: In Table 1, the standard deviation of the well-being index in Togo is around 0.55 for both men and women, reflecting the homogeneity of our dependent variable. In Togo, 45% of women are married, compared with 96.01% of men. This is understandable, as women often find it difficult to marry because of their age or situation, especially those who already have a child. Moreover, women in monogamous situations represent 56.68% versus 89.75%.

Table 1: descriptive statistics

4. Results and Discussion

This section is devoted to presenting and discussing the results. First, we present the results of the statistical analyses, followed by the results of the econometric regressions.

4.1. Crossed Results

The results in this section are based on our statistical analyses. We crossed variables to produce these figures.

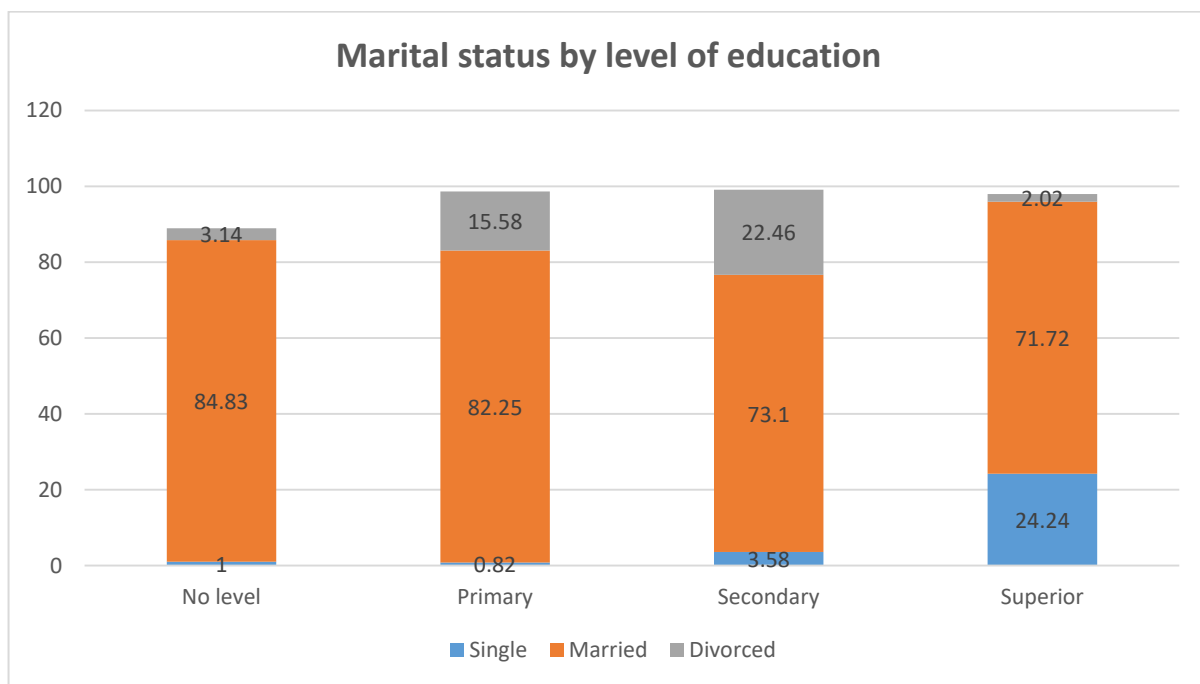### 4.1.1. Marital Status and Level of Education

Figure 3: Marital status by level of education (percentage)

Fig. 3 shows the results of the cross-analysis between marital status and the level of education of the head of household. The results indicate a negative correlation between marriage and level of education. Indeed, the figure shows that the higher the level of education, the less likely individuals are to marry. This result is not surprising, given that long-term studies require sacrifices in relationships. For example, for long-educated men, the aspiration to achieve an important position in society often outweighs the desire to marry. As for women with advanced levels of education, some men may feel intimidated by the idea of approaching them. They may fear that these women, because of their education, are less inclined to adopt a traditionally submissive role within the couple. What's more, having often completed their studies at a later age, these women may find themselves, unfortunately, at a disadvantage. On the other hand, some men may be reluctant to commit to women in positions of responsibility or with a higher level of education than their own, for fear of not being able to fully assume their conventional role as head of the family.
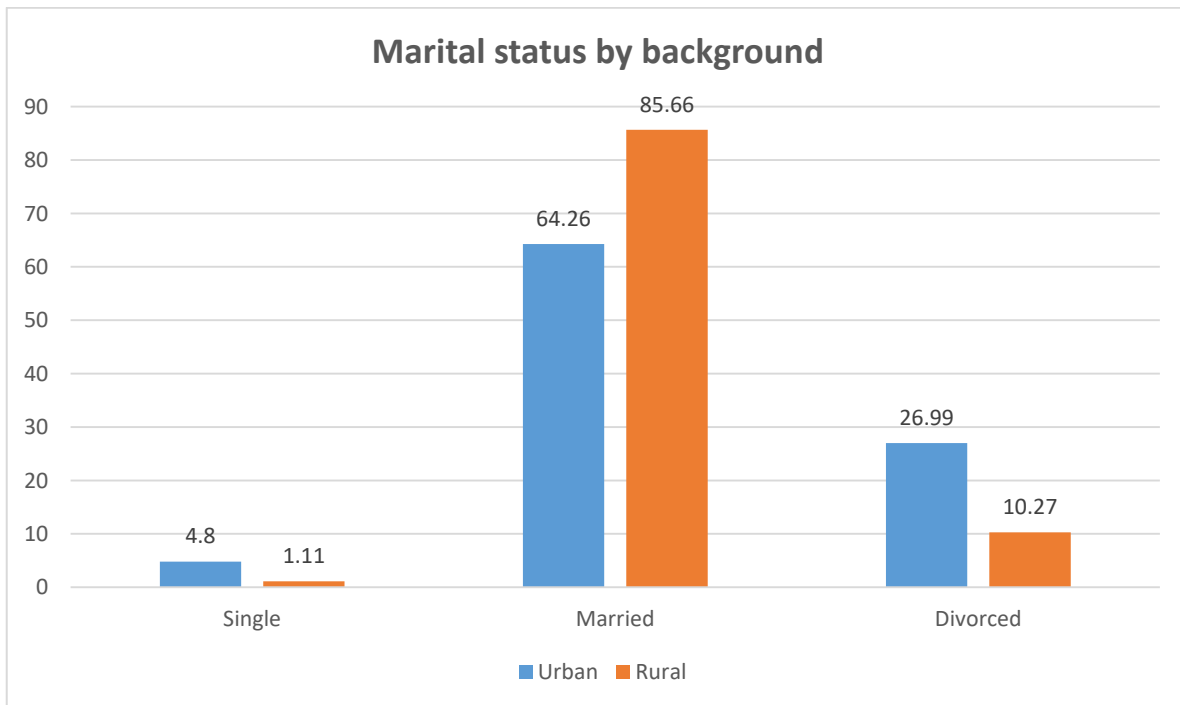
4.1.2. Marital Status and Place of Residence

Figure 4: Marital status by area of residence (percentage)

Fig.4 presents the results of cross-analysis between marital status and area of residence. The results reveal that more than half of married households (85.66%) are rural, compared with 64.26% of urban households. Single and divorced households are more represented in urban areas, at 4.80% and 26.99% respectively. These results are understandable insofar as rural households are situated in a context where traditional values govern the institution of marriage. According to these norms, marriage is a lifelong commitment, which is practically obligatory for people who reach a certain age. It is therefore not easy to divorce in this context, where community norms sometimes take precedence over the individual. In urban environments, on the other hand, globalization has helped to free individuals from socio-cultural norms. As a result, the individual is no longer subject to the values of society but makes decisions without necessarily taking into account the values of the community. This is why divorcees and single people are more numerous in urban areas.
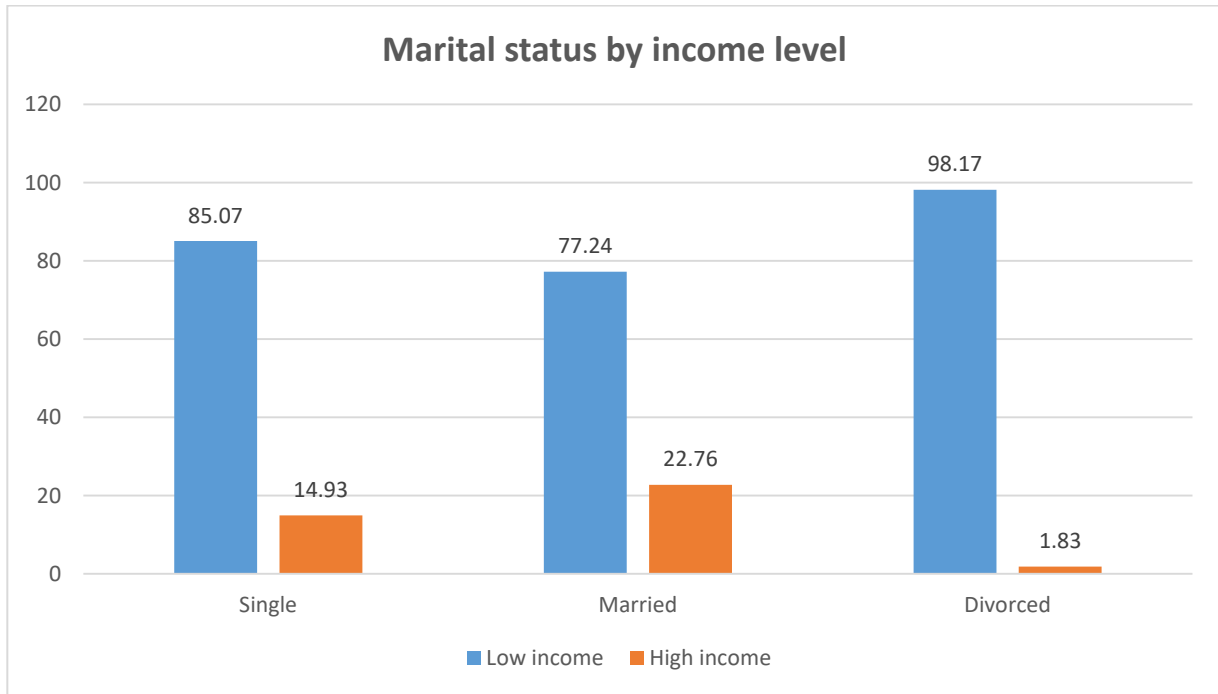
Figure 5: Marital status and household income (percentage)

Fig. 5 shows the evolution of marital status according to household income. In this study, we use total annual expenditure as a proxy for household income for the following reasons: firstly, expenditure makes it possible to take into account individuals said to have no income (Couchoro and Dout, 2019). Secondly, unlike income, whose flows may not be regular, expenditure flows are more regular and more easily identifiable (Friedman, 1957). Expenditure is therefore considered as income in the remainder of this document. We took the average annual income (1 723 427 CFA francs) as the frontier. We then considered all households with an annual income below this average as low-income households, and those with an annual income above this average as high-income households. This leads us to classify incomes into two categories: low-income and high-income.

The results in Figure 5 show that the majority of households in Togo have low incomes. However, it should be noted that compared to single and divorced people, the proportion of married people with a high income is higher. This result suggests that marriage can be a source of increased income for the couple through the pooling of assets, and is consistent with the findings of Lazear and Michael (1981), Rosenzweig and Stark (1989) [19,20]. One possible explanation for this result is that married people can initially rely on their spouse and in-laws as sources of financial support. Secondly, married people are more valued by companies who assume they are responsible, so they may be more likely to find responsible employment than single people and therefore earn a higher income (Waite, 2000). Being married and having a family can also motivate an individual to seek financial means because of their responsibilities, which can make them more creative in terms of entrepreneurship and finding ways to provide for the family.

4.2. Effect of Marriage on Household Well-Being
In this section, we present the results of our econometric analyses. The results for women are presented after those for men.

4.2.1. Results of The Effect of Marriage on The Well-Being of Married Women
Table 2 presents the results of the effect of marriage on women's well-being. Four sets of results are presented. Firstly, column (1) presents the results taking into account all categories of married women (monogamous married, polygamous married, and common-law). Column (2) shows the results for monogamous married women, column (3) for polygamous married women, and column (4) for common-law married women.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Married (total)	0.443***			
	(0.060)			
Married monogamously		0.530***		
		(0.060)		
Polygamous marriages			0.063	
			(0.102)	
Common-law union				-0.552**
				(0.236)
Age				
20-29 years	-0.164	-0.191	-0.221	-0.229
	(0.163)	(0.176)	(0.180)	(0.182)
30-39 years	0.353**	0.261	0.664***	0.659***
	(0.166)	(0.181)	(0.180)	(0.183)
Over 39 years	0.396**	0.346*	0.465**	0.455**
	(0.176)	(0.189)	(0.192)	(0.194)
Education level				
Primary	0.057	0.043	0.047	0.037
	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.066)
Secondary	0.154	0.087	0.310***	0.290***
	(0.098)	(0.101)	(0.099)	(0.099)
Tertiary	0.966***	0.897***	1.183***	1.163***
	(0.112)	(0.113)	(0.110)	(0.109)
Women's institutional sector				
Individual companies	0.168	0.073	0.040	-0.095
	(0.146)	(0.064)	(0.069)	(0.098)
Large private companies	0.254	0.129	0.138	-0.000
	(0.236)	(0.202)	(0.180)	(0.192)
Other	0.154	0.059	0.040	-0.093
	(0.147)	(0.066)	(0.071)	(0.100)
Socio-professional category (unemployed)	0.021	0.023	0.040	0.040
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Parent company business sector (trade)	-0.040*	-0.038	-0.060**	-0.058**
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Religions				
Animist	0.037	0.049	0.071	0.073
	(0.098)	(0.099)	(0.094)	(0.094)
Muslim	0.066	0.138	0.135	0.138
	(0.118)	(0.110)	(0.114)	(0.111)
No religion	-0.276**	-0.253**	-0.265**	-0.270**
	(0.115)	(0.107)	(0.115)	(0.114)

Place of residence (Rural)	-0.601***	-0.619***	-0.550***	-0.554***
	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Constant	12.336***	12.521***	12.361***	12.521***
	(0.235)	(0.204)	(0.208)	(0.226)
Observations	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440
R-square	0.72	0.73	0.68	0.68

Note: the dependent variable is the welfare index and the variable of interest is marital status. Results are presented according to each household head's marital status modality. This variable of interest is therefore made up of married people in general, polygamous married people, monogamous married people and common-law married people. Significance * $p<0.1$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$.

Table 2: Results of the effect of marriage on women's well-being

The results (columns 1, 2, and 3 of Table 2) show respectively that marriage as a whole and marriage under monogamy contribute to improving the well-being of married women in the Togolese context. Our results are consistent with the work of several authors such as Delphy (1984); Delphy and Leonard (1992); Okin (2008); Thorne (1992) and Whitehead (1998). These results can be explained by the fact that marriage offers women financial support from their spouse, bringing additional economic resources to the household and thus improving the standard of living of the family as a whole. Married women can therefore benefit from greater financial security and easier access to economic resources such as food, healthcare, and, in some cases, education. In addition, women may be economically vulnerable outside marriage and, once married, become financially secure thanks to the support of their spouse, in-laws, and their own family. Indeed, it should be noted that this support is not only financial, but also emotional, and takes the form of advice from all these families. All this contributes to the bride's self-fulfillment and thus to improving her well-being.

However, the results (column 4 of Table 2) show that the well-being of women in common-law unions is declining. This result is not surprising and can be explained in several ways. Firstly, common-law unions tend to be more unstable than marital relationships, which can lead to greater uncertainty about the future of the relationship. This instability can be a source of stress and anxiety for women in common-law relationships, which can affect their well-being. Secondly, in some cultures or communities in Togo, common-law unions may be perceived as socially unacceptable or less valued than marriage. This social pressure can be a source of stress and tension for common-law women, affecting their well-being. Thirdly, married couples enjoy certain legal and financial advantages (e.g. inheritance rights, the possibility of sharing tax benefits, etc.) that are not available to cohabiting couples. This can lead to financial insecurity for cohabiting women and affect their well-being. In addition, common-law women are more likely to be at a disadvantage in terms of power and decision-making in the relationship than married women. This imbalance can be a source of emotional stress and frustration for cohabiting women, compromising their well-being.

Furthermore, our results show a positive relationship between women's level of education and their well-being in Togo, with a significant effect for secondary (columns 3 and 4 in Table 2) and higher education (columns 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Table 2). These results confirm Becker and Collins (1964) theory of human capital, which maintains that a given level of education corresponds to a given job and therefore good pay [26]. Such a result can be understood insofar as women with a higher level of education have more job opportunities and therefore good pay, which can contribute to their empowerment (Shetty and Hans 2015; Ebrahimi et al., 2022). Similarly, age influences women's well-being in Togo. Indeed, the well-being of married women aged 30 and over increases with marriage. These results confirm the work of Loughran and Zissimopoulos (2004), who show that delaying marriage increases women's hourly wages by almost 4 % for each year of delay, which also affects well-being.

Furthermore, our results show that being a married woman working in the agricultural sector reduces women's well-being. This result is not surprising given that Togo's agricultural sector still uses rudimentary tools and is faced with climate change, leading to a decline in productivity. Moreover, in some cases, women have no decision-making power in the management of the financial resources generated by the sale of agricultural produce. This is usually done by their husbands, who manage it in their way, thus depriving women of economic development linked to farming activities. In addition, women may suffer discrimination in access to credit, land, family property, etc. This can negatively affect their well-being in marriage.

4.2.2. Results of the Effect of Marriage on Men's Well-Being

We present here the results of the effect of marriage on the well-being of married men. These results are shown in Table 3. Column (1) presents the results taking into account all union categories (monogamous marriage, polygamous marriage, and common-law). Column (2) shows the results for men in monogamous marriages, column (3) for those in polygamous marriages, and column (4) for those in common-law marriages.

VARIABLES	(1) OLS	(2) OLS	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
Married (total)	-0.361***			
	(0.077)			
Married monogamously		-0.039		
		(0.046)		
Polygamous marriages			-0.266***	
			(0.058)	
Common-law union				0.121
				(0.079)
Age				
20-29 years	0.070	-0.154	-0.169	-0.191
	(0.370)	(0.326)	(0.321)	(0.319)
30-39 years	0.481	0.234	0.208	0.199
	(0.371)	(0.326)	(0.321)	(0.318)
Over 39 years	0.653*	0.416	0.403	0.385
	(0.372)	(0.327)	(0.322)	(0.319)
Education level				
Primary	0.335***	0.339***	0.319***	0.333***
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.026)
Secondary	0.486***	0.503***	0.500***	0.496***
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.034)
Tertiary	0.985***	1.098***	1.092***	1.112***
	(0.136)	(0.141)	(0.140)	(0.141)
Men's institutional sector				
Individual companies	-0.093	-0.081	-0.095	-0.076
	(0.106)	(0.107)	(0.107)	(0.108)
Large private companies	-0.068	-0.042	-0.045	-0.035
	(0.110)	(0.112)	(0.111)	(0.112)
Other	-0.093	-0.077	-0.095	-0.072
	(0.120)	(0.121)	(0.122)	(0.122)
Socio-professional category (unemployed)	0.139	0.146	0.166	0.145
	(0.134)	(0.135)	(0.135)	(0.135)
Parent company business sector (trade)	-0.003	-0.021	-0.016	-0.026
	(0.089)	(0.089)	(0.088)	(0.087)
Religions				
Animist	-0.295***	-0.294***	-0.291***	-0.301***
	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.024)
Muslim	0.514***	0.524***	0.547***	0.526***
	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.033)
No religion	-0.211**	-0.166*	-0.110	-0.159*
	(0.084)	(0.088)	(0.085)	(0.086)

Place of residence (Rural)	-0.380***	-0.403***	-0.408***	-0.398***
	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.038)
Constant	12.476***	12.395***	12.392***	12.387***
	(0.375)	(0.341)	(0.338)	(0.336)
Observations	3,086	3,086	3,086	3,086
R-square	0.50	0.49	0.50	0.49

Note: the dependent variable is the welfare index and the variable of interest is marital status. The results are presented according to each modality of the marital status of the head of the household. This variable of interest is thus composed of the generally married, the polygamous married, the monogamous married and the common-law married. Significance * $p<0.1$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$.

Table 3: Results of the effect of marriage on men's well-being

The results obtained for men concerning the effect of marriage on well-being are opposite to those obtained for women, except for those living in a common-law union, where the effect is positive but not significant (column 4 of Table 3). The negative and significant effect of marriage on the well-being of married men is confirmed for married men in general (column 1 of Table 3) and polygamous married men (column 3 of Table 4). Our results thus confirm the studies by Lichter et al. (2003) and Edin (2000) . For Edin (2000), marriage can exacerbate economic difficulties rather than alleviate them Such a result in our case is not surprising. Indeed, in the African context, when a man marries, he is faced with three families to support (his own family, his family-in-law, and the family he wants to start). The married man is therefore called upon to provide for the needs (financial, health, nutritional, etc.) of these three families. All these burdens can contribute to reducing the man's well-being, due to these different responsibilities and the social pressure he is under. This result can also be explained by the division of labor within the household. Women are generally responsible for household tasks within the family, while household income is mainly generated by the man family (England and Farkas, 1986; Gupta, 1999; Sorensen and McLanahan, 1987. Consequently, in the event of an economic shock such as job loss or illness, the family's economic well-being may decline, which may also reduce the man's well-being.

The results show that the rural environment negatively affects the well-being of married men. These results are similar for men and women. There are several reasons for these results. First of all, rural areas do not have as many investment opportunities as urban areas. In addition, climate change is hurting the agricultural yields of rural households. All these factors lead to a decline in the well-being of married men, who are more often than not farmers. In addition, farmers have difficulty accessing agricultural credit, which leads them to use rudimentary tools.

As for women, the sign of the education variable shows that secondary and higher education increases men's well-being, thus confirming human capital theory (Becker, 1975)..

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to analyze the relationship between marriage and the well-being of married couples in Togo. Using data from the EHCVM, we employed statistical analysis and the ordinary least squares method as analytical tools. Our results revealed that marriage positively affects the well-being of married women and negatively affects the well-being of married men. In addition, our results revealed that the level of education increases household well-being. At the same time, we found that marriage is a decreasing function of education level.

Our results suggest that the provision of social assistance, such as affordable healthcare or employment assistance programs, could help improve the well-being of married men. The introduction of a unified social register would make it easier to target married men eligible for such social assistance. Indeed, married men tend to isolate themselves socially, which can affect their well-being. It would therefore be important to encourage the participation of married men in social activities, such as community recreation programs or sports clubs, which could help married men to connect with others and improve their well-being. Promote gender equality to reduce tensions linked to rigid gender role expectations, for example by offering paid parental leave.

In addition, authorities could encourage rural entrepreneurship through targeted tax policies and subsidies to encourage the creation of rural businesses, thereby providing additional employment and income opportunities for rural spouses. Vocational training programs can also help rural newlyweds acquire the skills they need to start up and run their businesses. Similarly, implementing policies that facilitate access to credit for rural households can help stimulate economic growth in rural areas, which in turn can improve the well-being of rural couples. In addition, investment in rural infrastructure, such as access to water, electricity, roads, schools, hospitals, and vocational training centers, could improve the living conditions of future brides and grooms, as well as employment and income prospects in rural areas.

Appendix: Methodology for constructing the well-being indicator
The well-being indicator, whose methodology is presented below,

was calculated by Togo's National Institute of Statistics and Economic and Demographic Studies (INSEED).

The variable was constructed by aggregating food consumption, non-food consumption of non-durable goods and services, the value of durable goods, and imputed rent for owner-occupied and rent-free households (INSEED, 2020). Food consumption is measured over the seven days (reference period) preceding the interviewer's visit. It is the sum of food consumption within the household (purchases made and consumed, own consumption of household production, gifts received and consumed) and meals eaten outside the household. Household food consumption is annualized by multiplying quantities consumed by 365/7. In this survey, household food consumption is measured in quantities, while meals taken outside the household are reported in values. The most difficult question therefore concerns the evaluation of food consumption within the household (purchases, gifts, and donations). The survey plan provides two price vectors: the unit values of products purchased and the prices recorded on the markets of the sample households' localities of residence. The first information (unit values) is available if the product was purchased in the household during the 30 days before collection. When a product has been purchased during this period, the questionnaire not only provides information on consumption, broken down into purchase, self-consumption, and donation but also information on the last purchase (quantity purchased and corresponding value), making it possible to deduce the unit value of an acquisition. If the product was purchased more than 30 days before the interviewer's visit, the value of the purchases is not entered, so no unit value can be obtained. If the product's consumption in the household comes exclusively from self-consumption and gifts, we don't have a unit value either.

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