Marriage in the 21st Century: Attitudes and Perceptions of University Students

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ABSTRACT

Less than 50 years ago it would have seemed absurd to question the role of marriage as it was considered central to the organization of adult life. Increased societal acceptance of divorce, non-marital pregnancies and pre-marital cohabitation has, however, destabilized the norm of getting married. Marriage has, despite demographic shifts, significant value for the individual, families and society. This study investigates the perceptions of young people towards marriage, as well as demographic differences in their attitudes. The demographic variables of interest were age, race, religiosity, relationship status, and the primary caregiver(s) who raised the participant. Participants' perceptions were assessed through descriptive analysis of statements. Quantitative analysis was done on data obtained from questionnaires completed by 77 undergraduate university students. The study revealed that there is still a general positive regard for marriage among young, South African students. Furthermore, statistically significant correlations concerning certain demographics were found. Religiosity was revealed to be the greatest demographic influence on these participants' attitudes.

Key Words: *Attitudes, Marriage, Divorce, Race, Religiosity, Age, Relationship Status, Primary Care-giver(s).*

The large percentage of divorces each year, non-marital pregnancies and premarital cohabitation have all dramatically changed the traditional family structure (Amato, Johnson, Booth, & Rogers, 2003; Manning & Smock, 2005). Millions of children are no longer being raised in nuclear families. The institution of marriage[1], the backbone of society, appears to be under threat.

Marriage has, despite demographic and political shifts, significant value for the individual, families and the society (Nock, 2005). When looking at marriage as an institution, as opposed to a free-standing concept, marriage represents socially sanctioned behaviour. Marriage embraces traditionally virtuous, legal and predictable assumptions concerning what is moral and what is proper (Nock, 2005). Through marriage an individual is transformed; they are perceived and treated differently by society and even enjoy rights / privileges unmarried individuals do not. Married couples are perceived as more mature, stable, committed and responsible. This means that regardless of an individual's opinion or value of his / her marriage, there are broader implications – society's connotation.

This study proposes to investigate young adults' attitude towards marriage. This is done because attitudes are known to affect behavior and knowing the advantages of marriage it can be useful in hypothesizing the future of marriage. It then sets out to investigate demographic factors that influence these attitudes through correlation analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Firstly we look at marriage with its advantages as well as its recent changes. Then cohabitation trends and factors influencing marriage are discussed to create a better understanding of the relationship structure that appears to be taking the place of marriage for many. Now that people have an alternative to marriage it is hypothesized that marriage could be replaced by cohabitation

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[1]Marriage, in this article, refers to traditional heterosexual marriage.

(living together without being married is more acceptable today than it was a couple of years ago, Amato et al., 2003). The draw-backs of cohabitation are also ascertained.
High divorce rates and personal experiences with divorce dissuade many people from marriage, especially since they have another option. Research conducted by Thornton and Freedman (1982) has shown than an individual's experience with divorce (whether his / her own or his / her parents') influences his / her attitudes towards marriage. Looking at why we are experiencing such high divorce rates increases our understanding of marriage attitudes.
The literature review ends off with a brief look at where children stand in the face of a weakening marriage institution, as well as at religiosities influence on marriage attitudes. Religiosity is the prominent drive in the results of this study, yet so little research has emphasized the major influence of religiosity on marriage attitudes.

The Institution of Marriage

Research conducted by Durkheim (1897), Ribar (2003), Waite (1995), as well as Waite and Gallagher (2000) pointed out numerous advantages for married couples over their non-married counterparts. These advantages include having fewer acute illnesses; fewer fatal accidents; fewer instances of alcoholism; fewer cases of depression; a lower rate of suicide; better mental health; better sex lives; a better chance of living longer; higher salaries; better health; and a happier life.

Less than 50 years ago it would have seemed absurd to question the role of marriage as it was considered central to organization of adult life. Today however, it seems that less people are choosing to get married for a multitude of reasons. Nock (2005) holds five major demographic trends responsible, namely: the older age of marrying; cohabitation prior to marriage; single-headed households (because of unmarried pregnancies and divorce); women's move into the work force; and the declining fertility rate (as a result of the 'contraceptive era') in relation to postponed mortality. Amato et al. (2003), Hohmann-Marriott (2006), King and Scott (2005), Manning and Smock (2005), as well as Martin et al. (2003) have all separately confirmed these demographic trends.

Development of the birth control pill has had a profound impact on social customs and norms. Reducing the risk of pregnancy resulted in premarital sex no longer having a logical link to marriage. Sex without the risk of pregnancy is likely to have had the effect of making premarital sex more popular and acceptable. Disaffiliation of sex from marriage resulted in privacy as opposed to the public institutional sphere of marriage (Nock, 2005). Sex and cohabitation being normalized ratified delay and even rejection of marriage. This private aspect excluded public policymakers, who are now no longer able to promote stable marriages or discourage unmarried births.

Cohabitation as an Alternative to Marriage

The increasing popularity of living together prior to getting married has normalized unmarried cohabitation (Amato et al., 2003; King & Scott, 2005). Cohabitation is dynamic and its influences are far reaching for later marriage and children involved. By examining reasons proposed for cohabitation, traditional versus egalitarian gender roles, and the consequences of cohabitation prior to marriage, it becomes possible to deduct precautions and predict effects of this new relationship structure.

Many researchers (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006; King & Scott, 2005; Manning & Smock, 2005) point out that people cohabit for reasons of financial and sexual convenience, as well as a sign of stronger commitment (a step before marriage and after dating). However, the lack of common language or terminology (such as husband / wife / fiancé) seems to show that cohabitation prior to marrying is not yet institutionalized (Manning & Smock, 2005).

Most people believe that their cohabitation will strengthen future marriage but, according to Hohmann-Marriott (2006), couples who cohabit prior to marriage have higher divorce rates and shorter-lived marriages. The main reasons why cohabitation does not actually strengthen future marriage are attributed to nontraditional views (such as egalitarian views and division of labour), lack of problem solving and communication skills, and poor knowledge of self and partner (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006). King and Scott (2005) as well as Nock (2005) found that cohabitating couples are less committed to the relationship (compared to married couples) and

dissolve their union more readily. Difficult issues are not deemed worth the hard work needed to resolve the problem. Nock asserts that although marriage is still a public affair (you invite friends, family, perhaps even media, and a priest to witness your devotion) it is an "enforceable trust" (p. 15); cohabitation, on the other hand, is a private commitment, and is thus easier to abandon. To social institutions (such as banks and businesses) cohabitation is seen as "cheap talk" (Nock, p. 27, 2005), and does not transmit the same meaning that marriage does (even in the face of the weakening of marriage).

Cohabitation is a fluid process (King & Scott, 2005) as the majority of people who live together indicate that they have not made an actual decision to live together, instead that it gradually just happened.

> "It began...she stayed at my house more and more from spending the night once to not going home for weeks…there was no official starting date. I did take note when the frilly fufu soaps showed up in my bathroom that she'd probably moved in at that point" (Manning & Smock, 2005, p. 995).

This quote from Manning and Smock (2005) indicates that deciding to marry or cohabiting are not the same thing, and it reveals, to some extent, that cohabitation is a less committed and less formal union.

By becoming an increasingly acceptable relationship structure, more and more people are accepting cohabitation as an alternative to marriage. This affect on marriage, as well as the weakening esteem of marriage despite the benefits of marriage, speaks of a bleak future for the institution of marriage.

Divorce

Research conducted by Hetherington et al. (1998), Institute for American Values (1995), and Ten Kate (1996, as cited in Martin et al., 2003) predicts that an average of 40% of married people will remarry before the youngest child turns 18. Norton and Moorman (1987, as cited in King & Scott, 2005, p. 363) predict: "For cohorts reaching age 65 after 2010, roughly half of all ever

married individuals are expected to experience a divorce." **.** Most divorced people tend to remarry. Even though 81% of divorcés' believe marriage to be a life-long commitment; their remarriages are predicted to be less stable and more likely to end in divorce than first marriages were (Martin et al., 2003).

Phenomenally high divorce rates are attributable to various factors which include:

Normalization and Individualization: Divorce is no longer shunned by communities or society, and emphasis on individualization as well as the normalization of divorce makes it easier to dissolve unions (Amato et al., 2003). Individual happiness is deemed more important, and efforts to preserve the relationship are given less value.

Research conducted by Allen et al. (2005) revealed that there is a widespread occurrence and normalization of infidelity in monogamous relationships. Peer groups, media and individual characteristics contribute to an individual's proneness to commit adultery. Many couples attempt working through this 'disaster' (by seeking professional help, and forgiveness, for example), but many others do not tolerate or cope with such events and resort to divorce. Normalization of infidelity and individuality adds fuel to a culture of divorce.

Working Women: As women are now also prominent in the working force, wives' working hours and job demands have increased significantly. Women in the labour market (and not at home) have had numerous implications. Firstly, a decline in traditional gender roles has had ambivalent results. For example, increased division of household errands for both partners has negatively affected the husband's perceived quality of marriage (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006; King & Scott, 2005; Nock, 2005). On the other hand, households are now financially more stable and there is new equality regarding decision-making power. Gottman (1994, p. 57) showed that in relationships where the husbands have more power, relationship quality is reduced. Despite financial benefits and division of labour at home, drastic increases in working hours and job pressures for wives have negatively affected couples. A significant factor also contributing to high divorce rates is the lack of interaction (such as meals, doing household projects, or socializing together) between couples. The significant decline in interaction (which can be

attributed to non-overlapping work times) produces poor marital quality, unhappiness and marriage dissolution (Amato et al., 2003).

Heterogamous Unions: Social acceptance of heterogamous unions (couples who are of 'mixed' race, religion or age) has radically increased the occurrence of such unions. But, Amato et al. (2003) revealed that heterogamous marriages are more likely to end in divorce compared to homogenous couples. Thus, the general weakness of such marriages indicates another factor contributing to the high divorce rate averages. As for South Africa, further research within this topic is needed.

Children

It is no longer commonplace to expect children to be raised in nuclear families. Over the last few decades the family structure has undergone major transformations. Millions of children are brought up in single-parent households (where the mother is usually the head), or in mixed families with step-brothers / sisters / mother / father, or where parents decide to cohabit instead of getting married.

Pessimism regarding marriage due to high divorce rates, as well as children being unprepared to cope with relationships such as marriage (as the result of parents being poor role models) threatens the marriages of the adults of tomorrow. There is a dire need for preparation concerning married life (Martin et al., 2004).

Education is related to relationship success, as educated people are deemed better equipped at communication skills, and to deal with problems. Hetherington, Bridges and Insabella (1998) reported that children from broken families are twice as likely to drop out of school and three times as likely to live in poverty. Amato et al. (2003) point out that higher education provides individual and family characteristics that promote marital happiness and stability. Therefore, the millions of children raised in non-nuclear (or 'broken') families make the prospect of future marriage success seem bleak.

Research reports pertaining to divorce are closely monitored by courts and legislatures to merge results into updated and sensitive policies. Producing current and accurate research reports and policies is a difficult job as there is so much controversial data regarding the effects of divorce on children (Braver & Cookston, 2003).

Religiosity

A significant relationship has been found between religiosity and marriage success. Religious couples are less likely to cohabit before marriage, are more committed to lifelong monogamous marriages, and have marriages of a happier nature and higher quality (Amato et al., 2003; Thornton, Axinn, & Hill, 1992). Thornton et al. (1992) also found that religious trends are important determinants of national trends in marriage and cohabitation. Parents who attend religious services regularly influence their children's future opinions regarding religion, faithfulness and marriage.

RESEARCH QUESTION

With the changing familial structure and being represented with alternatives to married life, what are the attitudes and perceptions of young adults towards marriage today? Does the demographic background of the participants affect their attitudes towards marriage?

RATIONALE

Attitudes have consequences on successive behaviour of individuals (Axinn & Thornton, 1996), and numerous researchers (such as Durkheim, 1897, Ribar, 2003, Waite, 1995, and Waite & Gallagher, 2000) have illustrated the importance of marriage, as a means of organizing, fulfilling and supporting societies. According to Palazzolli (1989) systems (such as society and families) organize themselves ("auto-organization", p. 264) in order to function optimally. Marriages have been around through-out the world for as far back as history goes. Now we face an era where family-life is undergoing major changes. Divorce seems the norm, premarital sex is promoted,

and no-one frowns upon cohabitation by unmarried couples. This is an epoch where same-sex marriages are legal.

The present study addresses the dearth of South African research on attitudes to marriage held by young adults. As South Africa is a multicultural country, one could expect to find different results within South Africa's 9 different provinces, 11 official languages, and its many towns, cities, suburbs, and even families. South African University students are a good focus group as they interact in a wide diversity of cultures and opinions.

Normalization does not imply the right way. However, with decreased societal pressure on people to marry one could hypothesize that couples will exercise more responsible and individual choice, as reflected by their attitude towards marriage.

SPECIFIC AIMS AND HYPOTHESIS

This study was orchestrated with two main aims in mind. Firstly, to have a descriptive look at what the attitudes and perceptions of young adults are toward marriage. Secondly, to test for any significant affects that the demographic background may have on the attitudes of participants.

These aims were to verify or reject a hypothesis that marriage is decreasing in importance for young, South African adults. The multi-cultural heritage of South Africans calls for specific attention to our variety and not universalistic ideas. Demographic background provided a more holistic view of young adults' attitudes towards marriage.

The hypotheses and investigations were based on the high divorce rates, elevated infidelity rates, option of cohabitation instead of marriage and weakened societal pressure to marry. Differences were expected between groups that were compiled according to their race, relationship status, degree of religiosity, and by primary caregiver(s) of participant. Because the study involved 1st and 2nd year students only, their minimal differences in age preordained one not to expect to find significant discrepancy in attitude.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Design and Materials / Apparatus

A questionnaire was constructed with two main sections. Section One contains demographic information and Section Two consists of two scales to measure participants' attitudes towards marriage.

The demographics section asked questions pertaining to participants' age, race, religiosity, relationship status, and primary caregiver(s) who raised him / her. These demographics were selected and included in the questionnaire because of their ability to influence significant changes in attitudes towards marriage. Each category of the demographics (which are independent variables) was correlated with each other, as well as with the overall attitude towards marriage expressed by the participants.

Experiences affect ones' attitudes. Children whose parents divorced are likely to have different attitudes towards marriage than children who were not subjected to divorce (Thornton et al., 1996). The same premise is why we look at previous marriages of participant, and who raised the participant, as well as why we look into the religiosity and current intimate relationships of respondents. Age was asked to ensure that only respondents between 18 and 21 years old were used.

In articles concerning marriage attitudes the researchers only used 1 scale to assess the attitudes. To avoid running the risk of overlooking the dynamic and multifaceted-ness of attitudes, this incorporated 2 scales, as well as demographic correlations. The complex nature of attitudes necessitates that one use multiple indicators.

Two scales where selected to represent the explicit attitudes of young, South African adults. The two scales were selected from other studies done in similar fields in America, scales with already established psychometric properties. Permission was first obtained from both journals from which they came.

The scale also required information regarding the participants' demographics in order to created grouping variables to correlate hypothesized differences in attitudes.

The Likert-type format is widely recognized for measuring attitudes. Both the scales had Likert-type structures. The first scale, the Favorable Attitudes to Marry Scale (FAMS), has 9 questions regarding individual happiness, monogamy, responsibility and individual value of marriage. 7 of these 9 questions are assessed on a 4-point Likert scale, and the last two options were mutually exclusive (Yes / No options). The second scale, although not named by the researchers that used it, consists of 8 statements concerning marriage with 5-point, Likert-type responses. The options are assessed as dummy variables. The 2nd scale was selected as its statements reflected on avenues of wanting to marry, importance of career over marriage, opinions regarding commitment to marriage and advantages of marriage of participants. Therefore, by using both these scales, the research scope was broadened even further.

These two scales were especially preferred because of their established psychometric properties, their ease of use, and their array of questions and statements reflecting on the complexity of attitudes. Quantitative analysis was done in a cross-sectional study. Both Scales were analyzed separately through descriptive statistics looking at the statements, frequencies, and correlations with demographic cohorts.

Participants

Participants were all undergraduate psychology students from the University of Cape Town (UCT). The 77 subjects were aged between 18 and 21 years old, with a mean age of 19,44 (See Graph 1).

South African university students were selected for various reasons. Firstly, large numbers of prospective participants can be approached simultaneously. Secondly, these students come from various backgrounds and provide a colourful array of attitudes. Lastly, university students are either already married or are approaching the age at which most people tend to get married.

Procedures

After the required approval was granted from the Ethics Committee, the questionnaires (see Appendix A) were printed and arrangements for handing them out followed. After prior arrangements with the lecturers, three lecture classes were approached, briefed on the nature of the study, and then handed questionnaires to fill-in. Students were allowed to take the questionnaires home and return it to class the following day.

Of the hundred and fifty questionnaires distributed, only 93 were returned, of which 16 were discarded. The 16 questionnaires were discarded because of errors (for example, where more than one statement was marked or where some statements were left blank). Three were rejected because the participants were from the incorrect age category (18 ‹21).

Results

In total, there were 11 statements between the two scales that had a statistically significant correlation with 3 of the demographic variables (independent variables) of the participants. Religion had the most prominent affect on attitudes, followed by race. There was one instance were current relationship status affected participants' attitudes regarding the probability of ever finding a suitable marriage partner. None of the other demographics had significant correlations with the attitude scales. Religiosity was most significant, as it was correlated with 4 statements from Scale One (FAMS), and 4 statements from Scale Two.

As the sample size consisted of only 77 participants, chi-square analyses were too risky to use. In most of the analyses cells held values less than 5, and so to ensure significant results, Fisher's Exact correlations had to be done on the chi-square results. Only after Fisher's testing could statistical significant correlations be accepted as such. Descriptive analysis was then carried out, but only on statements that were significantly matched with the demographic(s). Spearman's correlations were performed on continuous data (such as Age), but no significance was found in any of the Spearman correlations.

None of the participants were married, nor had they been married before. One participant had a child. These demographics therefore yielded no statistically significant correlations. Most of the participants were raised by both their parents (see Graph 4). Primary caregiver(s) revealed nothing significant.

The r-value was determined by chi-square. Chi-square is done to identify the r-value which indicates the direction of the relationship between the statement and the demographic (whether it is positive or negative).

Statements with statistically significant associations were tabulated (See Table 1 & Table 2). Degree of religiosity was revealed to have the strongest affect on attitudes towards marriage.

Overall Attitudes to Marriage

Scale 1: Scale 1 revealed that despite the fact that most people (52%) will miss their single life to some extent; the majority of them believe that it will not be very hard to give up their personal freedom. Most people (66%) believe that it will not be very difficult to adjust to married life. Some 40% of the people doubt their ability to live exclusively with people of the opposite sex rarely (rarely, as in almost never). 42% of people occasionally doubt their chance of having a successful marriage. Despite these doubts, 49% believe that the responsibilities of married life will be enjoyable. 99% of the respondents believe that they will be happy (even very happy) if they marry. 83% say they will find, or have found a suitable marriage partner. And 91% of the people believe that it is not better to remain single.

Scale 2: Most respondents agreed that married life helps individuals to mature and does not stifle individual growth, but most of them also believe that not everyone should want to get married. By comparing successful marriage to successful career, the results seemed ambivalent with a general mix-match consensus. Race and religiosity demographics showed that religious people and non-Caucasians are mostly opposed to having a successful career over a successful marriage.

Although most people agreed that people are less committed to marriage today than in the past, there was consensus only among a third of the participants. Almost half the respondents (48%) perceived marriage as having fewer advantages these days.

Attitudes and Demographic Differences (Correlations)

Scale 1: Religious people do not perceive married life as something difficult to adjust to, instead they see it as something that will make them very happy. They believe that the responsibilities of married life will be enjoyable to them, and hardly ever doubt their chance of having a successful marriage. Religious people are confident in that they will be able to (or have found) someone who is a suitable husband / wife for him / her.

Scale 2: Although they believe many people should not get married, religious people believe that married life helps individuals mature, and that marriage does not stifle individual growth. They are quite neutral regarding work, but believe a successful marriage to be more important than a successful career. The demographics of race were significant in three statements. In all three statements the Caucasian group showed the most significant correlations.

DISCUSSION

Most people (67%, see Table 5) believe it will not be too difficult to adjust to married life. Religious (66%), somewhat religious (54%), and non-religious (80%) people all agree.

Almost half of the people (42%) rarely doubt there chances of having a successful marriage (see Table 8). Religion definitely influences faith in marriage success as 56% of religious people never or only occasionally doubt success. Only 23% of somewhat-religious people never or occasionally doubt it. And only 18% of non-religious participants manage to never or only occasionally doubt their chances of having a successful marriage.

85% of people believe that responsibilities of married life will be enjoyable and even very enjoyable to them (see Table 6). Religious folk are the most optimistic about this. 91% believe

that they'll enjoy these responsibilities. Somewhat-religious people follow suite, where 86% of them believe this to be the case. Of the non-religious people, 75% believe it to be enjoyable.

99% of the people believe they will be happy (or very happy) if they got married (see Table 7). No one thought that marriage would make them very unhappy. 100% of religious and somewhat-religious people believe in marriage happiness. 64% of somewhat-religious people believe that they will be happy if they married. And 60% of non-religious people believed that they would be very happy if they got married.

Most people (83%) believe that they can find, or have found, a suitable marriage partner. All participants who were (are) currently involved in an intimate, longer than 6 month relationship, believed that they could find (or had found) a suitable marriage partner.
73% of people who are not currently involved in a relationship still believe that they will be able to find a suitable husband / wife (see Table 9).

Almost half (44%) of the sample see marriage as helpful for an individual to mature (see Table 11). More than half (51%) of religious people believe marriage to help individuals to mature. Half of the somewhat religious people believe the same.

The most prevalent opinion amongst participants (40%, see Table 10) regardless of religiosity, is that they disagree with the statement that everyone should want to get married.
31% of religious participants were undecided regarding whether or not all people should want to marry one day or not (Table 10). Most of the semi-religious participants (59%) disagree that everyone should want to get married. Half (50%) of the non-religious participants disagree that all people should want to marry.

More than half the participants (52%) agreed or strongly agree that a successful marriage is as satisfying as a successful career. 71% of religious people believe (or strongly believe) that a successful career is as satisfying as a successful marriage (see Table 12).

33% Caucasians are undecided regarding whether or not a successful career is as important as a successful marriage. Only 28% (a quarter) of the Caucasians agree that a successful career is as important (see Table 13).

More than half (52%) the people do not agree with the statement that marriage stifles individual growth. 46% of religious people agree that marriage does not stifle individual growth (see Table 14).

The majority of the participants (77%, see Table 15) are spread out between disagree, undecided and agree to success of marriage being more important than a successful career. Most participants were undecided. In the study where scale two was taken from their finding for this was the same, i.e. that most of their respondents were undecided as to whether a successful marriage was more important than a successful career.

A quarter of the Caucasian group is undecided regarding whether or not a successful marriage is more important than a successful career. No Africans or Indian populations believe a career to be more important than a successful marriage. A larger, representative sample of all races (see Graph 2) might yield more significant results for the participants that are not Caucasian.

36% of the population believes people to be less committed to marriage today than in the past (see Table 16). Although this is not representative of everyone, it is the response of most of the participants. Caucasian population seems to be split half – half on what they believe. 30% of them do not believe people are less committed to marriage, and 26% of them believe that people are less committed. The rest of the population is unevenly distributed between uncertainty, or strongly opposed or for the above idea.

LIMITATIONS

A larger sample size is required to ensure that the results can be generalized to the larger population of South Africa. Implicit attitude tests (IAT) are very insightful and could greatly enhance research concerning attitudes.

Questionnaires should include the homosexual population. Gay marriages are now legal in South Africa, and early assessment could be very beneficial to understanding of attitudes towards marriage. Gender differences should be determined.

To ensure that the study is apposite, instead of focusing on racial differences, perhaps a scale able to assess cultural differences is necessary. In an era were global communication and acculturation is so pronounced, races do not define cultures, but cultures define attitudes, morals and values. Different cultures speak volumes of the importance of family-life, marriage, divorce, pre-marital sexual practices, and so forth.

Short-comings of this research is that the motivation of study is based on the presumption that marriage is necessary and good for people, but does not assess how in changing times, general attitudes towards marriage may change, also with an increased tendency towards cohabitation instead of marriage, perhaps the significance and benefits of marriage will be challenged.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study correlate quite well with comparable studies done elsewhere. The subject group represents a good segment of the intended target demographic.

The statistics clearly show that most young people still think of themselves as being destined to marry. Their attitudes towards the happiness and success of their future marriages are positive. When asked to compare the importance of marriage to a successful career the general attitude speaks of a good balance. What is interesting is the vast difference that religiosity makes. In more than half of the statements religious participants were more positive towards marriage. They view themselves as more likely to have a successful marriage and more likely to adapt to married life. In comparable studies done in the USA religiosity also played a role, but its affects are much more pronounced in this study. Although this one demographic was not the one that seemed most likely to have the biggest affect at the onset of this study, it seems to warrant further research.

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Appendix A

Marriage in the 21st century: Attitudes and perceptions of university students

This is a survey pertaining to attitudes people hold towards marriage.

As research is beneficial to enriching our knowledge, it would be greatly appreciated if you would consent to participate in this survey.

It should take 5 minutes to complete.

Please bear in mind that, as with any research, to reveal accurate results it is of utmost importance that you answer honestly. There is no right or wrong answer, so respond according to what you feel represents your attitude most accurately.

Section 1: Demographics

Age: _____

Race: _____

Please complete the following by ticking the response that best suits you.

Do you consider yourself religious?:

Yes	No	Somewhat

Relationship Status:

Are you currently married?:

Yes	No

Have you ever been married before?:

No	Yes

Have you ever been divorced before?:

No	Yes

Are you currently in an intimate relationship (for more than 6months)?:

Yes	No

Do you have any children?:

Yes	No

If yes, how many (please specify)?: _____

Who were you raised by? (Tick appropriate response):

Parents (Both Mother and Father)	Parent (Mother Only)	Parent (Father Only)	Other

If other, please specify: _____

Section 2: Scales

Scale 1:

Please complete the following by ticking the response that best suits you.

(1) If you marry, to what extent will you miss the life you had as a single person?

Not At All	Very Little	To Some Extent	Very Much

(2) In your opinion, to what extent will it trouble you to give up your personal freedom if you marry?

Not At All	Very Little	To Some Extent	Very Much

(3) In your opinion, would adjustment to married life be difficult for you?

Not At All	Not Too Difficult	Rather Difficult	Very Difficult

(4) Do you ever have doubts as to whether you would enjoy living exclusively in marriage with a member of the opposite sex?

Never	Hardly	Occasionally	Frequently

(5) In your opinion, to what extent would the responsibilities of married life be enjoyable to you?

Very Much So	Fairly Enjoyable	Not Too Much	Not At All

(6) How happy do you think you will be if you marry?

Very Happy	Happy	Unhappy	Very Unhappy

(7) Do you ever have doubts about your chance of having a successful marriage?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently

(8) Do you think you will find, or have found, a person who is a suitable marriage partner for you?

YES	NO

(9) Do you think it would be advisable for you always to remain single?

YES	NO

Scale 2:

Please complete the following by ticking the response that best suits you.

1) Everyone should want to get married.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

2) Marriage helps individuals mature.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3) A successful marriage is as satisfying as a successful career.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

4) A successful career should be more important than a successful marriage.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5) Being married stifles individual growth.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

6) A successful marriage should be more important than a successful career.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7) The people I know are less committed to marriage than in the past.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

8) There are fewer advantages to marriage now than there were in the past.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

If you have any queries, or are interested in the results of the study please e-mail tehillanicole@gmail.com.

Table 1:

Chi-Square demographics on significance in Scale 1 (FAMS) using Fisher's Exact.

Statement	*Demographics*	*r*	*Significant p-value (Fisher)*
3. In your opinion would adjustment to married life be difficult for you?	Religiosity.	-0.33	0.0199
5. In your opinion, to what extent would the responsibilities of married life be enjoyable to you?	Religiosity.	-0.35	0.0020
6. How happy do you think you will be if you marry?	Religiosity.	-0.26	0.0392
7. Do you ever have doubts about your chance of having a successful marriage?	Religiosity.	-0.37	0.0146
8. Do you think you will find, or have found a person who is a suitable marriage partner for you?	Currently in intimate Relationship.	-0.13	0.0029

Table 2:

Chi- square demographic significance in Scale 2 (un-named) using Fisher's Exact.

Statement	*Demographics*	*r*	*Significant p-value (Fisher)*
1. Everyone should want to get married.	Religiosity.	-0.21	0.0217
2. Marriage helps individuals mature.	Religiosity.	-0.18	0.0053
3. A successful career is as satisfying as a	Religiosity.	0.13	0.0014
successful marriage.	Race.	0.03	0.0260
5. Being married stifles individual growth.	Religiosity.	-0.29	0.0323

6. A successful marriage should be more important than a successful career.	Race.	-0.26	0.0197
7. The people I know are less committed to marriage than in the past.	Race.	-0.05	0.0091

Table 3:

Scale 1: Frequencies in percentages

Statement	Very Much %	To Some Extent %	Very Little %	Not at All %
If you marry, to what extent will you miss the life you had as a single person?	7	52	31	10
In your opinion, to what extent will it trouble you to give up your personal freedom if you marry?	13	31	36	20
In your opinion would adjustment to married life be difficult for you?	1	17	66	16

Statement	Frequently %	Occasionally %	Rarely %	Never %
Do you ever have doubts as to whether you would enjoy living exclusively in marriage with a member of the opposite sex?	5	21	40	34
Do you ever have doubts about your chance of having a successful marriage?	8	42	28	22

Statement	Not at All %	Not too Much %	Fairly enjoyable %	Very Much So %
In your opinion, to what extent would the responsibilities of married life be enjoyable to	4	11	49	36

you?

Statement	Very Unhappy %	Unhappy %	Happy %	Very Happy %
How happy do you think you will be if you marry?	0	1	42	57

Statement	Yes %	No %
Do you think you will find, or have found a person who is a suitable marriage partner for you?	83	17
Do you think it would be advisable for you always to remain single?	9	91

Table 4:

Scale 2: Frequencies in Percentages

Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Marriage helps individuals mature.	7	44	22	19	8
Everyone should want to get married.	5	17	22	40	16
A successful career is as satisfying as a successful marriage.	18	34	23	21	4
A successful career should be more important than a successful marriage.	1	4	18	51	26
Being married stifles individual growth.	1	8	14	52	25
A successful marriage should be more					

important than a successful career.	18	26	27	24	5
The people I know are less committed to marriage than in the past.	10	36	25	22	7
There are fewer advantages to marriage now than in the past.	2	20	20	48	10

Table 5

Scale 1: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Difficulty Adjusting To Married Life				
	Not At All	Not Too Difficult	Rather Difficult	Very Difficult	Row Totals
Yes	9	23	3	0	35
No	1	16	2	1	20
Somewhat	2	12	8	0	22
All Groups	12	51	13	1	77

Table 6

Scale 1: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Enjoyment of Responsibilities Of Married Life				
	Very Much So	Fairly Enjoyable	Not Too Much	Not At All	Row Totals
Yes	20	12	3	0	35
No	5	10	2	3	20
Somewhat	3	16	3	0	22
All Groups	28	38	8	3	77

Table 7

Scale 1: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Perception Of How Happy If Married				
	Very Happy	Happy	Unhappy	Very Unhappy	Row Totals
Yes	24	11	0	0	35
No	12	7	1	0	20
Somewhat	8	14	0	0	22
All Groups	44	32	1	0	77

Table 8

Scale 1: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Doubts Regarding Chance Of Having Successful Marriage				
	Never	Occasionally	Rarely	Frequently	Row Totals
Yes	10	13	12	0	35
No	6	5	7	2	20
Somewhat	1	4	13	4	22
All Groups	17	22	32	6	77

Table 9

Scale 1: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

In Intimate Relationship	Ability To Find Suitable Marriage Partner		
	Yes	No	Row Totals
Yes	28	0	28
No	36	13	49
All Groups	64	13	77

Table 10

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	All People Should Want To Get Married					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Totals
Yes	5	8	11	7	4	35
No	6	10	1	3	0	20
Somewhat	1	13	5	3	0	22
All Groups	12	31	17	13	4	77

Table 11

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Marriage Helps Individuals Mature					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Totals
Yes	4	5	3	18	5	35
No	1	4	10	5	0	20
Somewhat	1	6	4	11	0	22
All Groups	6	15	17	34	5	77

Table 12

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Successful Marriage as Satisfying as A Successful Career					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Totals
Yes	2	5	3	13	12	35
No	1	3	10	6	0	20
Somewhat	0	8	5	7	2	22
All Groups	3	16	18	26	14	77

Table 13

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Race	Successful Marriage as Satisfying as A Successful Career					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
Caucasian	2	8	14	12	7	43
African	1	0	1	8	5	15
Indian	0	4	1	2	0	7
Coloured	0	4	2	4	2	12
Total	3	16	18	26	14	77

Table 14

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Religiosity	Marriage Stifles Individual Growth					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Totals
Yes	4	13	9	1	1	35
No	7	7	1	2	0	20
Somewhat	6	9	1	3	0	22
All Groups	17	29	11	6	1	77

Table 15

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

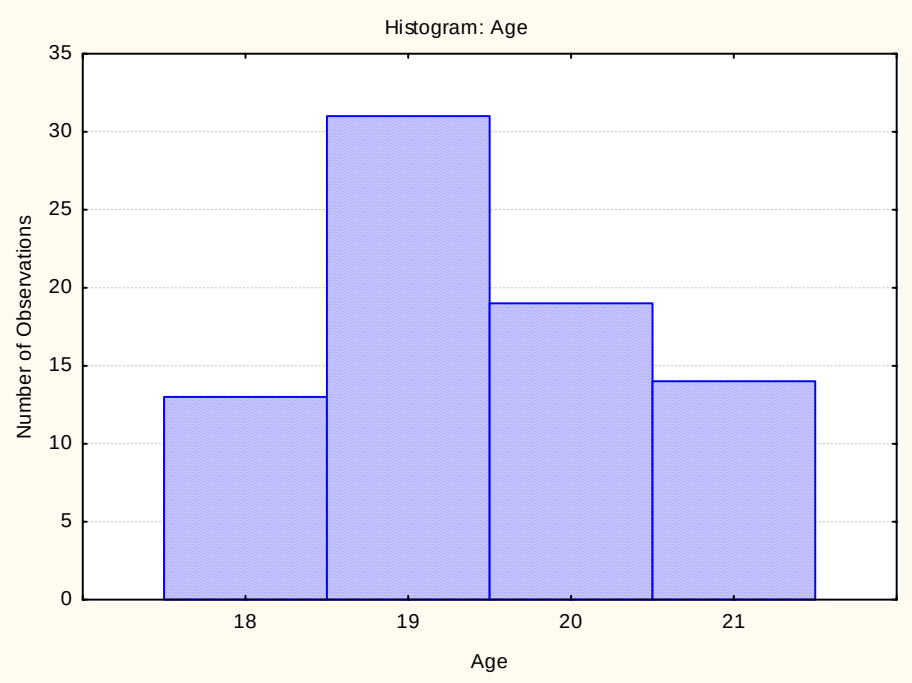
Race	Successful Marriage More NB Than A Successful Career					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
Caucasian	2	7	12	10	12	43
African	0	9	2	3	1	15
Indian	0	0	4	3	0	7
Coloured	2	2	3	4	1	12
Total	4	18	21	20	14	77

Table 16

Scale 2: Summary Frequency Table (N = 77)

Race	People Are Less Committed to Marriage Nowadays					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
Caucasian	3	13	10	11	6	43
African	2	3	5	3	2	15
Indian	0	1	0	6	0	7
Coloured	0	0	4	8	0	12
Total	5	17	19	28	8	77

Graph 1:



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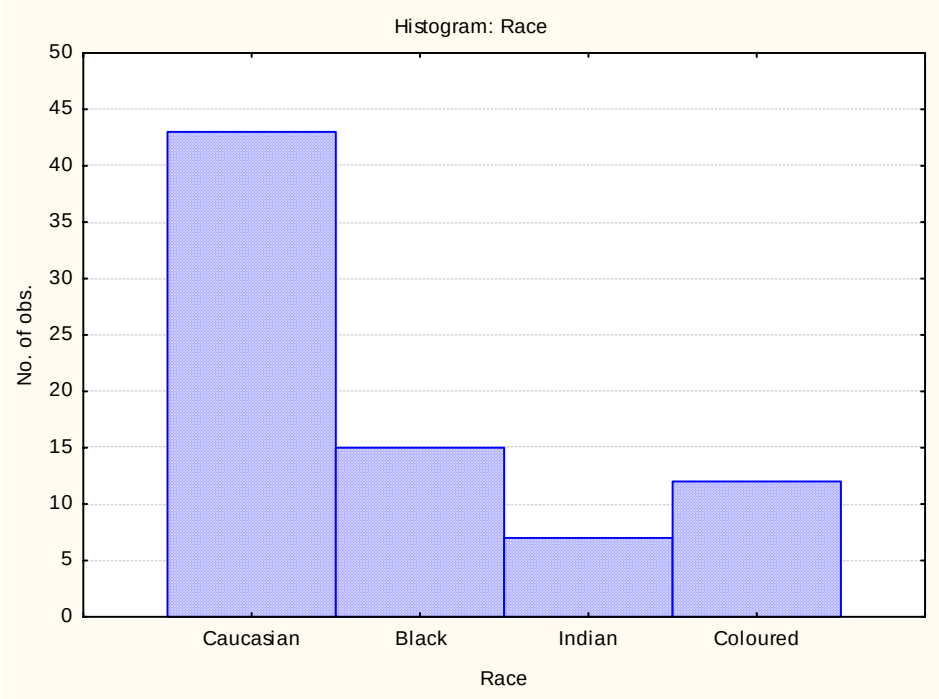

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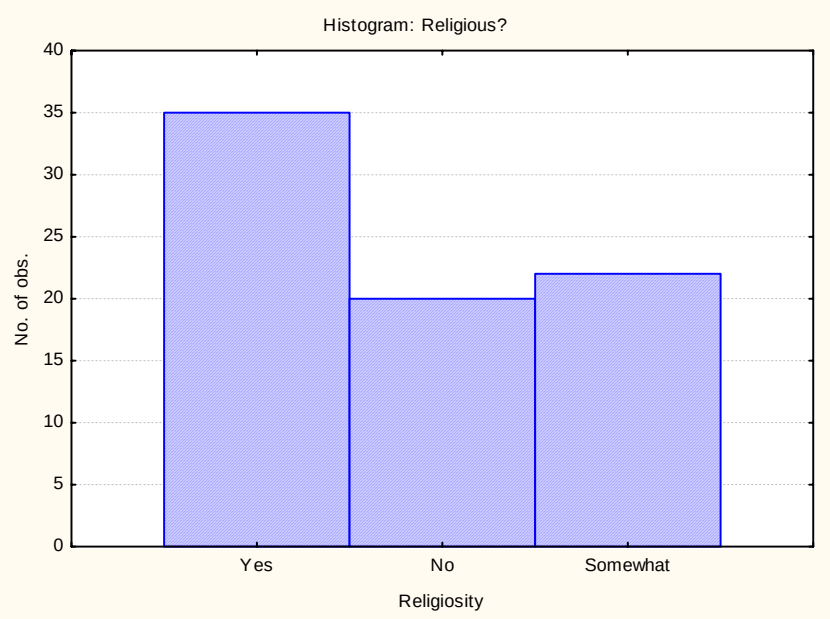
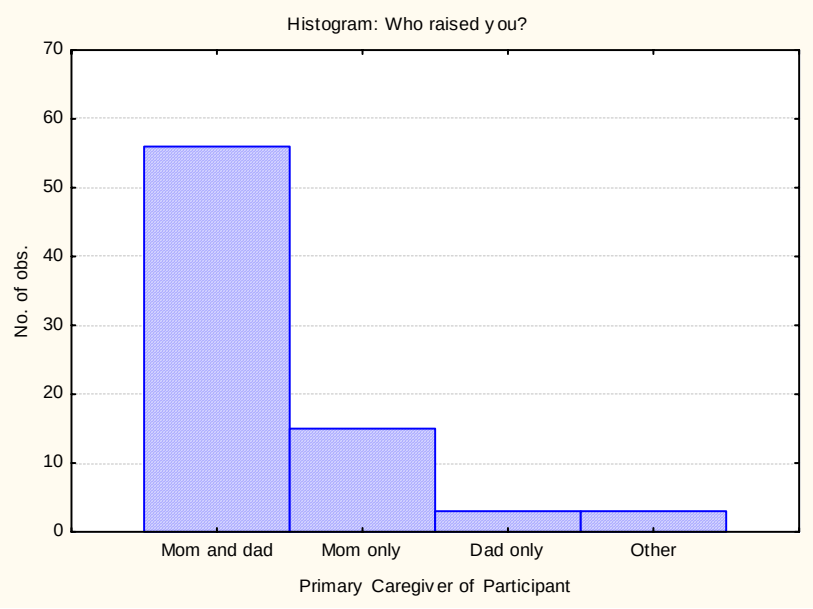
Graph 4: