De La Salle University – Dasmariñas

AGE, GENDER, AND PARENTAL MARITAL STATUS AND THEIR ROLES ON MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS

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KLATANG EMILIO AGUINALDO ARCHIVES

ABSTRACT

NAME OF INSTITUTION: De La Salle University- Dasmariñas

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

A. General

The main objective of the study is to determine the roles of age, gender, and parental marital status on the expectations of college students on marriage.

B. Specific

1. Identify the demographic profile of the respondents according to age, gender, and parental marital status.
2. Determine the level of marriage expectations of the respondents.
3. Ascertain if there is a significant relationship between age and the level of marriage expectations.

4. Find out if there is a significant relationship between gender and the level of marriage expectations.
5. Clarify if there is a significant relationship between parental marital status and the level of marriage expectations.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Marriage itself is an extremely complex topic that has served as the subject of countless books, articles, and films. Rather than provide a definitive overview of marriage in general, the major scope of this study covered the expectations or views about marriage of purposively selected College of Liberal Arts freshmen students of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas through the data that was gathered from the given questionnaire. The male and female college students are from parents with varying status: married, separated, and widowed. They are also within the age bracket of 15 to 21 years old.

Yet this study has certain limitations. The expectations on marriage refer to the respondents' personal expectations (future scenario or assessment) of their own marriage. The researchers also primarily focused on the parental marital status – married or separated - regardless of whether the child is a product of a happy or bad marriage but are living together, and if the child is living with the second family or with the parent who has not remarried.

Another limitation that the researchers have encountered was the conflict between ideal and actual or real responses. Some of the respondents might have tried to project a "favorable" image not only of themselves but also of their interaction with their parent/s. Thus, the respondents might have answered in ways that they believed to be complimentary and socially acceptable. However, the researchers minimized this defect by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality to the answers of the respondents.

Also, the number of respondents depended on the attendance of the students the day the surveying was conducted. Thus, not all College of Liberal Arts freshmen students were able to answer the questionnaire due to absences or unavailability.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers used a type of non-experimental quantitative research, particularly the descriptive-correlational design. The College of Liberal Arts freshmen students (SY 2003-2004) were the population used as respondents and were selected with the use of purposive sampling. They were given the survey "*The Marriage and Family Attitude Survey" (*developed by Don Martin, and was later on adopted by Bryan Strong, 1999), which served as the main instrument for the gathering of data. Included also to the survey given to them, are some questions that would determine the respondent's age, gender, and parental marital

status. From this survey, responses of the purposively selected CLA Freshmen students were tallied and scored by computing the frequency and the percentage and then by getting the mean of the frequencies determined to be appropriate for analysis. The Chi-square and the Cramer's V were used to determine the significant relationship of the three variables to the level of marriage expectations of the respondents.

MAJOR FINDINGS

AGE	LEVEL OF MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS		
	High	Average	Low
15 – 17	311	23	0
18 – 21	41	14	0
$\chi^2 = 18.93$	C = 0.22	weak relationship	

The results above suggest that age may matter on the level of marriage expectations. It may vary if the age is ranging between fifteen (15) and seventeen (17) or if the age is ranging between eighteen (18) and twenty-one (21). However, with the small scope of the age considered in the study, it may be assumed that it has affected the computation and the result of having a weak relation to the level of marriage expectations.

Some teens might have not thought of marriage yet. But, since the respondents are considered as young adults, many of them are committed into relationships and are already thinking about entering marriage. This is quite

expected already for this generation is more exposed to issues like premarital sex, unexpected pregnancies and cohabitation. Age has a weak relation to the level of marriage expectations because perspectives of young adults nowadays might be changing already. There is the possibility that teens of today, regardless of age, though they might still be expecting for marital success, can accept more freely the possibility of encountering problems on marriage. On top of these, young adults will later on be even more exposed to the real world and have the tendency that their marriage expectations will change. People around (such as friends, colleagues, partners, etc.) whom they are dealing with may also influence their expectations on marriage. Their thinking and beliefs may still change as they become more matured enough to accept and face the consequences that they may encounter.

To see the relationship of the two variables, the Cramer's V was computed and it obtained 0.22. Therefore, the relationship of the two is weak (see Appendix B for the scale).

GENDER	LEVEL OF MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS		
	High	Average	Low
Male	75	20	0
Female	277	17	0
$\chi^2 = 19.44$	C = 0.22	weak relationship	

From the data gathered, there were seventy-five (75) males who have high level of marriage expectations, twenty (20) from average level of marriage expectations, and none from low level of marriage expectations. For females, there were two hundred seventy-seven (277) who have high level of marriage expectations, seventeen (17) from average level of marriage expectations, and none from low level of marriage expectations. The fact that there are more female respondents might have been a factor for having more female respondents whose level of marriage expectations are higher than those of the males. The reason for a weak relation between gender and level of marriage expectations might be because of the realities that make both males and females aware of the issues on marriage. Though females are believed to be the ones who were more optimistic about marriage, their expectations or beliefs still have the tendency to change due to the out coming issues in the society today and that there are more females who start to become pessimists with regards to being successful on their own marriages. This may explain that expectations still depend on the individual and not particularly on the gender.

PARENTAL MARITAL STATUS	LEVEL OF MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS		
	High	Average	Low
Married	296	24	0
Separated	37	5	0
Widowed	19	8	0
$\chi^2 = 14.47$	C = 0.19	weak relationship	

The fact that there are more respondents who belonged to those whose parental marital status is married might also be a factor for having greater number of respondents under the married parental marital status who obtained a high level of marriage expectations than that of the two other parental marital statuses. The finding to this is that teens and young adults are still expecting positive implications on marriage though coming from different parental marital statuses. Since the relationship between parental marital status and level of marriage expectations is weak, it may be said that parental marital status alone does not affect the level of marriage expectations that much. There is the possibility that the situation in the family may also be a factor to the level of marriage expectations, and not only their parental marital statuses.

CONCLUSIONS

It would appear, based on the results of this research that most adolescents desire to have successful marriages. However, it could be speculated that it becomes more difficult to learn the skills necessary for a stable, long-term relationship when such a large number of adolescents from this generation have been exposed to separation and single-parent families and its consequences.

Therefore, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Out of the three hundred eighty nine (389) freshmen students from the College of Liberal Arts who were considered as the respondents of this

study, majority of the population comprise of those whose ages ranged between fifteen (15) and seventeen (17) than those whose ages are between eighteen (18) and twenty-one (21). The females outnumbered the males by having a total number of two hundred ninety-four (294) while the total number of males who were available for this study is only ninety-five (95). The respondents whose parental marital status is married obtained the highest rating, followed by the separated, and the widowed.

2. As to the level of marriage expectations of the College of Liberal Arts freshmen students, most of them have high level of expectations on marriage.
3. Between the relationship of age and level of marriage expectations, it has a weak relation.
4. The relationship of gender and level of marriage expectations is also weak. Although there were more females who have high level of expectations than that of males, no one obtained low expectations on marriage.
5. As to the relationship of parental marital status and of marriage expectations, results showed that it also has a weak relation.

The data gathered showed that most of the respondents have a high level of expectations on marriage, and that none has low expectations. With the computations, it explains that the three variables are significant but is weak in relation to the level of marriage expectations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers propose the following ideas for supplementary study:

A. Research Recommendations

1. For additional asset and to be able to explore more information about the study in data gathering, more variables (such as course, religion, influence of media, etc.), not only the three stated variables, are requested to be used.
2. Equal number of the respondents for each category can make the study more reliable.
3. Exploring more on the family background of each respondent can give further information needed and can give more impact on the data.
4. Another instrument/s for measuring the actual expectations on marriage is recommended.
5. Citations or discussions of other factors (such as satisfaction in the family, peer influence, perspectives of males and females on marriage, etc.) that can affect or influence the level of marriage expectations are encouraged.

B. Program Recommendations

1. There is an increasing fact which suggests that young people enter into marriage too quickly and are ill-prepared to make the adjustments necessary to assure stable, harmonious relationships. The findings from

the present study are encouraging in that there appears to be a growing realization of the need for greater preparation regarding marriage and parenthood. Thus, seminars regarding this matter are highly recommended.

2. A number of programs have been developed to help adolescents prepare for marriage and family life, but their use is not widespread. The present study indicates that providing adolescents with the information they need to make informed choices may be useful in helping them recognize their attitudes and how these attitudes may influence marriage and family life. Helping adolescents understand the discrepancies between their attitudes and their behaviors would also be beneficial.

3. Much of the current research focuses on the repercussion of failed marriages, often emphasizing the negative impact on society. It is suggested that mental health professionals and educators take a more proactive role in educating young adults about marriage and family life. For example, premarital workshops and interventions could be conducted in schools, churches, hospitals, and youth centers.

4. The results of this study show that many adolescents desire committed, long-term relationships. It is thus imperative for psychologists, counselors, and therapists to talk to adolescents about their attitudes

toward marriage and family life and how these attitudes often conflict with societal trends. Educating adolescents about the skills necessary to build and maintain loving, long-lasting relationships is also important.

5. Finally, premarital sex is commonly an important aspect of teenage intimate relationships. However, it is clear that adolescents are often unprepared for the possible penalties. Therefore, it appears appropriate to develop programs to help adolescents meet their intimacy needs appropriately and safely.

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