

**THE INFLUENCE OF FINANCIAL SATISFACTION,
SEX ATTITUDE AND PERCEIVED PARENTS'
MARITAL QUALITY ON YOUNG CHINESE
FEMALE'S PERCEPTION OF MARRIAGE**

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JUDUL: **THE INFLUENCE OF FINANCIAL SATISFACTION, SEX ATTITUDE AND PERCEIVED PARENTS' MARITAL QUALITY ON YOUNG CHINESE FEMALE'S PERCEPTION OF MARRIAGE**

IJAZAH: **MASTER PSYCHOLOGY**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to find the influencing of financial satisfaction, perceived parents' marital quality and sex attitude on Chinese female's perception of marriage. This is a mixed method study, which comprises of questionnaire and interview. 229 female adults with Chinese nationality and age among 21-35 years were recruited in this study. Seven of them were chosen voluntarily to give an interview. All these participants are residing in Hebei province, China. The participants were contacted through colleges, universities and workplace. The instruments used in this study were Financial Satisfaction Scale (FSS) (Joo & Grable, 2004), Parents Marital Quality Scale (PMQS) combined by Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (Fowers & Olson, 1993) and the Couples Satisfaction Index (Funk & Rogge, 2007), Sex Attitude Scale (SAS) combined by Sexual Knowledge and Attitude Test (Lief & Reed, 1972), Attitudes Toward Sexuality Scale (Fisher & Hall, 1988) and Sexual Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987), and The Marital Attitude Scale (MAS) provided by Braaten et al. (1998). The results indicated that there were significant influences of perceived parents' marital quality [$F_{(1, 227)}=43.007, p<.05$] and sex attitude [$F_{(1, 227)}=44.045, p<.05$] on Chinese female's perception of marriage. However, there were no significant influences of financial satisfaction [$F_{(1, 227)}=2.684, p>.05$] on Chinese female's perception of marriage. The interview part supported and explained the results. Finally, the results suggest that parents improve their marital quality to increase their children's positive attitudes to marriage and parents and schools should improve sex education.

ABSTRAK

PENGARUH KEPUASAN KEWANGAN, PEREPSI, KUALITI, PERKAHWINAN IBUBAPA DAN SIKAP TERHADAP SEKS PADA PERSEPSI PEREMPUAN CINA TERHADAP PERKAHWINAN

Tujuan kajian ini adalah melihat pengaruh kepuasan kewangan, perepsi, kualiti, perkahwinan ibubapa dan sikap terhadap seks pada persepsi perempuan cina terhadap perkahwinan. Ini adalah kaedah kajian campuran yang melibatkan temuduga dan borang kajian soal selidik. Seramai 229 wanita berbangsa cina dan berumur antara 21-35 tahun telah terlibat dalam kajian ini. Tujuh daripada mereka dipilih secara sukarela untuk temuduga. Kesemua peserta bermastautin di Wilayah Hebei China. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa terhadap pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap persepsi Q perkahwinan ibubapa dan sikap terhadap seks terhadap persepsi wanita cina mengenai perkahwinan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan terdapat pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kualiti perkahwinan ibu bapa ($F(1, 227) = 43.007, p < .05$ dan sikap seks [$F(1, 227) = 44.045, p < .05$] persepsi perkahwinan. Walau bagaimanapun, tidak terdapat pengaruh signifikan kepuasan kewangan [$F(1, 227) = 2.684, p > .05$] mengenai persepsi wanita Cina perkahwinan. Akhir sekali, kajian mencadangkan ibubapa meningkatkan kualiti perkahwinan untuk meningkatkansikap positif, anak-anak mereka terhadap perkahwinan dan ibu bapa serta sekolah sepertimana meningkatkan kualiti pendidikan seks.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Marriage is understood as the union of men and women with protocol properties, and the combination of genuine welfare services for children, the interests of both spouses, and common interests of society (George, Girgis & Anderson, 2010). Gender combination and kinship links are common among high or greater animals, but marriage and family are a social phenomenon unique to humans.

The Chinese institution of marriage is kind of important social norm, and marriage etiquette is an important part of Chinese culture. In Chinese traditional concept, the meaning of marriage is very sacred and solemn. In ancient China, people thought that all social and interpersonal relationships were built on the marriage. They also considered that men and women's marriage is because "Yang" and "Yin" are closed (Chen, 1937).

This chapter will discuss the background, problem statement, research questions, research objectives and the significance of the study to help readers understand more about Chinese marriage structure and the whole thesis.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Financial Satisfaction and Marriage

The economic factor is the major force to promote the social development. In the process of people's marriage, monetary factors play a major role. To a certain extent, it determines the conclusion, continuity and termination of marriage. With the progress of society and economy, the relationship of marriage has changed accordingly. (Sun & Tong, 2003)

After the founding of China, the employment opportunities for female were raised. With the improvement in economic conditions, the status of women in marriage is rising. There were unbalancing of husband's and wife's income. For the contractions in marriage, the economic contradiction rises, the economy underlines the importance of it in the relationship of husband and wife. (Dong, 2000)

Economic conditions are the basis for the continuation and development of marriage. With the economical basis, couples could pay more attention to their emotional satisfaction than material satisfaction. This means that couples have more financial budget to improve their marital quality. On another hand, the increase of assets makes people have higher spiritual pursuit and the self value pursuit. It results in dissatisfaction to the existing life or the existing matrimonial status. Furthermore, it is likely to cause the contradiction between partners. (Sun & Tong, 2003)

1.2.2 Perceived Parental Marital Quality

After the reform and opening up policies, Chinese society is in a period of transition. Therefore, people's values and perceptions of marriage and family are gradually diversified. Environment is a key factor to affect people. Society is a vast

impact environment, and the second most important is the influence of family. Children growing up in different family backgrounds will form different views of marriage. Parents are a role model for children, and their outlook on marriage will have an influence impact on their children. (Li et. al, 2009)

1.2.3 Sex and Marriage

In 1980, there were two major things happened, which changed a lot of Chinese female's sex attitude: the publisher of the new marriage law, and the advocated of the one-child policy. (Yi, 2007)

The new marriage law made people cognizance that love is the soul of marriage; marriage should base on love. Under the one-child policy, couples' sexual life is not just for reproduction. Sexual life is means to express love and to seek happiness in both mind and body. Thereupon, happiness is the main factor to measure the quality of marriage; more people began to seek the sexual behavior pattern between couples, which able to make both sides happy; sexual knowledge and sexual science became the urgent need for people. (Yi, 2007)

1.3 Marriage Development Trend in China

At present, China is in the midst of a significant transformation of its social structure. Marriage is also undergoing rapid and profound change, and to sum up. The changes are in six areas (Wu, 2004).

1. The transition from master-slave relationship to a partnership. The conjugal relationship in the traditional marriage is a master-slave relationship. Male-dominated, female subordinate to the male. The partnership is the modern form of

the relationship between husband and wife. Partnerships in marriage are the result of people requiring power subjectivity and high-quality marriages.

2. The transition from perceptual marriage to rational marriage. Traditional marriage was based on family background and social status. There were few factors to consider to get married. Though promoting modern marriage based on love, this did not deny the importance of property and material conditions of matrimonial life. Moreover, with the progress of marketization, the essence of marriage is increasingly more materialistic, more rational. The materialism and rationality in modern marriage show that high-quality marital life is based on high-quality material life. Meanwhile, the marriage loses complete radio love.

3. The transition from low to the high selectivity of marriage. Customary marriage is low selectivity marriage. The traditional society deified marriage. They have promoted destiny and did not advocate choice, or high selectivity. They gave the power to choose a partner to God or parents. Nowadays, society advocates "love free, marriage free". People have more rights to choose.

4. The transition from moral marriage to contract marriage. The traditional marriage is honorable marriage. It depends on ethics to maintain the nuptial relations. After the founding, China has published the Marriage Law. The law guarantees the rights and obligations of married couples. The law also provided the legal basis for the transition from ethical marriage to contract marriage. However, the current form of Chinese marriage does not completely contract marriage.

5. The transition from sex marriage to asexual marriage. In the traditional marriage, sex and marriage are unified. Marriage and childbearing must be based on sex. However, sex is only lawful and ethical within marriage. With the opening of

people's minds, marriage gets another way to satisfy people's sexual needs. The contemporary situation is many people just do not agree to treat marital sex as the only form of sexual behavior and do not agree with the use of marriage to regulate and restrict sexual life. However, the developing norm of extramarital sex can lead to a reduction of marital sex or even disappearance of it. In this situation, when sex and marriage become more separated until those two are completely separated, this is known as asexual marriage.

6. The transition from lifelong marriage to phase marriage. In the habitual mind, marriage should be life-long. People treat marriage as the most important thing in the entire life. In the past, people treated divorce as the failure of marriage. Nowadays with the developing Chinese economy, urbanization, and the improvement of people's living standards, the divorce rate is rising. In the past, people thought that a female is no longer a person, the female is only the half of a male. When they found another half, they will be considered as a complete person. However, nowadays, female is seen as an individual, just the same as a male. Based on above, the cause of men being needed by women is for physical needs. The change of female's position makes divorce appear.

1.4 Divorce

In recent years, the reform, opening up, and progress of the market economy changed not only people's economic life but also changed people's concept of marriage and family. The divorce rate has increased slightly. Based on the statistical data of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China, the number of divorces is substantially increasing. In 2002 the total amount of divorce in China is 1.177 million pairs of couples; in 2003, 1.331 million pairs of couples divorced; in 2004 there were 1.665 million pairs of couples divorced; in 2005 the number became 1.785 million pairs of

couples, and until 2006, the number was 1.913 million pairs of couples. Compared with the number in 1978 which was 285 thousand, these past 27 years saw the increase of about 1.628 million pairs of couples who divorced. There were about 848 thousand pairs of couples who registered their divorce nationwide in two-quarters of 2010. It means that nearly 5,000 pairs of couples registered divorce every day (Liu, 2011).

1.5 Problem Statement

In 1982, there were 97.3% unmarried people among age 15~19 years in China. Among those unmarried people, 95.6% were female. The number among age 27~29 years unmarried people was 9.9%, and there was 2.48% unmarried female among them. After 25-year-old, there was a sharp decline in the proportion of unmarried. Each age group population data has shown that the percentage of an unmarried male was far more than female in 1982 (Chen, 1986).

From 1995 to 2008, the age of people gets married in general postponed. National unmarried male in age from 24.5 years old in 1995 delayed to 26 years old in 2008. Unmarried female in age 22.5 years old in 1995 deferred to 23.5 years old in 2008. Moreover, until 2008, in the same age, the proportions of unmarried female were higher than male (Hou, 2012).

5th Census data in 2000 shows that average age of marriage of Chinese women was 23.4 years old. However, 6th Census data in 2010 shows, the average age of marriage for Chinese women was 24.9 years old (Liu, 2012).

Based on the statistics above showed an obvious tendency of female to delay marriage. As we know, China has the greatest population in the world. The

Chinese government, they are encouraging people delayed marriage and childbearing to control the growing population. Besides of the government affection, know as the social development. Many Chinese female chooses to delay their marriage by their willing. The data only can tell the tendency, not explain the cause. Furthermore, the data also showed that the trend of female to delay marriage is stronger than male's.

1.5.1 Financial Satisfaction

Based on the Chinese history and traditional culture, after the founding of China, a lot of female were realized their unequal social position with male and fight for their working rights. The increasing number of career women caused the increasing of female's economic position. Moreover, the psychological and emotional needs were appeared (Li, 2009). Even though female's economic position is higher than before, also they faced about sexism at the workplace. Since 1999, the employment rate of women was observably decreased (Deng, 2011). Because of the weakness in the workplace, females are seeking for financially and mentally support through marriage. Some women are hoping marriage can change their economic or social position.

1.5.2 Sex Attitude

In Western culture, it has been observed that the women who had premarital sex with at least one non-committed partner have less marriage satisfaction than those women who had not experienced premarital sex with a non-committed partner (Rayburn, 2005). In addition, some researchers have been also indicated that premarital sex and cohabitation increase the risk of divorce of future marriage (Kahn

& London, 1991; Teachman, 2003). Indeed, the perception of marriage has been related to gender and premarital sex behavior (Hill, 1951; Salts et al., 1994; Walters & Parker, 1972).

Based on the traditional Chinese culture, lots of researches which studied about the attitude of premarital sex were with prejudices about premarital sex. For the previous studies, most of them were examined among university students. The participants of the previous studies were limited (Jiang et al., 2001; Zeng et al., 2005). In fact, there were a lack of studies explained how premarital sex influence the perception of marriage in China. In this study, will explain further about how Chinese female treat about premarital sex, and how sex attitude influenced Chinese female's perception of marriage.

1.5.3 Parental Marital Quality

In the child's growth process, one-third of the time are spent at home. Family is the most important environment during child's growth. Most people's views of marriage are from the cognitive of their own family, such as the people from unhappy family are doubt about marriage, even denial about the value of marriage (Zheng, 2004). The long-term mental depression from parents' divorce will produce children's shame and anxiety during love process (Qiu, 1997). In a family, parents' unequal status can cause that children tend to worship and dependent on the high-status gender (Tao, 2002). In another hand, some people who were from a broken family did commit that regardless of the fact that they disappointed about marriage, somehow they hold the hope for their own marriage could be better than their parents' (Cheng, 2007; Feng, 2014).

Western studies pointed that the family status (broken or integral). Parents' communication, relationships and number of peers are related to the sexual attitude and behavior (White & DeBlassie, 1992). Parents' marriage relationship (broken or integral) was a significant influence on children's attitude of marriage and their confidence of marriage life (Martin et al., 2003).

In China, most studies about the perception of marriage are the descriptive study conducted from the perspective of sociology or pedagogy, and lack of empirical research from the perspective of psychology. Studies of influencing factors of perception of marriage were based on foreign literature. It is the absence of specific studies namely how these factors affect the concept of marriage.

1.6 Research Questions

According to the Problem Statement, even though Chinese female has more opportunities in the workplace, and higher financial position than before, still they faced about sexism at the workplace. Because of the weakness in the workplace, females are seeking for financially and mentally support through marriage. In this research will study whether financial situation influenced on Chinese female's perception of marriage.

Because of the lack of studies explained how premarital sex influence on the perception of marriage in China. This study will explain further about how Chinese female treat about premarital sex and how sex attitude influenced Chinese female's perception of marriage.

According to the previously studies, some researchers showed that parents' marriage has a positive influence on children's perception of marriage; in another hand, some researchers showed different results.

The present study was designed to address and explain the outcome of the research, whether the financial satisfaction, parents' marital quality, and sex attitude are difference in age groups, education levels and relationships and whether the

financial satisfaction, parents' marital quality and sex attitude are influenced on Chinese female's perception of marriage. There are six questions as follows:

1. Does financial satisfaction influencing Chinese female's perception of marriage?
2. Does the perceived parents' marital quality influencing Chinese female's perception of marriage?
3. Does sexual attitude influencing Chinese female's perception of marriage?

1.7 Research Objectives

Due to the fact that there are not many types of research have been conducted related to the research of this issue in China. For the previous studies, most of them were examined among university students. The participants of the previous studies were limited. This research is to conduct to find the influencing factors of perception of marriage among Chinese female adults whose age among 20-34.

There are a few objectives for this study as the follows:

1. To explore the influences of financial satisfaction on Chinese female's perception of marriage.
2. To explore the influences of perceived parents' marital quality on Chinese female's perception of marriage.
3. To explore the influences of sex attitude on Chinese female's perception of marriage.