

# Young adulthood is a period sociology essay

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Marriage is a legal sanction where man and woman as a couple committed to each other. According to Cherlin (2004), the reason marriage became increasingly deinstitutionalized is supported by the demonstration such as low stability of marriage, delay in marriage and growth in cohabitation. Besides, the most influential reason contributed to the "deinstitutionalization of marriage" is adult's view on cohabitation because it shows the potential growth of cohabitation which might influence value of marriage in the future. When we discuss on marriage topic, most of the research suggest that parents or family behavior bring great impact on adults' marriage attitudes. Cunningham (2006) suggested that parents are the primary source children expose to the view or system of marriage. Therefore, perception on parents' marriage strongly affects the child's expectations and attitudes toward marriage and divorce. Other than that, positive attitudes towards divorce and poorer support for marriage are more common with children living in single parents and stepparent families. Thornton (1989) concluded that the perception of getting marry, stay married, having children, tendency to maintain strict division of labor between men and women that are so important before year 1950 have been dramatically changed. The continuing trend towards more egalitarian sex role attitudes increased women involvement in workforce and caused the traditional social beliefs of individuals have to follow a particular script based on gender have diminished. Furthermore, adults nowadays emphasize more on achieving life goals and maintaining single instead of getting married. The "egalitarian" marriage tends to shift the traditional marriage which emphasize on husband as the authoritarian and primary economy source in the family away because "egalitarian" marriage focus on equality in

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partnership, openness in communication, flexible gender role and both husband and wife act as the bread owner in the family (Rowald, 2000).

## **Statement of Problem**

The marriage attitude has significantly changed over the past few decades. The changes included increases of first marriage age, delay in marriage, and regression of men's economic position which affect the economic security of marital household. Delay in marriage attributed to the changing preferences attitude for marriage, especially women is support by much literature (Teachman, Tedrow, & Crowder, 2004). In contrast, there are actually less attention on studies paid on men desires and attitudes toward marriage. Besides, young adults nowadays are more likely to accept other alternatives of marriage such as acceptance of cohabitation, more permissive about premarital sex and childbearing, and to remain as single (Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2004) In the past decades, women were traditionally engaged in marriage and be dependent on men economically. However, the increased economic opportunity nowadays allowed women to be independent and even avoid marrying. As the economic growth, marriage becoming less central because many other opportunities are available with women increase of education level, growth in employment opportunities and increase in rates of labor force participation causes women to diminished economic reliance on men (Bulanda & Brown, 2004)

## **Purpose of Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the marriage attitude of adulthood. This study is about discussing the changes of adult's marriage attitudes. There are only few researches about marriage attitudes in

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Malaysian context are available where most research is based on Western context. Therefore, we could obtain more information on Malaysia adults' marriage attitudes. Moreover, the finding of this study can provide the awareness of changing marriage attitudes, the factors that lead to changes and also the consequences of this changing attitude. The research topic of this study is: The study of marriage attitudes among adulthood. The research questions of the study are: Are adulthood having positive attitudes toward marriage? Is there any significant difference between gender and marital attitudes? Is there any significant difference between age groups and marital attitudes? The independent variables are adult's attitudes, gender difference and age. The dependent variable is adult's attitude toward marriage.

## **Objective of Study**

Firstly, this study aimed to examine the adulthood attitude towards marriage. Then, follow by examining the gender differences in marital attitudes. Lastly, is to examine the age differences in marital attitudes.

## **Hypotheses**

Adulthood is having positive marriage attitudes. There is a significant difference in marital attitudes among gender. There is a significant difference in age groups in marital attitudes.

## **Operational Definitions**

Marital attitude. Marital attitudes refer to a person's subjective opinion of the institution of marriage (Braaten & Rosen, 1998). It also suggested that marital attitudes are shaped by numerous factors, general attitudes toward marriage, socialization experience, and parents or family influences. Besides,

positive marriage attitudes are usually related to an individual idealistic notion of a model marriage. Adult. Adulthood can be broken into three periods of development which are early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood (Santrock, 2010). Early adulthood usually begins in the late teens or early 20s and last through the 30s. In this period, adult establishing personal, career development intensifies and economic independence. This is the sixth stage of development in Erikson's psychosocial stage, which consists of intimacy versus isolation. At this stage, adult will face the developmental task of forming intimate relationship such as friendship or romantic relationship if not, isolation will result (Santrock, 2010).

Furthermore, this is also a stage where transition from financial and emotional dependence on parents to dependence on self and peers. Age. The term " age" refers to chronological age which explained the number of years that people lived. Adults ranged from the aged of (20-40). Gender. Gender refers to the behavior, attitudes and feeling associates between individual cultural expectations and biological sex. Behavior that fulfills the expectations of cultural is constituted as gender-normative; behaviors that are seen as incompatible with those expectations referred to gender non-conformity. It is also defined when individual socially determined role is ascribed by the result of his or her sex. Besides, it is referred to the social and psychological characteristics which associated with being female or male. Attitude. According to Allport(1935), attitude have been defined as a mental or neural state of readiness, shaped by experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on individual's response to all objects and situation which is related. In another words, attitude is the tendency an individual act in a particular way due to experience and temperament.

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## **Theoretical Framework**

Planned behavior theory. Armitage and Conner (2001) stated that this theory is the most reliable and widely used to examine attitude or behavior.

Planned behavior theory is a theory explained on reasoned action due to the limitations in dealing people behavior with incomplete volitional control

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Ajzen and Fishbein (1980)

mentioned that the core factor in planned behavior theory is intention of

individual's to perform a given behavior. Ajzen and Fishbein stated that

intention is very strong in predicting behavior because it might perform a

role in capturing the motivational factors which influence the behavior. For

instance, it can indicate how hard willingness and efforts they are planning

to exert to perform a certain behavior. Ajzen (1991) suggested that people

will show stronger intention towards a behavior when they contact with the

following three key attitudes which is, having positive attitudes, perceived

control over the event and believe that he should do it as other people think.

In Sassler and Schoen (1999) mentioned that people holding positive

attitudes about marriage increase their likelihood to involve in marriage.

Besides, individuals from divorced family have lower expectations for a

success relationship and hold negative attitudes towards marriage (Riggio &

Weiser, 2008 as cited in Park, 2012). The three key attitudes as mentioned

are attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms (perceived social

pressures) and perceived control as shown in the figure below. Therefore, in

order to predict the individual tendency to get marry by using planned

behavior theory, researcher would need to know the individual's intention to

marry, individual's attitudes toward marriage, and the perceived control the

individual have over the outcome. Figure 1. Theory of Planned Behavior

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applied to this study (Kahn, 2007) Attitudes about marriage Attitudes about marriage Behavior: marry or not Intention to marry or not How important others feel about marriage Perceived control over decision to marriage As mentioned above, it is a theory that involved three keys attitude which affect the behavior. However, in this study, we only examine the positivity and negativity of adult's attitudes toward marriage. As a conclusion, this theory is very effective to examine attitudes and behavior and it does help in this research because attitude is a main key factor which influences an individual's behavior and belief. Maturation thesis. It is a view that marriage will achieve greater success if the spouses have reached a high level of psychological maturity at the time of marriage, sufficient time to develop good relationship skills, and if there are stabilization between their standards for a spouses and what they have to offer on the marriage market (Lehrer, 2006). This thesis also predicts that marital age have recently moved up to a higher ages because the average marital success of people who married in their thirties have increased compared to people who married in twenties (Glenn, Uecker, & Love Jr., 2010). Therefore, it might be concluded as in order to have better understanding towards the spouses, achieved inner psychological maturity and so on, adult who plan to involved in marriage may develop a more optimistic and positive attitudes toward marriage in late twenties and thirties instead of in early twenties due to the influences of this maturation thesis. Social Learning Theory. According to Bandura (1977), social learning theory states that learning occurs within a social context. This type of learning includes observational learning, imitation, and modeling. This theory illustrates the subjective cognitive component that one's future marriage may relate to their exposure to parental marital characteristics <https://assignbuster.com/young-adulthood-is-a-period-sociology-essay/>

(Hall, 2006). Social learning theory could predict the views and attitudes of marriage differ from gender. In this theory, it states that view and attitudes of marriage are formed through observational learning, imitation, and modeling. Therefore, due to gender ties, females may develop view or attitudes towards marriage by modeling the mother and it same goes for male modeling the father (Servaty & Weber). As noted in the theoretical framework the creation of meaning, views and attitudes can be influenced by interaction with friends and family members. For example, offspring's negative attitudes toward marriage are strongly associated with parents' marital conflicts (Ottaway, 2010). Besides, parental divorce which has been associated with less confidence towards marriage may causes difficulty in maintaining a future long-term marriage and shows less commitment toward marriage and greater acceptance of cohabitation and even divorce. For the conclusion, social learning theory discussed about how an individual's attitudes being shaped by observational learning, imitation, and modeling. From the example and explanation above, attitudes and behavior could be develop by observe, imitate and learn from family and friends which might bring great impact to the person. In the study of marriage attitudes with the implication of social learning theory, adult's attitude towards marriage could be study and it might even provide the explanation for their attitudes towards marriage.