

Problems on early marriages

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



In our research paper we looked at young marriages especially of those in college. This topic was of interest to us because of our college careers and upcoming marriage. Jeremy is currently a junior in chemical engineering and I am a junior in elementary education. We ourselves feel that a college marriage would work although it will be hard. We will now discuss the literature we looked at regarding young marriage. To begin our discussion we will first give a definition of an adolescent.

The term adolescent " refers to the post pubertal population younger than twenty years of age who have a distinctive life-style; for those immediately younger the term young adults is used"(John and Pat Caldwell, 1998).

Adolescence is socially defined. It is seen there as an instrument for social change and prepares you for adult life in societies where adolescence is found. Adolescence is associated with the following: going to school, trying to achieve occupational positions, and creating boy- girl friendships.

Adolescence is associated with the moving away from agrarian society to full-time education which is needed in complex societies (John and Pat Caldwell, 1998). In the study of adolescence there has been a huge interest in adolescent marriage and childbirth. Marital instability has been directly linked to adolescent marriage and childbirth. When this occurs the adolescent is forced into the role of a parent and they are not able to fully develop their own identity or learn the importance of intimacy (Teti and Lamb, 1989).

Adolescent marriage has been shown to have an effect on lowering their socioeconomic status and stability in the marriage. Adolescents that are

married and have children with their new responsibilities now have less time for what is really important which is their education. Adolescence is a time that should be focused on education. Women who gave birth in adolescence completed less than eleven years of education. Those who had adolescent marriages and kids completed 11.82 years of education. Women who only had an adolescent marriage and did not have children completed 12.9 years of education (Teti and Lamb, 1989).

Marriage and children at such a young age obviously have a negative affect on education. Education has a great impact on a person's social and economic status. At the end of a person's adolescent phase they are ready to enter college. Some college students today are not ready for college though. Parents should make sure that their kids can cope with everyday responsibilities such as food and transportation, budget, money and time, resolve conflicts, be able to make decisions, and have goals suggests an excerpt from an article in USA Today.

It is a large change from having their parents there to help them deal with their problems. College is the time to grow and find out who you truly are and what you want to do with the rest of your life. Some couples are finding themselves having to make compromises within their relationships when it comes to their careers. Less young couples have to compromise their careers for their partner. Universities are offering jobs to young couples to keep them together. Deans are even offering departments extra money to create new positions for the spouses (Wilson, 1996).

Upon looking at our research material, we feel that couples should get married in college. In college you learn greater responsibilities and how to make life choices, which enables you to live a more mature adult life. After learning about these things in college you are able to take on the responsibilities of a married life. We have found that colleges are flexible with working with the married couple. We are now going to look at different marital roles. There are the instrumental or traditional model and the companionship or egalitarian model.

The difference between the two is the difference between husband and wife relationship. In the instrumental model the husband brings in the majority of the household income and takes care of the finances, the wife on the other hand, stays home and takes care of the children. The companionship model stresses more of a friendship and mutual sharing of responsibilities between spouses. In this model the roles for spouses can be reversible (Pollock, Die, and Marriott, 1989). We feel that the companionship model works because it allows open lines of communication, which we feel is very important to a marriage.

The method that we used was a survey consisting of five questions. The questions all dealt with our problem of should people get married in college. We used our sociology class as a convenience sample. The ages of the students in our class ranged from 18 to 30 or older. This gave us a broad age group to give us enough information on our topic. We decided to do a survey because it was the quickest, simplest, and most direct method to gather the

information on our topic. We collected our data from the students at the beginning before class started.

We handed out the surveys and allowed them to complete them at their leisure. As stated earlier all of our questions dealt with marriage and the ages at which it should be appropriate to marry. Our first question asked at what age is it acceptable to get married. We gave them a list of the ages above but broke them into categories. They were as follows: 18-21, 22-25, 26-29, and 30 and above years of age. We asked them to circle their response. The second question asked them the best age to get married. We used the same format as in question 1 for their responses.

In order to distinguish between acceptable and best we can describe it in this manner. Acceptable ages in which to get married dealt with the way in which society would look at it. The best age to get married would show their personal views on the topic. Question 3 was what made the rest of our survey come together. This question asked should people get married in college. The same was asked as in question 1 and 2, to circle their answer; yes or no. The fourth question asked what characteristics you would chose in finding a partner.

The characteristics are looks, race, religion, age, education, social status, and values. We came up with the above characteristics after reading Peplau, Hill, and Rubin" s article on " Sex Role Attitudes in Dating and Marriage: A Fifteen Year Follow-up of the Boston Couple Study" in the Journal of Social Issues. We asked them to check all characteristics that were important to them. In question 5 we asked them to indicate their gender and asked them

to circle their age groups. In our five-question survey on marriage we polled a college sociology class which consisted of a sample size of 31.

We broke up our age groups from 18-21, 22-25, 26-29, and 30 and above. Our first question was on the most acceptable age to get married. The majority of the students chose 18-21 to be the most acceptable at 47 percent. The minority, however came out to be 30 and above at 3 percent. * Note: One student survey was discarded because they indicated all answers as being correct. Our next question asked at what age is it best to be married. Students said 22-25 was best, being the majority, at 74 percent. On the other hand, the minority was 18-21 at 3 percent.

All surveys now being included. The third question addressed the issue of whether or not people should get married in college. The majority of our sample size said no at 52 percent. The amount of students saying yes was close at 48 percent. The fourth question asked for characteristics of the person you would marry. The characteristics given are follows: looks, race, religion, age, education, social status, and values. We will start off with the majority being values, surprisingly everyone agreed. Looks, age, education, and race were all very close.

Looks came out to be 65 percent, age and education were tied for 61 percent, and race was 58 percent. Social status was the minority in this case at 29 percent. Our last question had two parts to it. The first was to indicate their gender and the second was to specify their age group. Our survey indicated that majority was females consisting of 23 and there were 8 males. Majorities of students were ages 18-21 at 77 percent, then there were 30

and above which represented 13 percent, next was 26-29 at 6 percent. And last was 22-25 at 3 percent.

The results of our survey were rather interesting. When looking at our results we found that there was quite a difference between the best and acceptable ages to get married. The majority of the students chose the age group of 18-21 years as being the most acceptable to get married. On the other hand, the students chose 22-25 years as the best ages to get married. We found this to be interesting because although you can get married at 18-25 it may be best to wait until ages 22-25 according to our survey. This may be because the majority of students surveyed were 18-21.

The question can then be raised of if they really think they are ready to get married at 18-21 years of age, and obviously they do not since they chose 22-25 years as the best age to get married. At the ages of 18-21 people are just entering college and learning how to make it in the world and they are pursuing a degree if they are in college. At eighteen a person is just old enough to vote and serve in the Armed Forces, but they still can't buy liquor. Society does not think that an 18-20 year old is mature enough to buy liquor, so should they be able to get married at that age.

The first few years of college are good years to learn life lessons and the different characteristics that you will need to make it in the world as we talked about earlier in our research. I think that the students realized this and many of them felt that they would rather finish college around the age of twenty-five and then start their careers and their newfamily. The majority of the students surveyed agreed that you should not get married in college, but

the it was only a very narrow margin between those who said that it was alright to get married in college compared to those who thought that you should not.

Once married you have to be ready to start a family and of course be open to the possibility of having children. Children take up a lot of a parent" s time as well as a lot of a family" s income. Having children while in college could very well hurt your chances of getting an education as we saw in the data presented about adolescent mothers. At the age of 22-25 years many college students have a bachelor" s degree and are then ready to start their new careers. Their jobs would also bring along the financial stability needed to maintain the needs of a family.

The age bracket of 22-25 would have the better financial ability to support a family and we are sure that the students took this into consideration when they filled out this survey. The characteristics that the students chose for the person that they would some day want to marry were interesting. Everyone selected the values of the person to be important to them, which truly is important since values are passed down from parents to children. Twenty students out of the thirty-one that were surveyed chose looks to be important to them.

A person should and will be attracted to the person that they decide to marry. The interesting thing was the fact that nineteen people chose education to be important while only nine people chose social status to be important. These two things really go hand in hand though. Education is a way to that people can use to rise above their current social status. The data

that we looked at showed us those adolescents that are married and have children have a lower chance of getting an education above the high school level and therefore end up having a lower social and economic status.

Social status is also related to education in the way that some of the people in lower social status may not have the same opportunities that people with a higher social status might have. They may not be able to get into college or if they do not go as far in college as they could if they had more money at their disposal. They also may not know people in important places that may be able to help them get into the school that they wanted to or to get the job that they wanted. Social status also has to deal with a person's values.

A person who has less than someone else may be able to appreciate more what they have than others that take what they have for granted. There were characteristics that went hand in hand almost in the survey that people seemed to have overlooked. The question that we looked at in this paper was should people get married in college. After reviewing the data on adolescent marriages, we would have to agree with the information that we collected from our survey that 22-25 was the best age to get married.

People in the 18-21 range are still considered as adolescents and still have a lot of growing up to do. By the ages of 22-25 students have learned how to live by themselves and have possibly even earned a degree to support themselves and a new family if it were their choice to get married. I guess we should really say that we agree with getting married later in your college years after you have learned how to take care of yourself so that you in turn can take care of someone else.