

# Different marriage perceptions in contemporary and traditional china



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The main purpose of this report is to give the values of marriage in terms of contemporary Chinese perceptions. According to a survey through questionnaire of naked marriages, this report reflects the different view points of marriage between contemporary and traditional Chinese people. In order to indicate the new trend of people's marriage views, the report will firstly analyze the results of research in terms of percentage. Then, the report will give an account of naked marriages, with people standing on different opinions. Next, it will analyze the main causes from different standpoints. It will state the root reason as well as other reasons. Finally, the report will give the comprehension of naked marriage and reach the conclusion on the basis of the research's result and the reasons above.

## **2. Introduction**

Naked marriage refers to a phenomenon that people are directly married at a registry under condition of lacking house, car, even their wedding ring. In other word, naked marriage is to get married without debt and luxury. In this case, there are less complicated things to prepare and to undertake than previous marriage. It is a new network vocabulary which gained popularity in 2008. With the development of civilization in modern society, the first objective of a marriage has transformed into love from breeding offspring. As is known, marriage and material are always inseparable in Chinese traditional marriage perception. Before 1949 when the new country was established, both boys and girls should get married on coming of age, and they would be tied in wedlock formally through matchmakers on the basis of financial situation of the men's family. After the founding of new China, the feature of marriage was simple and thrift which followed the style in

revolution time and the wedding just means a common meal. In the 1960s, the marriage began to attach importance to exquisite decorations; it was common to see that couples asked the carpenter to make wooden furniture such as wardrobe, table and chair. When it comes to 1970s, three major items including watches, bicycles and sewing machines were necessary in marriage. Approximately ten years later, however, they changed into the refrigerators, color TV sets and washing machines. In addition to home appliance, many brides must own the gold necklace, gold earrings and the gold ring, which afterwards were called three pieces of gold. At the beginning of 21st century, house, money and the car becomes the new contents of three major items. Contrasts to the Chinese family concept in the past, the modern couples emphasize freedom and independence to a higher degree and pay less attention on wedding from the standpoint of marriage. Meanwhile, marital status is regarded as one of the privacy in the eyes of young white-collar, and then the phenomenon of hidden marriage appears. Under such background, naked marriage is brought to the public's attention.

### **3. The Analysis of Research**

In the investigation of naked marriage, as for the question of whether naked marriage is the trend or the helpless option, 18% of the respondents choose trend while 82% of them choose helplessness. When being asked the opinion of the relationship between naked marriage and happiness, the number of people who hold the views that the naked marriages can obtain happiness accounts for 44 %. In their opinions, only love can endure the test of lacking material products, can it mean precious. The ratio of people with the opposite views is just the same. They argue that economic basis is the

prerequisite for the daily life and the absence of substance will cheapen the quality of life and the degree of happiness. Another 12% people are uncertain about this. Interestingly, the research indicates that the attitude to the naked marriage between men and women are quite distinct. 80% of men are in favor of naked marriage while 70% of women feel that naked marriage is infeasible. In regard to the approval of naked marriage, the proportion of people who welcome the naked marriage takes 57.7%, they argue that love is the core of marriage and couples can make efforts together to buy house after marriage. In the meantime, those who disapprove of naked marriage accounted for 35.7%.

The research also reveals that the majority of people who agree with the perception of naked marriage family are at the age of 20 to 35. Furthermore, most of them are urban white collar with high education and large income.

#### **4. Literature Review**

As a token of modern marriage perceptions, naked marriage has been brought to public attention with people standing on both sides. Some people welcome this new form of marriage with applause, arguing that holding a wedding for others' watching is costly and time-consuming. As a result, it can be omitted if couples themselves feel it is unnecessary. The money spending on houses, cars and other things is a great mass of expenditure for their parents. In this case, the things like ostentation and extravagance have nothing to do with marriage. Anyhow, marriage is related to two people and it can be conducted as long as both of them feel proper.

Professor Chen who has engaged in social psychology research since 2002 illustrates the popularity of naked marriage in terms of sociology. She has been holding the opinion that it is sagacious for couples to live together simply. They should get marriage certificate from marriage registration office under the insufficient material conditions. (Chen, Fu-Mei and Li, Tsui-Shan. 2007, p400) It shows the increasing legal consciousness among the new generation of young people. Besides, Lu Rucai thinks that compared to the premarital cohabitation, naked marriage is worthy of being advocated. Moreover, it also deserves to advocate as a simple way of life in the high level of material development. Naked marriage gets rid of the material restrictions and secular ideas and makes couples get married without any burden. (Lu Rucai. 2004, p34)

Other Sociologists also indicate that naked marriage should give praise and support. Professor Chia thinks that it is not only a return of rational knowledge but also a kind of social progress. According to the analysis of them, during the 1950s, due to the restricted conditions, many people's weddings were naked marriages. However, it has not prevented the passion of this generation in work and life. (Chia, Rosina C. etc. 1986, p599) In fact, the form of marriage is considered less important when taking sincere love into account. Accordingly, parents are supposed to put aside outmoded thoughts, and offer more freedom to the next generation in order to reduce their economic pressure.

Feldman also points out that naked marriage encourages to forming a plain life style which is worth recommending. Thanks to naked marriage, young generation no longer acts as the NEET group (Not in  
<https://assignbuster.com/different-marriage-perceptions-in-contemporary-and-traditional-china/>

Education<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>CEmployment or Training). Instead, they rely on their own efforts to create the future. (Jin X, Li S, Feldman MW. 2005, p30)

On the other hand, there are also many opponents who strongly believe that basic material is the foundation of a marriage. Professor Cao who criticizes the naked marriage on a realistic basis, argues that it is not a feasible thing to do, especially in this fast-developing material world where the divorce rate is rising alarmingly. Naked marriage will result in more life pressure and competition. (Liv Jiang and Cao Yang. 2006, p40) In this context, material preparation is equivalent to a promise for a new marriage, particularly for expensive urban living. Having a home and a car is really beneficial to a new family and it helps them grow from a pretty good start.

Jill Savege predicts that naked marriage will not be always in vogue in China. It is common that China has constant custom with long history towards marriage that cannot be easily changed. Marriage has a close relationship with material in Chinese traditional marriage perception. (Shi, Qijia; Scharff, Jill Savege. 2008, p310) In this regard, even through couples have reached consensus on naked marriage, their parents would object strongly to the wedding , and the reason is that they cannot afford a diamond ring and marriage ceremony, let alone a home and a car. In their opinion, house and car represent the capability of getting established in society.

In addition, the scholar Olga thinks that due to the insufficient material foundation, their children may lag behind others at the starting line at birth. Many educators like Lu also point out that good material elements have far-reaching influence on mental development of children, and they reveal that

children with good material elements are inclined to form the extroverted and gregarious character which is benign to their future. (Pochagina, Olga. 2004, p140)

Both sides of the scholars discuss the naked marriage from different angles and aspects which offer plenty of valuable ideas for this report. On the basis of their works and results of research, the report makes synthetic and comprehensive analysis.

## **5. Methodology**

This report is mainly to discuss the modern Chinese marriage perceptions by questionnaires and interviews of naked marriage, and it will use data analysis and the qualitative analysis. Data analysis will offer sufficient data to support the facts. And qualitative analysis will see through the appearance to perceive the essence. This kind of analysis will expound from different aspects to form an integral evaluation for the viewpoints of marriage. However it should be pointed out that questionnaires failed to take into account people's real-life action, the data getting here is the possibility of what people are willing to do, rather than what they would do in practice.

## **6 Causes of the Naked Marriage**

### **6. 1 Social Pressure**

Young generation that has reached marriageable age is inflicted with the heavy pressure from work and life, and it is the social pressure that makes young people cannot afford to houses and cars. In recent years, the soaring housing prices in China give rise to the increase of marriage cost and become the biggest obstructions in the preparation for marrying. Therefore

<https://assignbuster.com/different-marriage-perceptions-in-contemporary-and-traditional-china/>

young people begin to choose naked marriage as a way of compromise. A survey conducted by statistical bureau shows the average wedding cost in shanghai reached a high point at 18.7 million in 2009 and the spending was in line with that of the United States. Undoubtedly, the wedding cost in Shanghai ranks the first place in China and it is twice more than Harbin that has the least wedding cost in China. Another Investigation reveals that fifty percent of Chinese newly-married couples manage to get married at the cost of emptying their parents' funding. A new national statistics conducted by Ministry of Civil Affairs show that the total consumption amount produced every year due to the marriage has reached 25 million Yuan.

## **6. 2 Pursuit of Pure Love**

The young generation pursues pure romantic love in this frugal way of marriage. From the view point of love, the marriage is based on the ideal of common life between men and women, and then they will form a strong admiration for each other in their heart. True love means a strong pure feeling of a desire for people to become lifelong partners regardless of material constrains, and naked marriage can prove that true love is everlasting. The Associate Researcher Johnson, who works in institute of sociology and demography, argues that naked marriage can aid in getting rid of the secular concepts and making couples get married without any material burden. (Johnson, Julie R. 2010, p27)The ones who have a naked marriage can throw common customs and reveal the true meaning of marriage, so that the so-called honeymoon, wedding and money are not necessities if people are marrying with the people they really want. Besides, No matter how poor the man is, as long as this man has perseverance and



ambition, he will not let his beloved women suffer from hardships through his hard working. Only when people eliminate factors such as ceremony and traditional material concepts and just immerse themselves in the joy of marriage itself, will such naked marriage show distinguish and faithful. And people can put off difficulties which are tough to handle temporarily in marriage and do them when the conditions are abundant.

## **7 The Significance of Naked Marriage**

On the one hand naked marriage manifests the changing attitude towards marriage in modern China. Choosing naked marriage is not only a familial decision, but also an individual's choice of love and lifestyle. Contrast to Chinese traditional wedding concept, marriage stands for the spirit of mutual assistance and efforts rather than the actual wealth people possess. On the other hand it also reflects the varying concept of material nowadays. Instead of spending extra money on unnecessary products, couples should make effective use of it and meet the challenge in a positive attitude. Love is a kind of intellectual product that needs the joint efforts of couples to accumulate. Therefore, choosing naked marriage might be taking a test in the future and the state of poverty after efforts cannot be accepted by everyone.

Additionally, the popularity of naked marriage partly proves the struggle of social equity from men. Obviously, men have undertaken excessive pressure of marriage in modern life. As everyone knows, society calls on the equality between men and women for a long time, but these days the actual fact is that society pays close attention to ensuring women enjoy equal rights in employment and promotion with men, whereas the uneven marriage cost <https://assignbuster.com/different-marriage-perceptions-in-contemporary-and-traditional-china/>

that men has taken on is neglected by most people. It seems that the men's natural responsibility is to buy houses for their families in the perspective of traditional Chinese people, and therefore many young men would like choose to support naked marriage in order to reduce their pressures of being mortgage slaves. But for women, they don't have a deep understanding of marriage cost due to the lack of houses supplement burden. In this regard, women don't need to carry too much pressure, thus they inclined to support the concept that it is appropriate to own houses at the time of getting married.

## **8 Conclusion**

This report is mainly to discuss the issue of naked marriage in the current China. It makes a detailed analysis based on the questionnaire survey with respect to whether naked marriage is appropriate and reasonable for love. It is apparent that people hold various views on this phenomenon. And it is a great challenge to the traditional family values. This trend is regarded as the sublimation of love which lacks the material and secular opinions and goes back to the essence of love itself. Of course, when considering choosing naked marriage, people should take account of both the enthusiasm of enterprising spirit and the growth of wealth to make full preparation for the unpredictable future of life. In conclusion, whether adopting naked marriage or not depends on the couple, and if their economic backgrounds and mutual perception of money is similar, naked marriage will bring them the happiness. It makes couples work hard together and start them off on an equal financial platform. But if their relationship is not strong enough, then naked marriage will have a higher probability of failing.

## 9 Appendices

### APPENDIX A: Questionnaire

Dear Sir/ Madam, Thank you for your attention and opening this questionnaire. The project aims to give the values of marriage in terms of contemporary Chinese perceptions. Your opinion will be of great help in my project. Your response will and your information will be coded and will remain confidential.

Thank you very much for your time and support. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Please mark the appropriate answer to the questions below.

1. What will you place more weight on when you marry to your fiancé?

A. House

B. Pure love

C. Wedding ceremony

D. Car

E. Honeymoon

2. Do you think naked marriage is the trend in modern society or the helpless option?

A. The trend of marriage

B. The helpless option with regard to modern society

<https://assignbuster.com/different-marriage-perceptions-in-contemporary-and-traditional-china/>

C. Not Sure

3. Do you think naked marriage can obtain happiness?

A. Definitely Yes

B. Yes

C. Should be

D. Not Sure

E. No

4. Do you approve of naked marriage?

A. Definitely Yes

B. Yes

C. Should be

D. Not Sure

E. No

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

If you have some questions that we do not list, please write it down below.

Thank you

## **APPENDIX B: Interview Questions**

1. What is the reason for couples to choose naked marriage in your opinion?

<https://assignbuster.com/different-marriage-perceptions-in-contemporary-and-traditional-china/>

2. What do you think of the marriage?