

The reversal of the college marriage gap



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The Reversal of the College Marriage Gap This essay will make comparison and contrast between two graphs highlighting the demographic trends in US with respect to changes in the college marriage gap. (Fry)

Source: <http://pewsocialtrends.org/pubs/767/reversal-of-the-college-marriage-gap>

The above bar graph is indicating the changes in the percentage of adults, who have either attended or not attended the college, with respect to their marriages at the age of 30. According to this graph, the ratio has changed over the period of time indicating that the young adults prefer to marry late. This is irrespective of the level of education of the adults as the trend for both the non-college educated as well as college educated adults is almost same.

It is generally argued that American society has been transformed in the manner that there are visible changes in the roles of men and women at the time of their marriages. (Fry and Cohn). Due to this reason, the resulting changes in the way adults marry have been manifested in the form of late marriages. This bar graph also indicates that the marriage rates of the adults under the age of 20 have subsequently declined due to the changes in the economic status of women. Another study conducted also showed that the average age for first marriage has changed during last forty years as economic hardships as well as the changing relationships between different members of the society have contributed towards the transformation which was experienced by the American society as a whole due to this shift.

(National Poverty Center)

Graph -2 indicates the changes which took place in terms of ages of the college educated as well as non-college educated adults at the time of their

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marriage. The results suggest that the average age of the college educated as well as non-college educated adults is almost same at the time of marriage. This change in the ratio of the ages has changed over the period of time, as earlier, non-college educated adults tend to marry at an early age as compared to the college educated adults. The change is however, mainly because of the difficult economic situations with which both types of individuals have to tackle. It is also important to note that some estimates indicate that the US population is ageing therefore there is a greater drop in the marriage rates. As such, the generation having higher marriage rates has passed its prime, and the younger generation is facing decline in the marriage rates. (Groves).

This graph is also showing a transition from 1950s to 2008 indicating as to how the average age of adults varied over the period of time at the time of their first marriage. What is also significant to note that the marriage of non-college going adult has rapidly changed during the last two decades. During 1990s, the average age was 25, which jumped to 28 within a span of twenty years indicating that the non-college educated adults have started to marry late because of the reasons discussed above.

Conclusion

The above two graphs indicate that the gap between the non-college educated and college educated adults in US has narrowed down. Earlier, non-college educated adults tend to marry earlier, whereas college educated adults used to marry late. However, this trend has changed during last 70 years or so as the economic conditions have forced people to delay their marriages and acquire skills, which can help them to remain competitive.

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