# Specific Aspects of Religiosity and Marital Attitudes: Differences by Age

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# MARRIAGE ATTITUDES

- 39% agree that marriage is obsolete (44% of those 18-29; Pew, 2011)

- 37% of younger adults (21-36) are married, compared to 66% of Baby Boomers at that age (Pew, 2017)

- Cohabitation rates have risen 29% since 2007; half of cohabiters are younger than 35 (Pew, 2017)

- 39% of those who married after 2010 have a spouse in a different religious group (Pew, 2014)

# TRENDS IN RELIGIOSITY

- Younger adults are 17% less likely to claim a religious identity than those over 40 (Pew, 2018)

- 36% of those 18-24 identify as religious "nones" (non affiliated)…this is over double the amount of Baby Boomers (17%)

- 39% of those 18-24 pray daily, as opposed to 61% for Baby Boomers

- 28% of those 18-24 attend services weekly, as opposed to 38% of Baby Boomers (Pew, 2014)

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

**Various theories (e.g. human ecology, marital horizons, marital paradigms) suggest attitudes toward marriage are shaped by various factors and contexts:**

- Socioeconomic factors

- Sociocultural factors and trends

- Values and beliefs (including religious beliefs and practices)

# OVERALL FOCUS OF THE STUDY

- Is the impact of specific aspects of religiosity on marital attitudes different for young adults (18-30) vs. those older controlling for other factors?

# SAMPLE

**An online survey was distributed across universities and across social media**

796 total participants

- 82% female

- 75% Caucasian, 14% African-American, 7% Hispanic or Latino

- **Education:** 50% some college; 18% college graduates; 18% post graduate degree

- **Income:** 50% reported up to $20,000; 15% between $20,001-$40,000, 12% between $40,001-$60,000 and 24% over $60,000

- **Relationship Status:** 32% married; 33% single (never married); 24% dating (not living together)

# MEASURES

- **Religiosity:** Adapted items from the Duke Religion Index (DUREL; Koening & Büssing, 2010). Five total items:

  - **Intrinsic/Subjective religiosity:** In terms of religious beliefs you describe yourself as (not religious at all to very religious); My religious beliefs greatly influence many of my daily decisions (7 – point Likert scale agreement)

  - **Organizational religious activity:** How often do you attend church, religious meetings, and/or activities? (never to everyday)

  - **Non-organizational religious activity:** How often do you privately engage in prayer or meditation? (never to everyday); How often do you privately read religious materials (e.g., Bible)? (never to everyday)

# MEASURES CONTD.

- **Personal and Demographic Factors:** Gender, age, race/ethnicity, income, education, marital status, parents' marital status

- **Dependent Variables:**

  - *Marriage is/has been a long-term goal for yourself* (7-point Likert scale)

  - *Marriage is an old-fashioned concept* (7-point Likert scale)

- **Divided the sample by age:** 18-30 (459), 31+ (257)

# ANALYSIS

- **Two different multiple regression models:**

  - One assessing the connection between the religiosity variables and the demographic variables with the **'Marriage as a goal'** dependent variable

  - One assessing the connection between the religiosity variables and the demographic variables with the **'Marriage is old-fashioned'** dependent variable

  - Multi-group analysis used to assess for path differences by age group

# Results: Differences in Perceptions of 'Marriage as a Goal' Between those 18-30 and those over 30?

**For the younger group:**

- Religious beliefs influencing daily decisions **+** (***); Reading religious materials **+** (*)

**For the older group:**

- Religious attendance/activity **+** (***)

**Multi-group analysis:** Religious attendance/activity- $\chi^2_D (1) = 5.13$, $p = .02$

# Results: Differences in Perceptions of 'Marriage Is Old-fashioned' Between Those 18-30 and Those Over 30?

**For the younger group:**

- Religious beliefs influencing daily decisions – (*); Overall religiosity – (**)

**For the older group:**

- Overall religiosity – (**); Religious attendance/activity – (*)

**Multi-group analysis:** Religious beliefs influencing decisions- $\chi^2_D (1) = 5.23, p = .02$

# TAKEN TOGETHER…

- Religiosity affected marital attitudes for both groups

- For the younger group, personal connection to religiosity was more important than organizational connection. For the older group, organizational connection was more important

- Younger group: exploratory; religion and relationships

# DISCUSSION/IMPLICATIONS

- Relationship and family programming assessing for attitudes, values, and beliefs (including religious beliefs)

- Matching/adapting relationship and family programming based on those beliefs and those needs

- Continued investigation on how marital/relational attitudes are shaped by various aspects of religiosity (influences on relationship outcomes)

# LIMITATIONS

- Online, self-report data

- Cross-sectional design

- Overall, sample lacking in diversity

- Single-item religiosity measures

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## THANK YOU!!!

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