

Other Influencing Factors

Mating:

The social concept of marriage is also grounded in the biological necessity of mating. Although it is beyond the scope of this course to determine which drive is stronger—the sexual component of mating or the drive to procreate—there is a biological component in both.

Regardless of what trends or traditions are present, marriage has been the most enduring socially acceptable means to get a mate and produce offspring.

Perceptions:

(Narrator):

The cognitive perspective of marriage brings to bear the perceptions of what constitutes a marriage. Those perceptions are brought into the marriage by each partner. Perceptions have a profound influence on the success or failure of a marriage.

The development of a long-term relationship starts with two people bringing together varying perceptions of what that relationship should be.

Jen and Cris are planning to get married next month. Let's hear what perceptions they both are bringing into their marriage.

Jen:

I love children. I've always dreamed that someday I would get married and have four kids and two dogs. Don't tell Cris, but I even have our children's names picked out: Alyssa, Ciara, Jack, and Charlie. Cris comes from a big family, and he is great with his brothers and sisters. He'll be a great father. I have visions of Cris coaching Jack's and Charlie's baseball teams while I'm driving Alyssa and Ciara to dance class.

Cris:

I love Jen and can't wait to spend our lives together. I envision us spending a lot of time traveling the globe and just being together. As for having a family, maybe we'll have one baby; we'll see. As the oldest of six kids in my family, I watched my parents work hard to make sure we all had the essentials. They did a great job, but they never had time for each other. When Jen and I get married, I'm going to make sure that we have time for each other.

What is the probability that Jen and Cris's marriage will fail?

A. 33%:

When looking strictly at Jen's and Cris's perceptions of marriage, there is a high probability for marriage failure because their perceptions are so different.

Jen focuses on having a large family and places value on fostering a family lifestyle. Cris sees greater value in a marriage where the husband and wife focus more time on each other than on raising a family.

B. 66%:

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C. 99%:

A great difference in perceptions, including norms and values, indicate a greater probability for marriage failure. Unless Jen and Cris make an effort in their marriage and compromise their personal perceptions and values, their marriage will fail.

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Susan and Tom are planning to get married next month. Let's hear what perceptions they both are bringing into their marriage.

Susan:

I admit when I first met Tom, I didn't know that he was going to be "the one." In fact, I didn't think any guy would be "the one." I watched my parents go through a rough divorce, and I vowed never to put myself through that pain.

Once I got to know Tom, I learned that we both have the same values and the same sense of humor. I couldn't help myself, and I fell deeply in love with him.

Tom:

Susan and I both come from rough family backgrounds, and we can totally relate to one another. We started out as friends before we went out on our first date. Even though we took things slow, it gave us a chance to learn a lot about each other. It's nice to know that we share the same ideas about marriage.

Susan was definitely worth the wait.

What is the probability that Susan and Tom's marriage will last long term?

D. 33%:

Although the divorce of Susan's parents and Tom's childhood influenced their perceptions of marriage, they both have similar values and perceptions. In addition, they spent a significant amount of time together and made the effort to foster their relationship before jumping into a marriage. Given these facts, there is a high probability of marriage success for this couple.

E. 66%:

Although the divorce of Susan's parents and Tom's childhood influenced their perceptions of marriage, they both have similar values and perceptions. In addition, they spent a significant amount of time together and made the effort to foster their relationship before jumping into a marriage. Given these facts, there is a high probability of marriage success for this couple.

F. 99%:

There is a high probability of marriage success for Susan and Tom. This couple's perceptions of marriage, including norms and values, are very similar. In addition, they made the effort to foster their relationship before jumping into a marriage.

Similarity in perceptions, including norms and values, indicate a greater probability for marriage success.

(Narrator):

The cognitive perspective of marriage brings to bear the perceptions of what constitutes a marriage. Those perceptions are brought into the marriage by each partner. Perceptions have a profound influence on the success or failure of a marriage.

The development of a long-term relationship starts with two people bringing together varying perceptions of what that relationship should be.

Beth and Mark are planning to get married next month. Let's hear what perceptions they both are bringing into their marriage.

Beth:

Mark and I met in freshman year in college and have been together ever since. We both love to spend time together and know that someday, when we both are ready, we'd like to start a family. Communication is the key in our relationship.

Mark:

Beth and I have been together for over five years. We've learned that if we're just honest with each other, we can get through any challenges that come our way. I'm looking forward to spending the rest of our lives together and someday starting a family.

What is the probability that Beth and Mark's marriage will last long term?

A. 33%:

Similarity in perceptions, including norms and values, indicate a greater probability for marriage success.

Because both Beth and Mark want to raise a family and place high value on honesty and communication, they are more likely to have a successful marriage.

B. 66%:

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Because both Beth and Mark want to raise a family and place high value on honesty and communication, they are more likely to have a successful marriage.

C. 99%:

Because similarity in perceptions, including norms and values, indicate a greater probability for marriage success, there is a high probability of marriage success for Beth and Cris. This couple has a similar perception of marriage, which includes raising a family. They both place high value on honesty and communication.

As stated, marriage is probably the oldest tradition and is common across cultures. It is rooted in both biological and social aspects of human behavior. From this perspective, we can understand how marriage is being redefined in our modern culture and why this redefining has been controversial. It is beyond the scope of this lecture to get into the political, religious, and ideological perspectives of marriage. The intention is to define marriage from a cultural perspective to demonstrate the intensity of such a relationship on adult development.