

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE FAMILY AMONG VIETNAM GENERATIONS TODAY

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In the new context with the impact of globalization, international integration and the development of market economy in the country, the concept and awareness of citizens on matters of life has changed more or less. The book is the actual survey results to find similarities, unity, and besides these are the differences and contradictions in the perception and conception of marriage family among Vietnam generations today.

The concept of generation, according to the author, can be understood as a set of people who have the same age. Although it may vary in occupation, living situation, personality but they had witnessed, and experienced the historical and social (economic, political, cultural.)events, and live together in a certain period of time. Generations were

influenced strongly by historical factors, so that each generation brings a unique personal perception, thought, and the way of thinking and acting. In other words, apart from the common points and similarities, generations also have its own and different reaction before the problem of era as well as different ways to think and behave in family life.

1. The concept of mate selection

Firstly, we must stress that conditions and circumstances of mate selection is not the same for everyone because of the differences in working and studying environment of each own. However, the concept of the present generation almost has a general trend in mate selection.

With problems who make final decisions in mate selection, among generations almost have similarities in mind. The

imposition of the parents and relatives in mate selection before is replaced by the right to freely choose a partner of the young generation with the protection of law and social support now. It shows that thinking of middle-aged people and older generations is now more progressive, not very different from the younger generation.

Most of the people who had been asked, also confirmed that children have the right to decide their marriages, but besides that they should also ask the permission of parents, convince their parents agreed with their choice, as well as hear comments from the parents for that choice. This will help avoid conflicts, affecting relationships between family members later.

On mate selection criteria, the younger generation who sets the standard for their choice, the older generation gives the standards for their children, and people who are mainly in middle age learn from the real life experience they have.

In general, the criteria for the wife, most of the comments agreed that there must be ethical, good health, and capable, resourceful, dynamic and fast. In addition, many comments of people living in urban areas also wants his wife to have more standards in appearance, stable job. With her husband, first must have the good moral, stable job, strong and capable as economic pillars of the family, then there must be strong, decisive in work as well in life.

The young people are the large rate in their opinion about mate selection

criteria is. Considering all these criteria are given in all three generations, in both urban and rural, men and women, we can see that there are reasonable and proper points, consistent with modern lifestyle and fact of life today.

2. The concept of marriage

Marriage is an institution with social rituals confirming the relationship between two persons of different sexes, is considered to be husband and wife, it defined the relationship and responsibilities between them, and between they and their children. Therefore, marriage has important spiritual and legal values, it is the recognition of the family, clan, friends, the state government on the coexistence of the men and women, on their rights and responsibilities with each other.

Consider the concept of *marriage age*, the trend data on marriage age showed that there are no significant differences in the concept of generations. Through the survey results, can be seen the average age of first marriage of the wife is 21 years old, the husband is 23 years old. Most rural men agreed that men should marry at the age of 25-26, while women should marry at age 20-22. The opinion of the people in urban areas, the age of marriage are higher.

Overall, the authors assessed, age of marriage for men and women in our country is higher compared to some years ago. It shows quite clear progress in the concept of all generations with the priority period for young people to study, create a career before marriage.

Wedding is an important procedure to start a new family life. So, all generations are unified in the concept of appreciating the meaning of marriage. For middle-aged and older generations, they see it as the completion date of their solemn responsibility to their already-grown children, so the procedure for the wedding is very important because it enhance and reinforce the meaning of the construction of the family. The organization of Vietnam people's wedding now generally retain most of the traditional procedures, including: choosing the date of marriage, propose marriage, betrothal ceremony and appearance ceremony after wedding . Marriage registration is also high appreciated because it fits morals and the rules of the state. But there are still a number of comments, mostly in the younger generation, considered that it is cumbersome, complicated, unnecessary and formalistic procedures.

Marriage contribute to build the sustainability of the family and the couple's happiness. So most of surveyed people appreciate *the significance and value of marriage*, respect marital problems associated with building a happy family.

However, when discussing marital, families issues today, we can not mention the phenomenon that there is not small part of the young people tend to defy the value of marriage and family. That is the phenomenon of trial marriage, living without marriage registration, sex before marriage and outside marriage. General opinion of

most asked people in all three of the generations is that they not agree with these relationship. Those who endorse and support only have very small proportion, mainly concentrated in the younger generation.

3. The concept of organizing family life after marriage

After marriage, the organization of family life is very important. It determines the couple's cozy, good and harmonious relations between tow sides of family. Since then, the love between husband and wife are strengthened more and it is the foundation for a happy family later.

Firstly is *living together with the family or not*. Survey results showed that couples after marriage is still living with their families account for a large proportion (52.8%). Thus the number of families with three generations living together in our country today is quite large. On the one hand, it is the tradition to show solidarity, close, and love in the family, on the other is for the children and parents having conditions to help each other. But the general trend of the young generation is interested in independence, to freedom in their own organizations to a new life. It is the older people who have good health still want to live separately, not dependent on their children. The main reason of people who agree to live separately is for both children and parents being free, having comfortable living and economic independence.

How to *organize the daily life* of the couple is also one of the prerequisites

for family happiness. It includes: the reasonable division of household chores, the determination of the major tasks of the family must have a consensus among the member, using the money appropriately. However, according to obtained survey results, these issues also related to the concept of the role of the head in family is the husband or wife. The Vietnamese think that head of the family is the person with quality, capacity and has contributed more than any other family members. Head of the family, according to the conception of almost asked people in all generations, is usually the men, the husband, although in many cases the wife has more capacity and contribute more . to the family. This demonstrates that the ideology to value men above men still exists in many Vietnam people's perception today. However, survey results also show that emotional factors, the love, attention, respect, equality with each other in family is increasingly evident, and there is also motivation for the family handling these issue appropriately and reasonably. And the right to decide of the head in family is gradually losing unique position.

4. Conception of the relationship between family members

To build a happy family, besides a reasonable organization in life, there is other issue concerning the relationship between parents and children. In this issue, there are many concepts, different perceptions between generations. However, the author only studies some aspects that are the most important,

namely: the concept of the children's role in the family, the number of children in the family, about how to treat boys and girls, about the nurture and education of children.

Survey results showed that most asked people in all three generations agreed that the reason to have children is for survival of the species, thus contributing to strengthening the couple relationship, bring joy and happiness to the family. To address the population growth rate is too fast, the State has encouraged each family has only 1 or 2 children. Thus, most young couples are now having the concept to have only 1 or 2 children in order to raise them in good conditions. However, besides that, many families also want to have more children with all the boys and girls, especially in rural areas. Many of the middle-aged and older generations in both rural and urban areas still support this concept, because they think that the families still have sons to maintain the continuity of the family line. That is the main reason to break plans just having two children of many young couples today, the pressures to have boys make them seek ways and means to try to be born a son leading to gender imbalance in newborn infants within recent years . It is also the reason of the thought that value men above women has declined but still exists in many families of all the current generations.

On the relationship between parents and children and the education of children also have many advances in the concept of all generations. The unity between

parents is a factor that plays an important role in educating children effectively. Before the mistakes of their children, most of the asked people agreed that we should remind the children, analyze for them the right and wrong things, and beating and shouting at them only count a small percentage. Educating children not only to present them docile, obedient to their parents but also provide them with the knowledge to develop their creative independent in thought and action, having their own voices and opinions, dare to protect these opinions if they are the right things. Some families, especially those in the younger generation, also pay attention to sex education for the children to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of this issue, to avoid unfortunate consequences. Besides that, with economic conditions is now more grow as well as the widespread and lack of control of cultural products on the market today, it makes the family the most concern about their children to caught in social evils, especially in urban areas. Therefore, according to the asked people, educating children the awareness of right or wrong, to know to protect themselves is very important.

Contradictions and conflict is inevitable in family life, in both husband and wife, parent and child's relationship. To resolve the contradictions and conflicts in families, most generations have emphasized the self-resolution, making concessions to each other and altruism, self-identify errors and learn from experience when having mistakes. However, in reality, physical and mental

violence still exists in many families when having conflicts usually are the husbands beat wife and children, and the wives nag husband or children. This is also the main causes leading to divorce rates are increasing in Vietnam today.

Based on the above analysis, besides similarities and differences, we can see that the cultural norms, the conception and perception of marriage and family in the Vietnam generations have more changes than ever before. From the actual survey results, the author offers some suggestions for raising awareness about marriage, and family in all generations, helping them have the basic knowledge to build a harmony and happiness family.

Firstly, provide the young with pre-nuptial knowledge. The younger generation has the right to freely choose a partner and decide to marriage. But to be able to do well, they should be provided with the necessary knowledge about the meaning of marriage associating with building a happy family, about selection criteria of each individual partner. Besides, they also need to prepare physically, mentally and psychologically for the step into family life after marriage.

Secondly, harmony between the young's freedom to choose a partner with the consultation of parents, the consent of the parents to go to formal marriage. Harmony, consensus, mutual compromise, get rid of selfishness, self-loving individuals of each party to create a consensus in the family is essential thing for the couple building a happy

family after marriage.

Thirdly, promoting the dissemination of propaganda, to equip the generations with knowledge and skills to organize an equal, prosperity and happy family life, anti-discrimination between son and daughter, against gender inequality in family relationships.

Fourthly, preserve and promote the cultural norms of the Vietnamese traditional family which is fidelity between wife and husband, the children's filial piety to parents, the spirit of solidarity between brothers, relatives. Gradually get rid of the conservative and backward exist in the opinion of many people. Also, combine with the acceptance of progressive ideas of the world to build a cultural family in line with the era of globalization and integration today.

However, to do these, the role of the State and the mass is also important. Firstly is the dissemination and propagation of knowledge about marriage and families through a system of mass media as well as local organizations. Besides that, we need to promote the implementation of policies, state laws relating to marriage and family as the Law on Marriage and Family, Gender Equality Law, Law on Prevention of domestic violence. Along with that, to have general plans for economic growth and development of diversified industries, especially in rural areas, to improve the material life and spiritual life of the family, provide the basis for people with stable jobs and income guaranteed for life.