



"The real victim" drawn by Yujie Xin

Bias and truths behind the single-parent families

Starting from single-parent families, study the exist and influence of family origin on children's future family values

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August 19 2019

Abstract:

This paper aimed to start from single-parent families, study on the exist and influence of family origin on children's future family values.

Background:

In recent years, unmarried young people who have exceeded the average age of marriage in society have shown an increasing trend year by year. It has become a phenomenon in today's society. Based on our observations in daily lives, we found that in some dating programs, single-parent children seem to be less popular and sometimes even be discriminated.

In fact, some people nowadays do list children in single-parent families as an “unusual” group and put some labels on them. The public believes that children in single-parent families become sensitive because of the lack of love, so they do not want to choose their spouse who are from single-parent families. We want to know if there is any bias in our area, so we conducted a random street questionnaire and interview to get first-hand information.

Questionnaire Analysis and Conclusion:

In our first survey report, 58 people responded. As a result, although 66% do not consider the origin family at all, there are still 32% prefer to choose children who are not from single parent family. During the unannounced visits of our team members about the effect on the children from single parent family, we found that although a small number of people gave us feedback that it had no effect, a large part of people still thought that there would be some influence or keep silence and even have no reply on this issue.

- **Willingness for Accepting People from Single-parent Families**

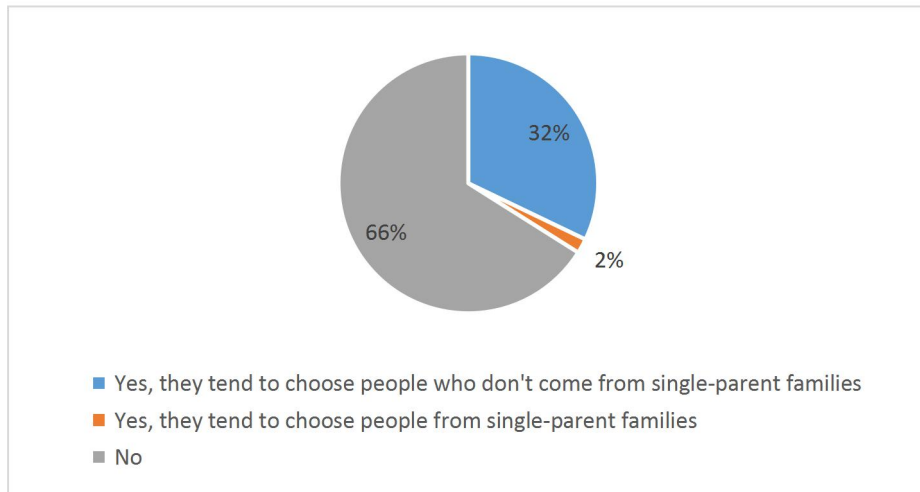


Figure 1: Do you consider this standard in your criteria for choosing a spouse: does the marriage object come from a single-parent family?

• **Acceptance of popular acceptance**

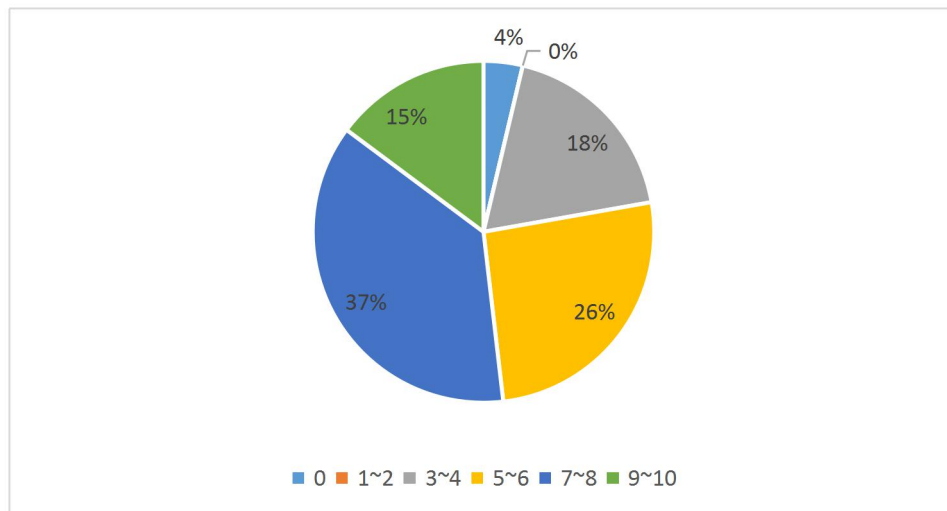
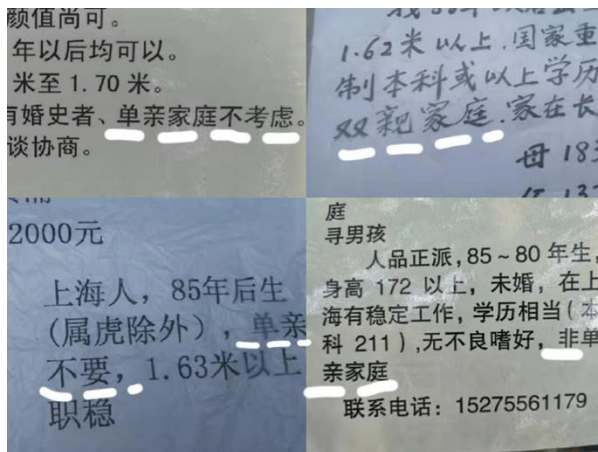


Figure2: the acceptance of children in single-parent families by other people in society (the higher the score, the higher the acceptance)

A total of 232 people of all ages participated in the questionnaire. These include underage 15-22 years old, 33-45 years old who have grown up and married, and 45-55 years old who have married or formed complete family values.

For the public under the age of 22, contrary to older people, most of them do not consider priority in whether he or she is from a single-parent family. When faced with love and marital problems, most people do not discriminate against single parents children. They can rationally think about some weaknesses of single-parent families that are over-generalized.

For the general public over the age of 45, single-parent families are less tolerant of children than other ages . No one tends to choose a single-parent family to marry. Additionally the term first appeared in the first five words used to describe the children of single-parent families. It shows that people over the age of 45 tend to have poor impressions of children from single-parent families.



“ the discrimination of single parent family really exist”

—When we went to the famous dating corner in the “people park” in Shanghai, we found that a lot of spouse requirements wrote clearly that “ no single-parent family.” “I don’t need people from single-parent family.”

Photo by Yujie Xin

Interview Analysis and Conclusion:

• Sensitive? Lack of love? Revealing the Real Face of Children in Single Parent Families

In this survey, we conducted one-hour interviews with different people from three different ages who are from single-parent families. They are Wang (female), 45 years old, who has a 23-year-old son; Jane (female), 31 years old, who is planning to get married, and Tom (male), a 16-year-old high school student. They live in different family environments, their parents had different reasons for divorce, and their parents

divorced in the different ages. The only thing they have in common is that they all come from single-parent families.

Jane's parents divorced after she graduated from primary school. The impression was that they were not very emotional and indifferent to each other, and they choose to break up. In the interview, Jane said that she has never felt sensitive or inferior since she was a child. She also feels that she does not lack the love of her parents. However, Jane also admits that for herself, single-parent families do have some impact. "Because I still spend most of my time with my father, and the lack of a mother's role will make me more mature than my peers. I don't think it's a bad thing for me, but my boyfriend sometimes feel a little bit upset about my over independence and dominance in the relationships."

Tom's parents divorced almost when he was 12 years old. He lived with his grandmother and mother since then. In the interview, he said that he is not sensitive, but has a low EQ. Sometimes he doesn't have the courage. "That's maybe because of the lack of parental permissiveness, I spend most time with female characters at home", but he is more willing to believe that his personality has a lot to do with it. This means that there is no necessary connection between the places of origin.

Wang has entered the marriage hall and her son has just graduated from college. Her father died when she was very young, and her brother and she were raised by her mother. She recalled that when she was a child, she did have some self-abasement caused by single parent. She even needed her mother to accompany her to sleep until she was 13 years old. But as she grew up and faced the age of her marriage, she did not feel any difference. "For me, the experience of later life is more important." In her later marriage, she admitted that she was more cautious about marriage because of the background of her single-parent family, in order to give her children a complete family as much as possible.

We asked that when they told their friends, their lovers that they are from single parent family, did they surprise. The answer are all yes. No one realized it. This suggests that although they may have some differences in characteristics, it does not affect anything at all. At least when they don't say it, it's hard to feel it.

All in all, the common feature of these three families is that although single-parent families may have more or less influence on their personality, the impact is not significant and they can adjust themselves very well. At the same time, they all believe that the public's sympathy, stereotypes and even prejudice towards the children of single-parent families are exaggerated. In fact, maintaining a normal attitude towards them is the greatest respect for them.

• the discrimination against single-parent marriages is just a simple way to avoid family risks

In this questionnaire, we also collected public views on the issue of discrimination against single-parent marriages.

"I think this problem does discriminate against stereotypes, but this situation is slowly disappearing, and the children of single-parent families are also accepted. I personally think that people born in single-parent families need to be loved and protected, but there is no need to treat them differently." From Mrs. Li, the mother of a child.

"My mother has this tendency to discriminate, I personally do not support this view, I think a person's past experience will have a lot of impact on children's life, but will not really affect the essence of this person." From Mr. Qiu, a high school student.

We also found some studies shows that the family structure is not the main factor affecting adolescent mental health. There was a study that Some scholars selected 801 10th grade students from 11 schools as subjects to examine the impact of parental support on family structure, family function and adolescent mental health. As a result, family structure did not effectively predict family function, while parental support is the main factor affecting family function and family view.

That is to say, it is unscientific to simply divide and judge people by "whether he or she is from single-parent family". Then why some people still would like to do that?

"In my view, the discrimination against single-parent marriages is just a simple way to avoid family risks. Although the opinion that children from single-parent family must have problem in their future marriage is just probability event, people

would rather believe it. ” From a respondent in Zhihu (a big Q&A website in China), answering the question that “Why single-parent families are very deductive when they are dating?”

The phenomenon of “avoiding risk” also exist in many other situations. For example, some parents and teachers think that boys are better at mathematics than girls. Though teachers teach students gender equality. And it is also known that not all boys are good at mathematics while not all girls are poor in mathematics, when it comes to their own interests, they begin to believe in this "probability." The public only knows that the easiest way to avoid risk is to not accept children from single-parent families. This is also a "probability" problem.

Reference

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