PSYC 106: INTRODUCTION TO PSYC II

PSYC 208: LIFE-SPAN PSYCHOLOGY

GLOBAL ASSIGNMENT

Love and Marriage:

This assignment explores cultural differences in beliefs about love and marriage. Once you have completed this assignment, you should have a better understanding of the cultural context of your own beliefs about love marriage.

To the Student:

Robert Levine and colleagues (1996) asked college students in 11 cultures (India, Pakistan, Thailand, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, Hong Kong, Republic of the Philippines, Australia, England, and the United States) to complete the questions below. First, answer these questions based on your own beliefs. Then respond to the reaction questions that following order to better understand the cultural influences on your beliefs.

The questions below ask for your thoughts about marriage/making a lifelong commitment.

1. If a man (woman) had all the other qualities you desired, would you marry this person if you were not in love with him (her)?

No\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Yes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain:

1. If love has completely disappeared from a marriage, I think it is probably best for the couple to make a clean break and start new lives.

Agree\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Disagree\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain:

Reactions:

1. Levine and colleagues found that members of individualistic cultures were more likely than members of collectivistic cultures to view love as important in decisions about marriage. In fact, in some collectivistic cultures, intense romantic love is viewed as immature and threatening to the family structure. How might you explain this finding?
2. In a 1967 study of American college students, Kephart reported that 65% of males and 24% of females answered NO to the questions about marrying someone who had the qualities you desired, but with whom you are not in love. No such gender differences were found by Levine and colleagues. Approximately 80% of males and females in the sample of Americans answered NO to the same question. How might you explain the dramatic change in the response of American females between 1967 and 1995? Why do you think the scores of males show increased importance of love over that same period of time?
3. The few valid studies that have compared the marital satisfaction of arranged marriages versus autonomous marriages (“love matches”) have had conflicting results. It is particularly difficult to compare divorce rates since societies vary greatly in terms of the ease with which martial partners, particularly women, can divorce (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005). We do know that there appears to be a global trend away from arranged marriages (Dion & Dion, 2005). Do you think this trend will ultimately be harmful or beneficial to relationships?

Please explain.

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