

# Review of: "Young love in contemporary China: Attitudes and behaviors in romantic relationships"

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This is a well-written and informative article about romantic relationships in contemporary China. Interrogating the relationships between young people is of great significance for scholars and policymakers in this field. At present, China is facing the problem of population ageing and an imbalanced demographic structure. Therefore, the Chinese government is sparing no efforts in encouraging young adults to give birth to (more) children. Recently, the Chinese government abolished the rigid one-child policy, and each couple is allowed to give birth to at most three children. By providing a deeper insight into the love and romantic relationship of young people, this article gives policymakers important information on young adults' attitudes towards love and even marriage, therefore having a potential influence on improving the marriage rate and birth rate in present-day China.

This article portrays the conflicts between the Chinese tradition and Western culture, believing that Confucianism makes Chinese young adults more "conventional" and Western culture makes Chinese youths more open. A weakness of this binary division is that a major ideology (the official ideology) is ignored, which is Marxism. Obviously, the Marxist ideology has some degree of influence on the attitudes and behaviours of Chinese young adults, which is not mentioned in this article. As this paper mentioned in p3, Chinese attitudes towards sexuality have become more liberal since the Cultural Revolution (Liu, 1998). In fact, China started opening up to the Western world in the 1980s, whilst the Cultural Revolution was a time period which marked the peak of Marxist ideology in socialist China. Traditional Chinese culture, as well as Western culture, were both discredited then. Therefore, the liberalisation of attitudes towards sexuality could be attributed to the domination of left-wing ideology (Marxism) in China then. In further research, the authors may discuss the interactions between Confucianism, Marxism, and Western culture as well as their influences on the attitudes and behaviours of young adults in China. Or, alternatively, do you consider Marxism a part of Western culture in a broader way?

This paper identifies the transformation of young people's attitudes and behaviours towards relationships in contemporary China, which makes me think of the individualisation of Chinese citizens. When urban China is entering a postmodern period, the lives of urban Chinese citizens are becoming more and more individualised (Wang, 2021). The findings of this paper echo the individualisation trend of Chinese citizens and reflect a part of the postmodern context of present-day China. The concept of postmodernity is based on a rethinking of modernity. After witnessing some significant changes in societies in the last century, some scholars began to discuss the transformation of modernity. Although there are different preferences concerning the prefix to be used to describe such a change, many sociologists have addressed the changes

in modernity. For example, as an artistic choice, Bauman favours the metaphor 'liquid' instead of the prefix 'post' to describe the new modernity (Davis, 2008). Although Giddens (1991) referred to the new modernity as 'high' or 'late' modernity rather than postmodernity, he too noted some notable changes in society since the last century. As a part of the globalised world, the lives of urban dwellers in China are also highly individualised, including their romantic relationships. East Asian modernity has different characteristics compared to European modernity. In South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, for example, society has become individualised, but these regions still lack individualism (Chang and Song, 2010). Despite the increasing individualisation in East Asia, such changes have not occurred ideally. This phenomenon is also partly reflected in the findings of this article.

This article can be more concise, especially the results and discussions. The authors have already provided many charts, which are clear enough for readers. Therefore, some brief interpretations of these charts would be enough to support readers in fully understanding them. Also, some contents appear to be repetitive. In sum, 10-15 pages would be a more appropriate scale. Moreover, the authors implemented a convenient sampling method by inviting friends to participate in the survey, and WeChat is used to advertise the research. It appears that the social networks of authors have a significant influence on the sample characteristics, therefore have a potential influence on findings and conclusions. It is acceptable, but the authors may need to be more reflexive about this issue as it does have an impact on your findings.

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