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An exploratory study into the perceptions of young Muslim South African adults regarding marriage.

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Abstract

Marriage is an important phenomenon that occurs in most societies across the world. Within the Islamic belief system, marriage is regarded as a sacred union and is obligatory on all Muslim people. This qualitative study explored the perceptions that eight young Muslim South African adults have regarding marriage, using semi-structured interviews. The data was analysed by following a thematic content analysis framework which highlighted aspects such as the extent to which participants ascribed to their religious beliefs regarding marriage, any societal influences that may have shaped their views on marriage as well as the factors they believed lead to the success as well as the breakdown of marriages. From the results, it was evident that young Muslim South African adults had positive views on marriage, and expected to get married at some point in their lives. This was primarily due to their religious Islamic background and family upbringings. Moreover, the results indicated that young Muslim adults are more flexible with regard to engaging in pre-marital romantic relationships, yet continued to hold marriage in high regard. Participants outlined factors such as teamwork from spouses, trust, commitment, understanding, honesty as well as communication between spouses as integral in achieving and maintaining a successful marriage. These perceptions are discussed in relation to findings from other studies. The need for pre-marital programmes for young Muslim adults is highlighted

Key words: Young South African Muslims, Marriage, Marital perceptions, Pre-marital programmes