IN PURSUIT OF PARENTHOOD

Infertility, Assisted Reproductive Technology, and Surrogacy

Edited by Siri Wilder, Sampson Lee Blair and Christina L. Scott

CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES IN FAMILY RESEARCH

VOLUME 35

IN PURSUIT OF PARENTHOOD

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CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES IN FAMILY RESEARCH VOLUME 35

IN PURSUIT OF PARENTHOOD: INFERTILITY, ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY, AND SURROGACY

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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LGBTQ studies, and takes a fresh look at contemporary family realities. In an innovative way, her work considers children as full agents in the construction of knowledge about families created thanks to third-party reproduction. The results of her work provide material, based on empirical data, to inform the social debate about the issues raised by third-party reproduction while also suggesting courses of action to better support the well-being of the people concerned.

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Catarina Rodrigues holds a BSc in Psychology and an MSc in Clinical Psychology from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Porto. Her Master's thesis focused on the psychosocial dimensions of gamete donation, offering a significant empirical and conceptual contribution to the present chapter. She is currently a user experience researcher, applying her background in clinical and health psychology to explore how individuals think, feel, and engage with digital products and services. Her work bridges psychological research and human-centered design, with a focus on creating meaningful, evidence-based user experiences aligned with people's needs and values.

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Reproductive Citizenship: Technologies, Rights and Relationships (2022), published by Palgrave Macmillan.

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FOREWORD

Since the birth of the first "test tube baby" in 1978, the landscape of human reproduction has changed dramatically. Infertility, once viewed as a mostly enigmatic condition, is now recognized as a public, clinical, and commercial concern. Recent advances in assisted reproductive technology (ART), such as the use of artificial intelligence in embryo selection, and the commercialization of surrogacy arrangements, offer life-changing possibilities for individuals facing involuntary childlessness. Progress continues to be made, with ongoing research pioneering a variety of novel reproductive techniques from stem cell therapies promising female fertility restoration to the lab-engineered production of human sperm.

Although often viewed strictly through this medical lens, infertility is as much a psychological experience as it is a clinical diagnosis. The inability to conceive is often accompanied by profound grief and shame, emotions which may be exacerbated by socio-cultural norms and expectations. As a number of countries roll out initiatives designed to combat declining births worldwide, the pressure is especially high on would-be parents. Even with the availability of existing ART techniques, repeated cycles of treatment are often necessary, and success rates vary, creating an environment of uncertainty and trepidation. Further, the use of third-party reproductive assistance brings ethical and legal implications that consumers must grapple with.

The current volume of *Contemporary Perspectives in Family Research* approaches the pursuit of parenthood as a complex and multifaceted experience, with 12 chapters spanning diverse disciplines, societies, and perspectives. The contributions address individual and cultural interpretations of infertility, emphasizing the impact of personal identity, societal expectations and stigmas, and our understanding of "childlessness" within the framework of reproductive decision-making. Chapters also explore the lived experiences of those pursuing ART, drawing from a variety of theoretical perspectives to explore how prospective parents navigate medical and social systems on their journey to parenthood. Additionally, the collection considers the difficult decisions and concerns inherent in surrogacy arrangements from individual, societal, and legal standpoints. Together, the contents comprehensively consider the issues surrounding infertility and offer recommendations for future research, policy interventions, and clinical care.

Beginning with two chapters examining parenthood aspirations across sexual identities, two studies spanning three countries provide a nuanced picture of how personal identity and culture can shape individuals' beliefs and values. In "Endorsement of Traditional Gender Beliefs and Aspirations about Family Formation among Chinese Heterosexual and Sexual Minority International Students," authors Yanbin Barbara Li and Charlotte J. Patterson investigated interrelations between traditional gender role beliefs and preferences for family

formation among a sample of Chinese international students living in the United States. Their analyses of online survey data indicated that while endorsement of traditional gender role beliefs was a robust predictor of parenthood aspirations across all groups, there were systematic differences in the endorsement of these beliefs across genders and sexual identities. The findings also highlight the importance of recognizing intersectional identities within a cross-cultural context.

Doyle P. Tate and Geva Shenkman's "Sexual orientation, parenthood aspirations, and involuntary childlessness in Israel and the U.S.A." examines the intersection of culture, personal identity, and barriers to parenthood. The authors used a large-scale survey methodology to investigate differences in parenthood aspirations across countries and sexualities. Quantitative analyses revealed greater parenthood aspirations among Israelis (vs Americans) and heterosexual individuals (vs sexual minority individuals). However, the experience of involuntary childlessness appeared to exert an overarching influence on parenthood aspirations across sexual identities.

In "The Sociocultural Aspects of Infertility in African Countries: A Scoping Review," Idah Moyo and Limkile Mpofu investigate the socio-cultural dimensions of infertility across Africa's societal contexts. The review analyzes complex associations between individual experiences of infertility and societal perceptions, outlining the ways in which infertility challenges social and familial relationships and identifying sources of support. The chapter provides a comprehensive synthesis of findings across more than 20 years of research, offering valuable information supporting future interventions and health policies for those facing infertility.

Taking a philosophical perspective, Ji-Young Lee's "From Infertility to Childlessness: An Explanatory Framework for Declining Natality" explores the multiple meanings of infertility and childlessness in the context of reproductive decision-making. Focusing on childlessness as an existential dilemma, the author moves beyond concepts of "voluntary" and "involuntary" to consider the multitude of factors that impact reproductive agency. Lee illuminates the divide between internal parenthood aspirations and external realities to provide an insightful explanation for declining natality that considers both biological and social challenges.

Although ART can provide an avenue to parenthood for those struggling with infertility, it may also incur personal costs for women. In "Career is Secondary to Pursuing Motherhood Through Assisted Reproductive Technology: Evidences from India," Seema Lall examines the impact of societal expectations and norms on Indian women's decisions to pursue ART. Through the lens of gender role theory and the theory of planned behavior, the study analyzes the overwhelming pressure of socio-cultural norms prioritizing motherhood, to the detriment of married women's career aspirations. The findings highlight the necessity of policy and workplace reforms to support working women who have chosen motherhood.

Deciding to pursue ART is not the culmination of the path to parenthood, but the beginning of a new journey that is often long, complex, and marked by physical, emotional, and financial challenges. Even when ART is successful, the experience can engender feelings of uncertainty and ambiguity. In "Re-imagining the Embryo: Relational Metaphors in Assisted Reproductive Technology," Catarina Delaunay and Luís Gouveia explore how individuals utilizing in vitro fertilization

(IVF) make sense of and interact with their embryos, creating a concrete relationship in the absence of a tangible presence. Using an inductive approach, the authors conducted a thematic analysis of interviews with IVF beneficiaries to identify five primary relational metaphors that participants used to conceptualize their experience. The chapter carefully considers the implications of these metaphorical frameworks in the context of IVF users' reproductive decision-making.

In some cases, initial attempts at conception through ART are unsuccessful, and would-be parents must attempt alternate treatments to achieve conception; some of which raise questions about biological connectedness and kinship. In two chapters exploring this process, the authors employ a qualitative methodology to highlight the ways in which participants navigate donor-assisted reproduction.

Mariana V. Martins, Catarina Rodrigues, Ana Nogueira, and Maria Emília Costa address the intricacies of deciding to proceed with this treatment in "From Genetic Loss to Parental Hope: Decision-making in Navigating Gamete Donation." Guided by grounded theory, the authors analyzed participant interviews regarding the experience of transitioning from the use of autologous ART to gamete donation. The results reveal several core themes that inform our understanding of third-party reproductive decision-making and promote evidence-based recommendations for healthcare institutions and providers assisting patients in navigating these transitions.

In "Single Mothers' Accounts of Assisted Reproduction, Relationality, and Intimacy in Aotearoa New Zealand," Rhonda M. Shaw focuses on participants' perceptions of donor-assisted reproduction. Analyzing interviews from single mothers who utilized assisted reproductive donation to conceive, Shaw draws on the notion of cold intimacies to explore concepts of connection, relationship negotiation, and kinship networks in the context of donors and donor recipients. Thematic analysis of women's responses exposed several paths to donor selection and diverse preferences regarding relational connectedness, influenced by cultural practices and personal beliefs.

In some cases, third-party reproductive assistance is a last resort for individuals struggling with infertility. Kévin Lavoie, Roxane Guay, and Isabel Côté illuminate the complexities of the process in "Resigning Oneself to Resort to Another Woman to Have a Child: Procreative Trajectories of Canadian Women Who Became Mothers Through Egg Donation or Surrogacy." Drawing from life-course theory, the authors used thematic analysis of participant interviews to identify key experiences in participants' journeys with third-party assisted reproduction. Their findings illustrate a pattern of events, from the initial realization of infertility, through grueling fertility treatments and consideration of alternative reproductive options, to the decision to pursue egg donation and surrogacy, that are shaped by individual parenthood aspirations and societal standards.

Taking a broader perspective, the next two chapters consider the social and legal systems that marginalize both those seeking ART and surrogacy arrangements outside of the traditional family structure and prospective surrogates themselves. Focusing on LGBTQ+ families in the context of Indian culture and legislation, Pooja Kapoor and Shikha Vasishta's "Reproductive Rights, Surrogacy, and Same-Sex Parenthood in India: Redefining Family and Care Labor Dynamics"

explores how nontraditional families navigate assisted reproduction and family caregiving. The authors used a diverse methodological approach, including doctrinal analysis and ethnography, to show how Indian LGBTQ+ families have challenged heteronormative ideals to develop progressive family care systems. The chapter critically analyzes systemic legal discrimination against individuals and families that do not conform to traditional societal norms and offers comprehensive policy recommendations to remedy existing inequity.

Turning to the surrogacy industry in the United States, Hillary L. Berk pulls back the curtain on the commercial framework to reveal concerning practices underlying surrogacy relations in "Harmless 'Preferences'? How the Surrogacy Matching Process Legalizes Discrimination." Taking a socio-legal approach, Berk conducted a qualitative analysis using semi-structured interviews with a variety of actors involved in the surrogacy matching process, including professionals in the field, prospective parents, and surrogates, as well as data from surrogacy matching program websites. Tracing surrogacy matching processes across 14 years, the findings raise questions regarding the institutionalization of personal values and preferences within the field of third-party assisted reproduction.

Individuals and couples may attempt ART or other third-party assisted reproductive assistance but find themselves ultimately turning to another opportunity for growing their family: adoption. Closing out this volume, Sahana Mitra and Valerie O'Brien's "The Lived Experience of Time: Irish and Indian Adoptive Parents in Transition to Parenthood" provides a cross-cultural examination of three key phases in the adoption process. Interviews with adoptive parents in both geographic locations were analyzed using interpretive phenomenological analysis, which generated a series of themes related to participants' subjective perception of time across the pre-adoption, toward-adoption, and post-adoption phases. While some experiences were common across individuals and cultures, such as the awareness of a social and biological clock governing the timing of reproduction and social changes resulting from the arrival of the adopted child, the findings also point to differences associated with gender and social context.

In Pursuit of Parenthood: Infertility, Assisted Reproductive Technology, and Surrogacy provides a multidisciplinary exploration of the ways in which infertility and assisted reproduction are experienced, understood, and negotiated by those confronting them. At a critical moment in the global conversation surrounding the "fertility crisis," this volume provides valuable insight into reproductive decision-making. We thank the authors for their contributions, which draw from a variety of methodologies, theoretical backgrounds, and contexts to advance clinical and public understanding. We also express our gratitude to the members of the editorial board, external reviewers, and Emerald Publishing staff, whose efforts were essential to the publication of this volume.

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CHAPTER 1

ENDORSEMENT OF TRADITIONAL GENDER BELIEFS AND ASPIRATIONS ABOUT FAMILY FORMATION AMONG CHINESE HETEROSEXUAL AND SEXUAL MINORITY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

How are ideas about gender roles associated with young adults' aspirations about family formation? We studied associations between endorsement of traditional gender roles and thoughts about marriage and parenthood among 210 heterosexual and 55 sexual minority Chinese international students who were living in the United States. Results showed that students' endorsement of traditional Chinese gender and fertility roles differed across gender and sexual identity; heterosexual male students endorsed traditional gender and fertility roles more strongly than did other students. Results also showed that stronger endorsement of traditional gender and fertility roles was associated with greater aspirations and intentions regarding parenthood, and with younger

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ideal ages for marriage and parenthood, regardless of students' sexual identities. Students who more strongly endorsed traditional gender roles were more likely than others to envision conceiving a child via sexual relations (vs other methods such as adoption or surrogacy). The more that young men endorsed traditional views about fertility roles, the more likely they were to envision living close to parents after marriage, but the reverse was true for young women. Overall, the results highlighted the associations of traditional beliefs with Chinese young adults' thoughts about family formation.

Keywords: Sexual minorities; gender; parenting; marriage; family formation

INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen a resurgence of traditional gender ideologies regarding the social and fertility roles of women and men across cultural contexts. In China, along with the rapid economic development, traditional gender ideologies have been salient in the lives of young adults. In the United States, although the culture is generally seen as more liberal than that of many other countries (e.g., Fussell, 2014; Zhang & Brym, 2019), traditional gender ideologies and conservatism are still influential (Clark et al., 2024; Thornburg et al., 2024). Specifically, traditional gender ideologies may include beliefs that men should be career-focused and women should be family-focused (Xie & Peng, 2018), as well as the traditional fertility roles, such as that women have a duty to bear children (Brase & Brase, 2012). Through cultural socialization (Brase & Brase, 2012; Eagly, 1987), young adults may come to endorse such traditional beliefs.

Moreover, cultural beliefs are reinforced by institutions and social interactions and ingrained into people's minds over time. As suggested by the Culture Cycle model, cultures are multilayered, interacting, dynamic systems where ideas, institutions, and individuals constantly interact; individuals' specific behaviors may be shaped by factors at the level of the most abstract ideas (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus & Conner, 2014; Markus & Kitayama, 2010). When young adults envision their future lives, beliefs about gender roles may play a role in whether and how they aspire to marriage and parenthood. For those who grow up in a single place, such cultural influences may be clear. However, less is known about how young adults' beliefs about family formation take shape when they live across two different cultural settings. Considering potential culture clashes when people are exposed to diverse cultural influences, the Culture Cycle model highlights the importance of multiple cultural settings on individuals (Hamedani & Markus, 2019). Do young adults who live across cultural settings endorse gender beliefs from one or both cultural settings? How are their beliefs about gender associated with their visions of future family lives? Our study aimed to address these two questions. Specifically, we examined the association between traditional gender beliefs and aspirations about family formation among a group of Chinese international students living in the United States.

Beliefs About Gender in the Chinese Cultural Setting

Traditional Chinese cultural ideologies are usually viewed as patriarchal (Tang, 1995). The most influential cultural ideological system in Chinese culture, Confucianism, endorses gender beliefs such as women's obligations to marry men and give birth to male children who will continue the patrilineal bloodline of the husband's family (Tang, 1995; Wang, 2005). Though Chinese women have the freedom to marry (i.e., Mainland China's marriage law protects the rights of women aged 20 years old and above in marrying any man and getting a divorce as a matter of free will), traditional ideologies around family formation are still promulgated within a patriarchal, heteronormative context (Cheng, 2018; Yeung & Hu, 2016). Moreover, in the Chinese tradition, married couples are expected to choose to live with and care for the husband's but not the wife's parents (Logan et al., 1998; Xu & Xia, 2014).

Furthermore, young adult Chinese women may face the "left-over women" stigma, which denigrates young women who are unmarried when turning 30 years old (Fincher, 2016; To, 2013). The "leftover women" stigma reflects and perpetuates Confucianist norms about women's roles (Tang, 1995). Moreover, recent changes of fertility policy in China also perpetuate Confucianist norms. In 2015, the Chinese government announced the end of the longstanding one-child policy and introduced the two-child policy, allowing a couple to have up to two children, in an effort to alleviate declining birth rates (Macrotrends, 2025). The "three-child policy" allows a couple to have up to three children, and was announced by the Chinese government in 2021 (Xinhua, 2021). Such laws and policies may reinforce cultural ideas and also influence individuals' ideas and behaviors (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 2010). However, in the years since the two-child and three-child policy, the birth rate has been in greater decline in China; for example, recent data showed that the current birth rate for China showed a 1.6% decline compared to the previous year (Macrotrends, 2025). Nonetheless, concerning individuals' family formation choices, the three-child policy (Xinhua, 2021) may perpetuate traditional ideologies about gender and influence individuals' choices.

Young adults' endorsement of traditional gender beliefs may also vary as a function of gender and/or sexual identity. As significant progress in promoting gender equality has been made in mainland China in the past decades (Yang, 2020), young adult Chinese women may endorse fewer traditional gender beliefs than their male peers. For example, a recent study on 528 college students in China found that, compared with their male counterparts, female college students viewed having children as less important and were more concerned about the negative effects of parenthood on their careers and personal lives (Xu et al., 2023). This finding was consistent with a so-called "sexuality and gender gap" in liberalism, as sexual minority and female individuals tend to be more liberal than others (e.g., Denise, 2017; Worthen, 2020). In addition, although tolerance toward gay men, lesbians, and members of other sexual minority groups in China has improved, they continue to face prejudice and discrimination (Wang et al., 2019, 2020). Considering the minority stress as a result of prejudice and discrimination in the homeland, members of sexual minorities may aspire to migrate and

live in a more liberal cultural context (e.g., Kam, 2020), and this may be related to their beliefs and aspirations about fertility.

Beliefs About Gender in the United States

As opposed to collectivism being highly valued in the Chinese cultural setting (Tang, 1995; Wang, 2005), individualism is highly valued in the United States (Triandis, 2018). In the Global Gender Gap Index, the United States was ranked 43 out of 146 countries in terms of its liberal policies, whereas China was ranked at 104 (World Population Review, 2024). Thus, some young adults in China may be attracted by the more liberal atmosphere in the United States and aspire to pursue their education and career in the United States.

There has, however, been a resurgence of conservative ideologies in the United States in recent years. For example, the protection of abortion rights was overturned by the US Supreme Court in 2022 (Clark et al., 2024). From the perspective of the Culture Cycle theory (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 2010), such returns to conservative ideas and policies on the institutional level may be related to and indeed may perpetuate traditional, conservative gender beliefs about fertility roles (on the cultural level) in the United States. Moreover, traditional beliefs regarding women's childbearing might be prevalent among individuals identifying with certain religions or holding more conservative ideologies (e.g., Mikołajczak & Pietrzak, 2014). For example, one study on 340 female students from a private Evangelical university in the United States found that more hierarchical biblical beliefs were associated with more traditional gender role ideologies (Eliason et al., 2017).

The Chinese and United States cultural settings are different in terms of collectivistic versus individualistic ideologies (e.g., Triandis, 2018); however, they may share some similarities in terms of recent resurgence of traditional gender beliefs. As Chinese international students are living across the Chinese and the United States cultural settings, they might endorse traditional gender beliefs from one or both of the settings after being exposed to both cultural socialization patterns (Brase & Brase, 2012; Eagly, 1987). Moreover, pursuing educational opportunities in the United States may reflect some of these students' endorsement of liberal beliefs, with their hope to live a life away from conservative, patriarchal constraints in China (e.g., Martin, 2021). The dynamics between individuals and cultural ideas (e.g., Markus & Conner, 2014) may be embodied in these students' choices of going abroad to live a freer life in a cultural context that fits better with their beliefs.

Traditional Gender Beliefs and Family Formation

As suggested by the Culture Cycle framework (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus & Conner, 2014), cultures provide frameworks for and shape individuals' thinking and acting through interactions with institutions and norms. Living in specific cultural contexts, individuals may endorse locally prevalent cultural beliefs about the social roles of men versus women. Through the socialization of cultural norms or ideologies, individuals may develop beliefs in traditional gender roles,

such as beliefs in the duty of women to bear children (Brase & Brase, 2012; Eagly, 1987). Furthermore, individuals' gender beliefs may be linked to their choices about family formation.

Culture is a dynamic system that changes over time (e.g., Cohen & Kitayama, 2020). In recent years, norms about family formation have been changing in China. Young Chinese people have been increasingly influenced by Western ideologies, including individualism and liberal ideologies (Davis, 2014; Yeung & Hu, 2016). Consistent with this view, the average age of first marriage has increased among Chinese women, from 24 years of age in 2010 to almost 28 years of age in 2020; and, among Chinese men, from almost 26 years of age in 2010 to 29 years of age in 2020 (Xinhuanet, 2022).

Previous research has found associations between traditional ideologies and individuals' choices of family formation in both China and the United States. Specifically, in China, traditional Confucian values are associated with individuals' reproductive behaviors (e.g., Tang, 1995). For instance, a study on Chinese college women found that pronatalist attitudes and gender roles attitudes were associated with young women's aspirations regarding marriage and fertility (Blair & Madigan, 2021). Another study using the data from the Chinese General Social Survey found a positive association between religious faith and fertility preference (Xie & Zhou, 2022). In addition, Chinese young adult international students who endorsed the importance of filial piety have also been found to be more likely to envision China as the ideal place to live with their future families (Li & Patterson, 2022).

The association between traditional ideologies and whether and how individuals choose to form families has been demonstrated in studies conducted in the United States as well. In the United States, one study using data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth found that women who described religion as important to them had higher fertility and higher intended fertility than did others (Hayford & Morgan, 2008). A Canadian study found that young adults who endorse individualistic values tend to value educational opportunities more highly, and to prefer to enter marriage and parenthood at later ages (Erfani & Beaujot, 2006).

Like their heterosexual peers, many sexual minority individuals express aspirations for parenthood (e.g., Tate & Patterson, 2019; Tate et al., 2019). In recent decades, assisted reproductive technology has provided many sexual minority individuals with pathways to parenthood such as donor insemination and surrogacy (e.g., Patterson, 2019; Yao et al., 2023). Moreover, the association between traditional ideologies and family formation has been found among sexual minority individuals across Chinese and US cultural settings. For example, Wang and Zheng (2021) found that young adult Chinese lesbian women's and gay men's endorsement of traditional cultural values was associated with their desires to become parents. Moreover, in the United States, one study using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health found that religiosity mediated the effect of sexual orientation on parenting intentions (Tate et al., 2019). However, less is known about how specific gender beliefs that Chinese

sexual minority international students hold might be associated with their visions of family formation.

Present Study

In this study, we explored associations between traditional gender beliefs (i.e., endorsement of traditional gender and fertility roles) and aspirations about family formation among heterosexual and sexual minority Chinese international students in the United States.

We expected that female students would endorse traditional gender beliefs less strongly than did their male peers; we also expected that sexual minority students would report fewer traditional gender beliefs than their heterosexual peers. We also hypothesized that Chinese students' ideas about family formation would be associated with their endorsement of traditional gender beliefs. Specifically, we hypothesized that greater endorsement of traditional gender beliefs would be associated with earlier ideal ages of marriage and parenthood. Regarding pathways to parenthood, we hypothesized that heterosexual and sexual minority students' stronger endorsement of traditional gender beliefs would be associated with a higher likelihood of envisioning a traditional pathway to parenthood (i.e., conceiving children via sexual relations with an opposite-sex partner).

We also expected that stronger endorsement of traditional gender beliefs would be associated with a higher likelihood of viewing China as an ideal place to live, and a higher expectation of returning to China after completing school and living with or near the husband's parents in the future.

METHOD

Participants

From July 2019 to January 2020, 265 Chinese international students living in the United States, with an average age of 23.03 years ($SD = 3.39$) participated in an online survey through Qualtrics. Among the participants, 210 self-identified as heterosexual ($M_{age} = 23.09$ years, $SD = 3.37$; 58 male and 152 female) and 55 as sexual minorities ($M_{age} = 22.84$ years, $SD = 3.51$; 16 male and 39 female). Among the 55 sexual minority participants, 14 self-identified as gay ($M_{age} = 23.30$ years, $SD = 3.95$; 14 male), 10 as lesbian ($M_{age} = 25.29$ years, $SD = 2.70$; 10 female), 27 as bisexual ($M_{age} = 21.41$ years, $SD = 2.59$; 2 male and 25 female), and 4 as pansexual ($M_{age} = 22.75$ years, $SD = 6.18$; 4 female). All 265 participants self-identified as cisgender. To avoid very small cell sizes, we combined lesbian, gay, bisexual, and pansexual students into male and female sexual minority students. However, it should be noted that combining these groups poses a risk of overlooking particular concerns of each specific group.

Participants described themselves as coming from many different parts of China, including 30 different provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities, or special districts. They further described themselves as studying in 60 different colleges or universities across the United States.

Survey Procedure

Recruitment

Recruitment methods included advertisements for the proposed study via email, social media, and websites. The advertisement provided a brief description of the study, a website link, and a QR code that linked to the online survey, as well as contact information for the researchers. Through the website link and QR code, participants who were interested in the study were directed to an online survey on the Qualtrics portal.

Online Survey

Participants chose whether to complete the survey in English or in simplified Chinese. The simplified Chinese version contained scales in Chinese that had been used and validated in previous studies at the time of the survey, and also scales that did not have an established version in Chinese. In these latter cases, translation and back-translation were employed in creating a Chinese version (Behr & Shishido, 2016). Specifically, one research team member who was a graduate student in psychology and was fluent in both English and Chinese translated the scale from English to Chinese. Another research team member who was an undergraduate psychology major and also fluent in English and Chinese did the back-translation to ensure accuracy. Further, one undergraduate student and one school psychologist, both fluent in English and Chinese, helped with checking and proofreading the translation.

The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board for Social & Behavioral Sciences at our university. Incentives involved an optional lottery drawing for 1 of 43 $30 Amazon.com eGift Cards. If they wished to enter the lottery, participants typed in their email addresses after finishing the online survey. This study was funded by a small research grant from the University of Virginia.

A total of 272 participants completed the survey with valid responses. Seven participants identified themselves as transgender or non-cisgender; since this group was too small to allow analysis, their data were dropped from further analysis. Thus, the final sample included 265 participants. Among those who self-identified as heterosexual, 158 participants chose to take the survey in Chinese and 52 in English. Among those self-identified as members of sexual minorities, 36 completed the survey in Chinese and 19 in English. Heterosexual and sexual minority participants did not differ significantly in taking the Chinese or English version of the survey ($\chi^2(1) = 2.13$, ns).

Measures

Demographic Information

In the context of the survey, we collected demographic information about participants' age, sexual identity, gender identity, course of study, years of study in the United States, place of residence in China, family income, religion, and romantic relationship status.

Plans About Family Formation

Parenting aspirations. We assessed both parenting desires and intentions. Parenting desire was assessed by an item adapted from Costa and Bidell's study (2017), "I would like to [i.e., desire to or want to] have children in the future." Participants responded using a 7-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree 7 = Strongly Agree). Parenting intention was assessed by one item, "I have a real intention [i.e., I plan or am going to plan] to have children in the future," also adapted from Costa et al.'s study (2017). Participants responded using a 7-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree 7 = Strongly Agree). In Costa et al.'s (2017) study, information about the reliability or validity of these two items was not provided. For the two items in this study, Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$.

Pathways to parenthood. Participants were asked to respond to one item, "If you would like to have children, which pathway would you take into consideration the most?" Participants chose one of the following options: (1) conceiving children via sexual relations with an opposite-sex partner; (2) adoption; (3) surrogacy; (4) other assisted reproduction techniques or other pathways; (5) not sure/don't know. In the logistic regression analysis, pathways to parenthood were categorized into two groups: traditional pathway (i.e., conceiving children via sexual relations with an opposite-sex partner) versus nontraditional pathway (i.e., all other methods).

Ideal age for marriage. Participants answered two items: "Approximately what age (in years) do you think would be the ideal time for you to get married to an opposite-sex person (or, for the other question, same-sex person)?" The only difference between these two items is that the person to marry is either opposite-sex or same-sex. Sexual minority students were asked to respond to both items. Heterosexual participants only responded to the question about opposite-sex marriage. Participants were asked to respond by writing an age in years. Most sexual minority participants who gave answers to both of the two questions gave the same answers to the two questions. Five participants who identified as members of sexual minorities answered these two questions with different answers; in these cases, we averaged the two numbers.

Ideal age of becoming a parent. Participants reported the ideal age of becoming a parent, on one item, "Approximately what age (in years) do you think would be the ideal time for you to have a child/children?" Participants were asked to respond by writing an age in years. The context of parenthood was not specified in this item, so participants could consider the ideal age for parenthood in the context of same-sex or opposite-sex marriage or other situations, as they preferred.

Ideal place to live after marriage. Participants answered one question about places that they would like to live in the future after marriage: "If you would like to get married, where would you want your family (with your partner/and your child/children) to live?" Options were "China," "The United States," "Other regions where same-sex marriage is legal," "Other regions where same-sex marriage is not legal yet," "Not Sure/Don't Know," "Not Applicable." Responses were coded into two categories: "China or other regions where same-sex marriage is not legal yet" and "The United States or other regions where same-sex marriage is legal." Those who answered "Not Sure/Don't Know" or "Not Applicable"