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CAN OF WORMS: SIXTH TOPICAL – “DOES MARRIAGE MATTER ANYMORE” RESULTS SUMMARY

In advance of the next episode of the new TV show “Can Of Worms” going to air, Roy Morgan Research conducted the sixth of 10 “Topical Polls”. The survey was conducted by telephone amongst a nationally representative sample of 543 Australians aged 14 years and over on July 27, 2011.

The topic covered in this sixth poll was **“Does marriage matter anymore?”**

A detailed analysis of results for this ‘Topical Worm’ is presented below. Various sub-group analyses have been provided, however for some (such as religion and ethnicity) sample sizes are very small for some groups, and results should be treated with caution.

Detailed Findings

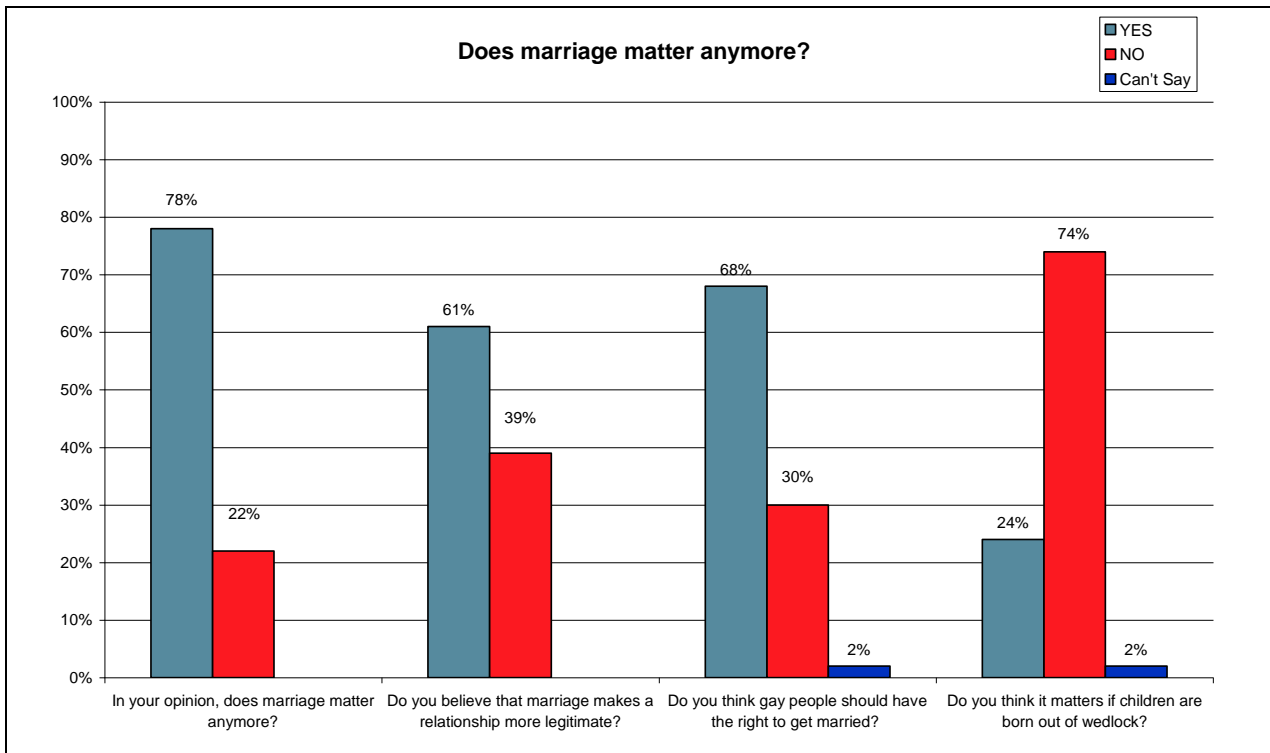
Respondents were asked:

1. *“In your opinion, does marriage matter anymore?”*
2. *“Do you believe that marriage makes a relationship more legitimate?”*
3. *“Do you think gay people should have the right to get married?”*
4. *“Do you think it matters if children are born out of wedlock?”*
5. *“Which of the following best describes your views on marriage? Would you say...[Getting married is something you should never do / Getting married is something you should only ever do once / Getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right]?”*

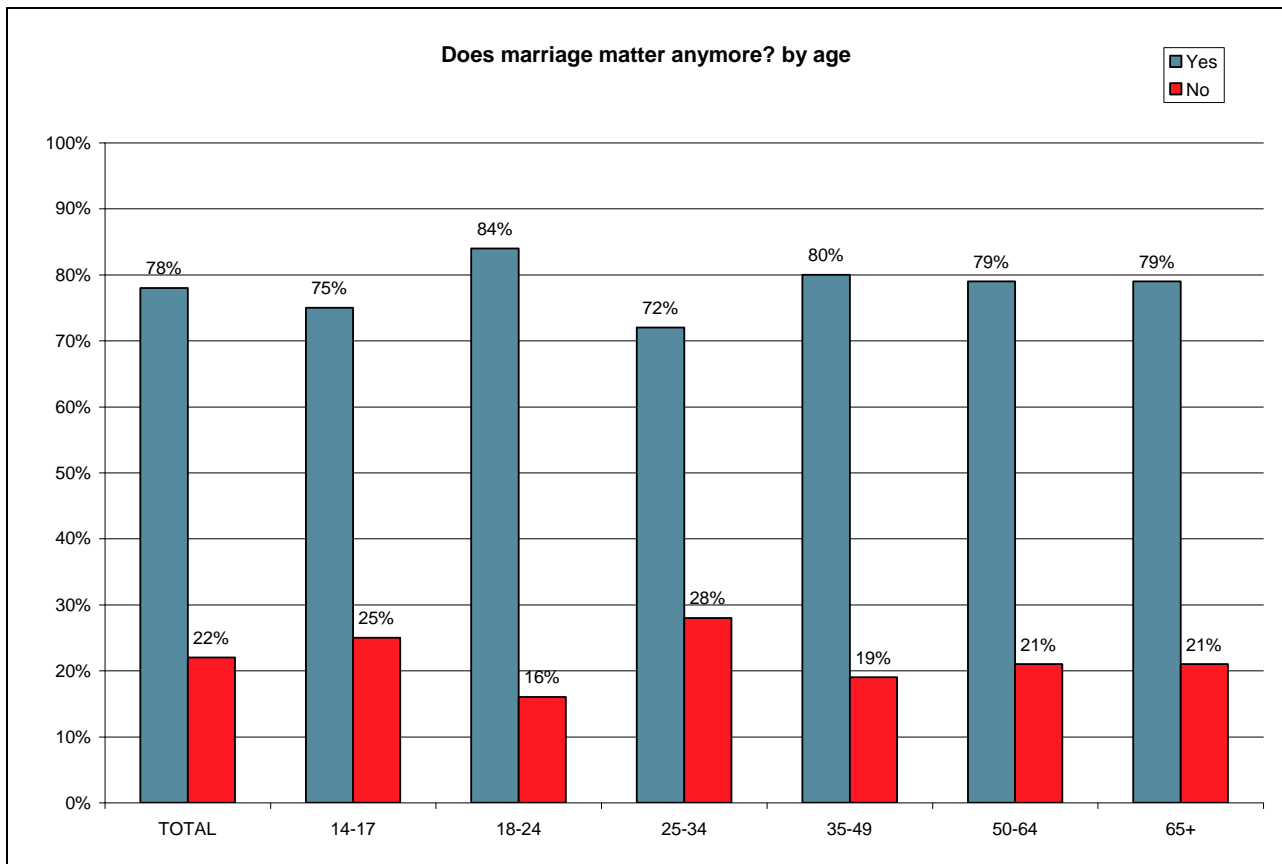
The majority (78%) of Australians think marriage still matters, just over a fifth (22%) think marriage does not matter anymore. Around three-in-five (61%) believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, 39% think it does not.

The majority of people (68%) also think gay people should have the right to get married, but 30% think they should not, and 2% are undecided. Just under a quarter (24%) of people think it matters if children are born out of wedlock, but the vast majority (74%) of Australians don’t think it matters, and 2% are undecided

When asked which of three statements best described their views on marriage, over half (58%) said “getting married is something you should only ever do once”, but just over a third (34%) said “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”. Just 4% said “getting married is something you should never do”. Four percent were unable to say.



The majority (78%) of Australians think marriage still matters, just over a fifth (22%) think marriage does not matter anymore. There was no difference in opinion between the sexes on this issue – 78% of both men and women said marriage still matters. Analysis by age revealed some interesting results – those aged 25-34 were least likely to think marriage still matters (72%), but those aged 18-24 were most likely to think marriage still matters (84%).



Those living in capital cities were more likely than those in country areas to think marriage still matters (80% cf 75%). Those in NSW were most likely to think marriage still matters (83%) followed by Western Australians (81%), South Australians (77%), Queenslanders (76%). Tasmanians (74%) and Victorians (73%) were least likely to think marriage still matters.

Parents with children at home (81%) were more likely than parents whose children were out of home and those who were not parents to think marriage still matters (both 77%).

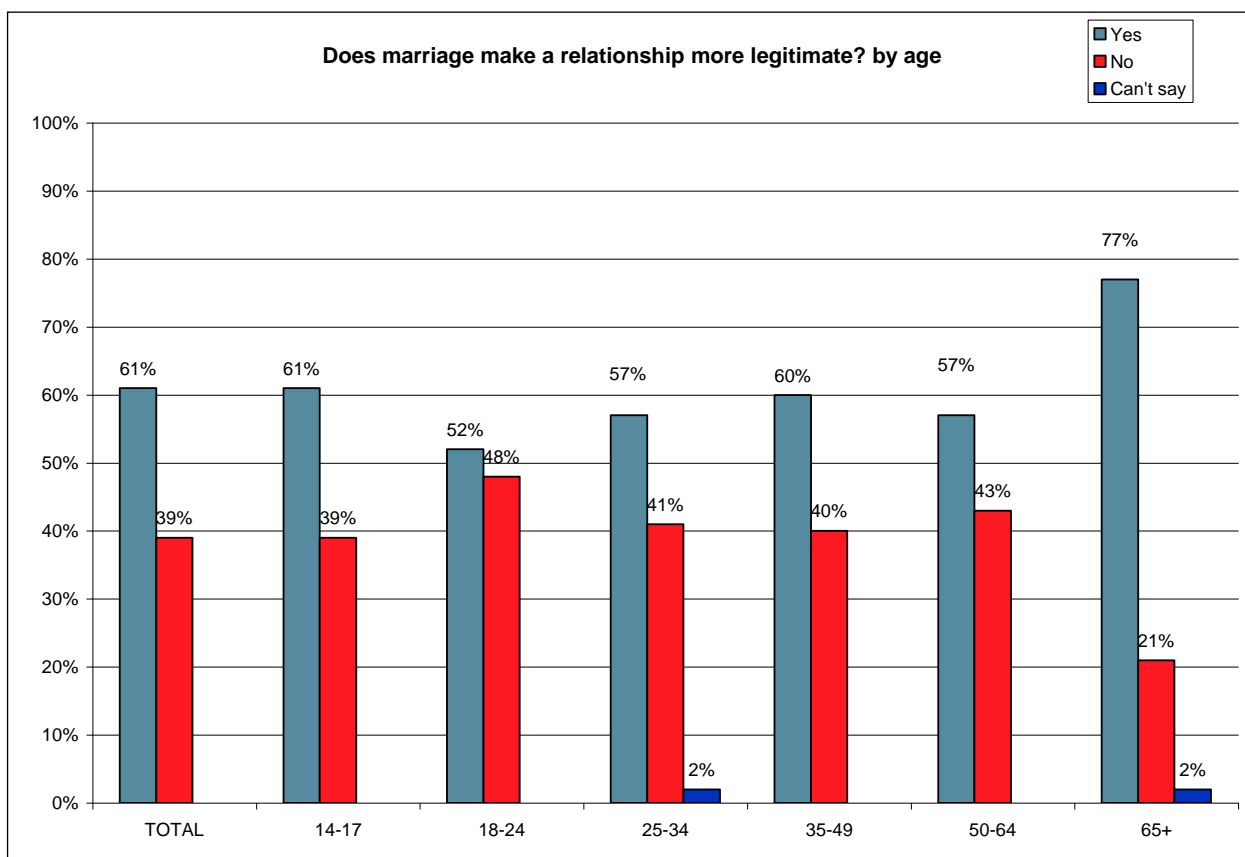
Eighty eight percent of married people, 84% of those who are engaged or planning to marry, 76% of those who are widowed, and 74% of those who are single think marriage still matters. The same was true for only 65% of those who are divorced and 34% of those who are currently separated. People currently living in de facto relationships were least likely to think marriage still matters (31%).

Due to small sample sizes, analysis by ethnic/cultural background should be treated with caution as data is not robust enough to be reliable: Eighty seven percent of those of Asian background think marriage still matters, as did 82% of those of European extraction, 80% of English/Anglo/Celtic background and 76% of those who considered they had no other cultural or ethnic background other than Australian. All of those surveyed from Arabic/Middle Eastern extraction (n = 5) and those of Indian background (n = 6) thought marriage still matters.

Those who considered themselves to be “Very Traditional” were far more likely than those who considered themselves to be “Very Progressive” to think marriage still matters (80% cf 75%).

Due to small sample sizes, data for minority religions should be treated with caution as it is not robust enough to be reliable: Those not of a religious faith were less likely than other groups to think marriage still matters (72%). Those of other Christian denominations (89%) were more likely than and Catholics (83%) and Anglicans (80%) to think marriage still matted. All of the Muslims surveyed (n = 3) thought marriage still matters.

Around three-in-five (61%) believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, 39% think it does not. Men (65%) were more likely than women (56%) to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. Analysis by age revealed those aged 65+ were most likely to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate (77%), those aged 18-24 least likely (52%).



There was a slight difference in opinion between those living in capital cities and those in country areas - 62% of those living in capital cities said they believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, compared with 59% of those in country areas. Queenslanders (63%), those in NSW (62%) and Western Australians (61%) were more likely than those in other States to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. Victorians (59%) and South Australians (58%) were less likely than the national average to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. Tasmanians (39%) were by far least likely to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate.

Sixty five percent of parents whose children had left home said they believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, as did 60% of those who weren't parents and 57% of parents with children still at home.

Those who are planning to marry/engaged (74%) were more likely than those who are currently married (70%), and those who are widowed (63%) to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. Just over half (53%) of those who are single, and 48% of those who are divorced believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. People currently living in de facto relationships were least likely to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate (19%).

Eighty percent of those of Asian heritage believed marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, as did 65% of those of European extraction and 60% of those who considered they had no other cultural or ethnic background other than Australian, and 60% of those of English/Anglo/Celtic background.

Those who considered themselves to be "Very Traditional" were more than twice as likely as those who considered themselves to be "Very Progressive" to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate (81% cf 39%).

Due to small sample sizes, data for minority religions should be treated with caution as it is not robust enough to be reliable: Those of other Christian denominations (77%) were more likely than Anglicans (71%) and Catholics (62%) to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. All of the Muslims surveyed (n = 3) believed marriage makes a relationship more legitimate. Those not of a religious faith were less likely than all other groups to believe marriage makes a relationship more legitimate (44%).

Seven-in-ten (70%) of those who thought marriage still mattered also believed marriage makes a relationship more legitimate, as did 26% of those who thought marriage doesn't matter anymore.

The majority of people (68%) think gay people should have the right to get married, but 30% think they should not, and 2% are undecided.

Women (75%) were more likely than men (60%) to think gay people should have the right to get married. Analysis by age revealed that the acceptability of gay marriage decreases with age - 79% of those aged 14-24 thought gay people should have the right to get married, compared with 71% of those aged 25-34, 69% of those aged 35-49, 67% of those aged 50-64 and just over half (52%) of those aged 65+.

There was a difference in opinion between those living in capital cities and those in country areas - 70% of those living in capital cities think gay people should have the right to get married, compared with 65% of those in country areas. Victorians (76%), South Australians (73%) and Western Australians (67%) were most likely to think gay people should have the right to get married, followed by Tasmanians (66%), those in NSW (64%), with Queenslanders (62%) least likely to think gay people should have the right to get married.

Those who were not parents were more likely than parents with children at home, and parents whose children were out of home, to think gay people should have the right to get married (75%, compared with 71% and 56% respectively). Those who are married / de facto were less likely than those who were not (widowed/separated/divorced/engaged/single) to think gay people should have the right to get married (66% cf 71%).

Those of English/Anglo/Celtic background were more likely than those of European extraction and those who considered they had no other cultural or ethnic background other than Australian or to think gay people should have the right to get married (75% compared with 70% and 66% respectively).

Those who considered themselves to be “Very Progressive” were more than twice as likely as those who considered themselves to be “Very Traditional” to think gay people should have the right to get married (88% cf 38%).

Those not of a religious faith were more likely than all other groups to think gay people should have the right to get married (80%) – 74% of Catholics, 68% of Anglicans and 51% of those of other Christian denominations thought gay people should have the right to get married.

While 82% of those who thought marriage does not make a relationship more legitimate thought gay people should have the right to get married, the same was true for only 60% of those who thought marriage did make a relationship more legitimate.

Just under a quarter (24%) of people think it matters if children are born out of wedlock, but the vast majority (74%) of Australians don't think it matters, and 2% are undecided

Men (26%) were more likely than women (22%) to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock. Analysis by age showed those aged 65+ were far more likely than all other age groups to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock - 39% of those aged 65+ thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock, compared with 18% of those aged 50-64, the same proportion (18%) of those aged 35-49, 23% of those aged 25-34 and 26% of those aged 14-24.

Twenty six percent of those living in capital cities think it matters if children are born out of wedlock compared with 20% of those in country areas. South Australians (41%) and Queenslanders (29%) were most likely to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock. Twenty three percent of Western Australians, and the same proportion (23%) of those in NSW thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock, as did just 17% of Tasmanians and Victorians.

Twenty nine percent of those who weren't parents and 26% of parents whose children had left home thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock, compared with just 18% of parents with children still at home. Married people were significantly more likely than those in de facto relationships to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock (23% compared to just 1%).

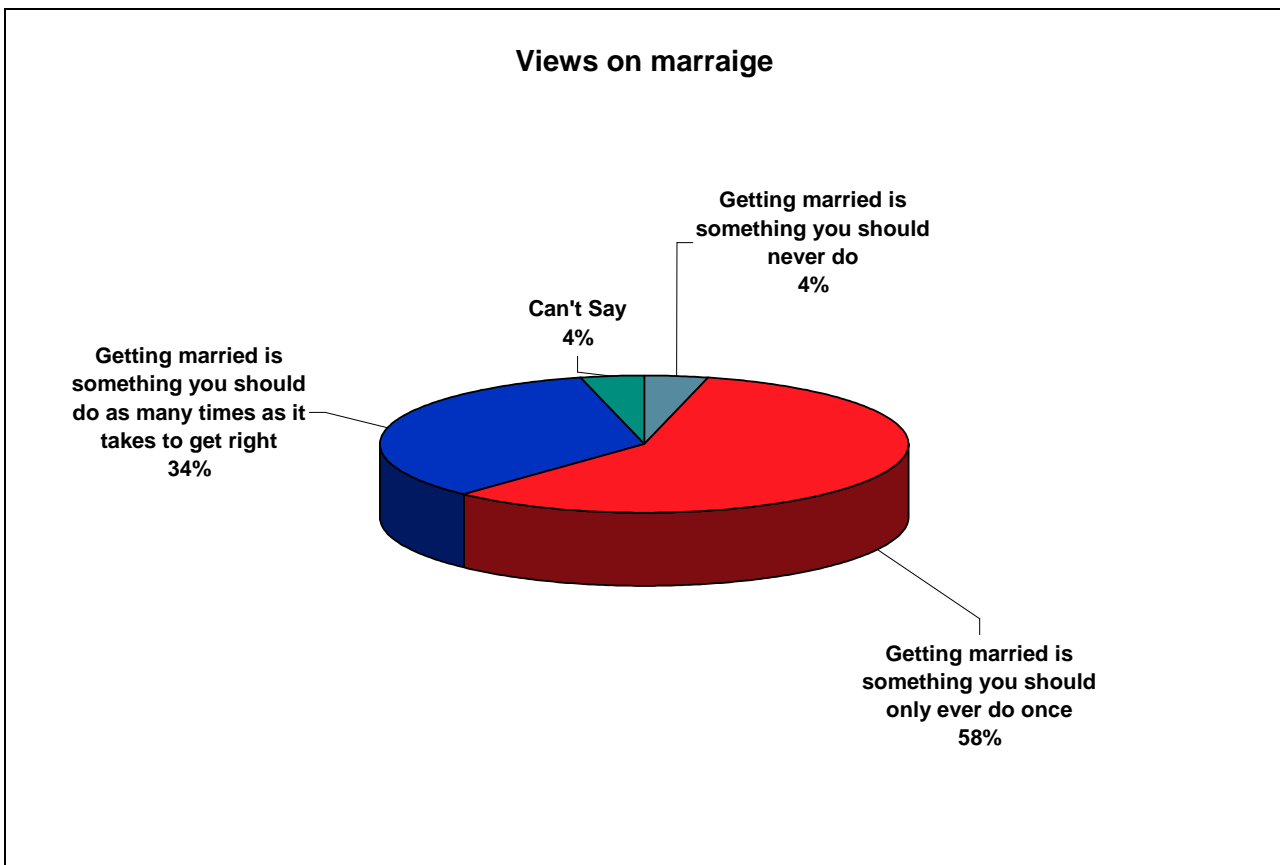
Due to small sample sizes, analysis by ethnic/cultural background should be treated with caution as data is not robust enough to be reliable: Those of English/Anglo/Celtic background were more likely than those of European extraction and those who considered they had no other cultural or ethnic background other than Australian or to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock (29% compared with 23% and 21% respectively). None of those surveyed from Polynesian backgrounds (n = 4) or Indian background (n = 6) thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock.

Those who considered themselves to be “Very Traditional” were around three times as likely as those who considered themselves to be “Very Progressive” to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock (47% and 15% respectively).

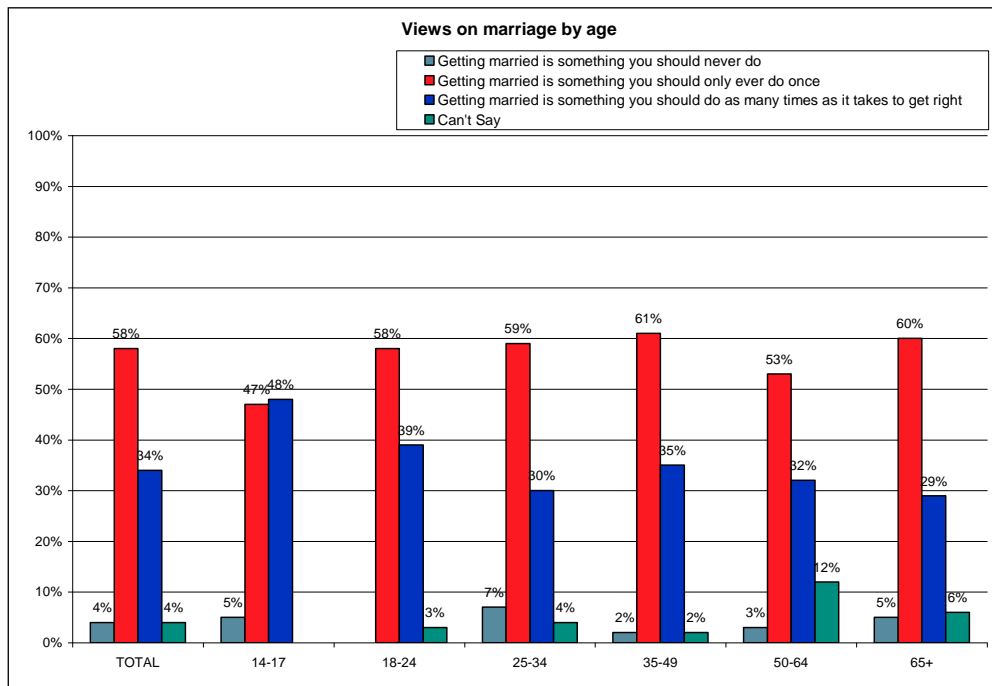
Those of other Christian denominations (36%) were more likely than Catholics (27%) and Anglicans (26%) to think it matters if children are born out of wedlock. Only 11% of those not of a religious faith thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock

While 32% of those who thought marriage makes a relationship more legitimate thought it mattered if children were born out of wedlock, the same was true for only 11% of those who thought marriage did not make a relationship more legitimate.

When asked which of three statements best described their views on marriage, over half (58%) said “getting married is something you should only ever do once”, but just over a third (34%) said “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”. Just 4% said “getting married is something you should never do”. Four percent were unable to say.



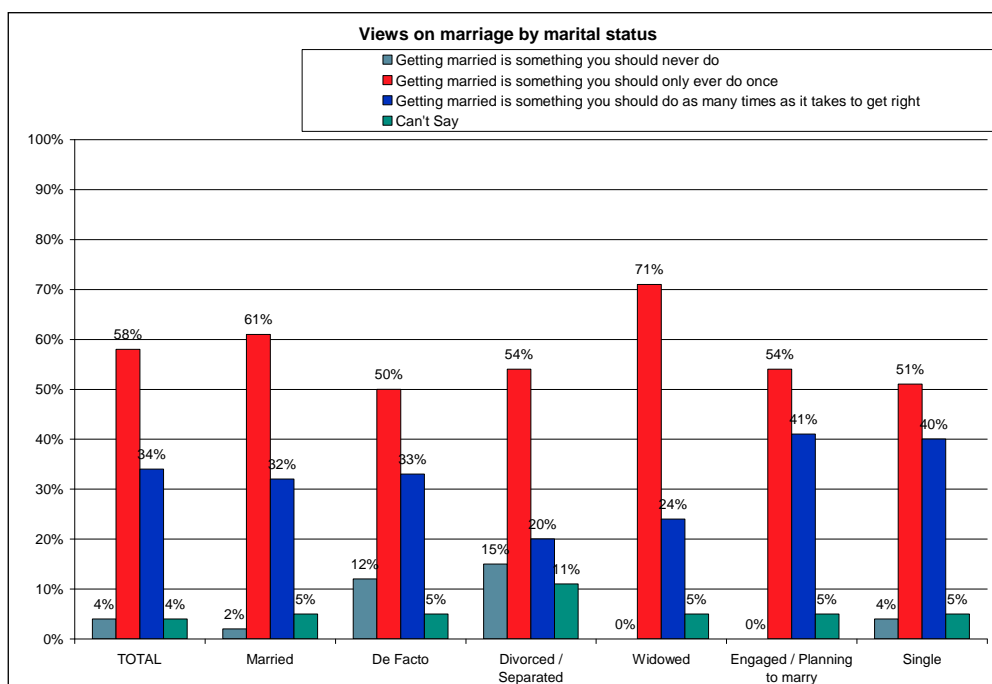
Men (60%) were more likely than women (56%) to say “getting married is something you should only ever do once”, while women were more likely than men to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” (36% cf 31%). Younger people were more likely than older people to think “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” – 48% of those aged 14-17 and 39% of those aged 18-24 thought “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”, compared with 30% of those aged 25-34, 35% of those aged 35-49, 32% of those aged 50-64 and 29% of those aged 65+.



Those living in capital cities (34%) were slightly more likely than those living in country areas (32%) to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”. Victorians (42%), were most likely to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”, South Australians least likely (19%).

Those who were not parents were more likely than parents with children at home, and parents whose children were out of home, to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” (37%, compared with 34% and 29% respectively).

Those who were widowed were more likely than other groups to think “getting married is something you should only ever do once” (71%), while those who were divorced/separated were more likely than other groups to think “getting married is something you should never do” (15%) and singles and those who were engaged / planning to marry were more likely than other groups to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” (40% and 41% respectively).



Those of English/Anglo/Celtic background were more likely than those of European extraction and those who considered they had no other cultural or ethnic background other than Australian or to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” (40% compared with 36% and 33% respectively).

Those who considered themselves to be “Very Progressive” were more likely than those who considered themselves to be “Very Traditional” to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right” (42% cf 23%).

Anglicans (38%) were more likely than those of other Christian denominations (34%) and Catholics (29%) to say “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”. Thirty six percent of those not of a religious faith said “getting married is something you should do as many times as it takes to get right”.

Cross tabulated data has been provided separately as an addendum to this report.