



Culture: Human Relationships

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Culture & marriage



Worked Example

Here is an example of a **Paper 3 source** and 15–mark ERQ using **motivation** (HL extension) in the **Human Relationships** context:

Source 5

The following study is cross-cultural investigation into how informal 'rules' may be the key to relationships not only surviving but thriving

Aim: To investigate the rules governing relationships (for friendships and for romantic relationships) in four different countries.

Participants:

- Three groups of 60 participants
- The groups were organised according to age (30 participants aged 18–25 years; 30 participants aged 30–60 years)
- The participants came from the UK, Italy, Hong Kong and Japan

Procedure:

- The researchers presented the participants with 33 'rules' which were considered to apply to all relationships (platonic and romantic) and an additional 12 rules specific to romantic relationships
- The participants were asked to rate the importance of each rule to encouraging a successful, long-lasting relationship

Results: The participants' responses resulted in specific rules being chosen as the most important, some of which were:

- Each partner in the relationship must be addressed by their first name (this was seen as essential in all 22 relationships)
- Each partner should not criticise their partner in public
- Each partner should not discuss confidential matters with anyone else
- Each (romantic) partner should not have intimate relations, i.e., sex, with anyone else
- Each partner should repay debts/favours and compliment their partner
- Each partner should respect the other partner's privacy
- Japanese participants showed the most difference in scores compared to the other three countries:
 - they had stricter rules about relationships with work colleagues
 - they rated intimacy and emotional expressiveness in romantic relationships lower than the other countries
- The participants from Japan and Hong Kong were more likely than those in Britain or Italy to approve of rules involving obeying superiors and preserving group

harmony

Conclusion: There appears to be some agreement as to what constitutes a general set of rules for all types of relationships, although there is some cultural variation within this.

Q4: To what extent can we **conclude** that human relationships are almost impossible to measure? In your answer, use your **own knowledge** and **at least three of sources 2–5**.

[15 marks]

Model answer:

Researchers who wish to pin down, operationalise and measure the variables involved in relationships face a difficult task. Relationships involve the measuring of 'slippery' variables which almost defy measurement, e.g., feelings, attitudes, and changing dynamics. This is exacerbated when culture is thrown into the mix, bringing with it norms and behaviours which may be unfamiliar to the researcher. While some behaviours may be the same across cultures (as seen in the items listed in the research above), there remain nuances of behaviour which are particular to certain cultures.

Far eastern cultures (e.g., Japan) are prone to modesty bias, in which the self is subjugated to those in authority. This is in contrast to the self-serving bias of countries such as the UK where the emphasis is placed upon the individual and what is in it (e.g., a relationship) for them. Western researchers may view the modesty bias as limiting or harmful to a relationship, whereas researchers from the far east may see this behaviour as preserving harmony within a relationship. Thus, measuring relationships is fraught with potential sources of bias and subjectivity.

Guidance

- The command term "To what extent" requires you to express a view/judgement on the merit, validity, or success of an argument or concept, supported by relevant evidence
- Weigh up the relative merits of the claim
 - What is there in this (and other) source(s) that could be used to back up this argument?
 - Do you know of any research or examples which could be used to explore the topic of culture and marriage?
- Consider the difficulties facing cross-cultural researchers
 - What are the implications involved in using one's own cultural perspective while also assessing other cultures?
- Make sure that your argument is informed by the sources and that it draws from the relevant topics featured in this context
- Include concepts (e.g., causality, bias) to inform your critical thinking and discussion of the source(s) as well as any real-world or anecdotal examples you are aware of



Your notes



Culture & communication



Worked Example

Here is an example of a **Paper 3 source** and 6-mark **SAQ** using **motivation** (HL extension) in the **Human Relationships** context:

Source 2

The table below shows the findings from a study into the correlation between ratings of the importance of communication and level of satisfaction in the marriage from a sample of Indians living in the USA.

The three groups are:

- Indians in arranged marriages living in India
- Indians in arranged marriages living in the USA
- Indians in free-choice marriages (i.e., not arranged) living in the USA

Table 1: The relationship between importance of communication and satisfaction in marriage

Group	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
Indians in arrange marriages in India	.583
Indians in arranged marriages in the USA	.721
Indians in free-choice marriages in the USA	.433

Q2: Analyse the findings from **source 2** and state a **conclusion** based on the claim that people in arranged marriages do not value communication as highly as those in free-choice marriages.

[6 marks]

Model answer:

The findings are quantitative, which makes the results easy to compare at a glance and to convert to percentages and statistical testing. On the face of it, these findings refute the claim that people in arranged marriages do not value communication, as the second group (Indians in arranged marriages in the USA) have the highest correlation coefficient at .721. This is a reasonably strong correlation which suggests that communication and marriage satisfaction are linked. The lowest score of .433 for the free-choice couples living in the USA might be a reflection of divorce being easier in individualistic countries so there is less pressure to make the marriage work.

The findings should not be taken as definitive, however: a correlation can only show a relationship between variables, not cause-effect. There is always the possibility that

social desirability bias or response bias influenced the ratings given by participants. If this were the case, it would decrease the validity of the data.

Guidance

- Your analysis should refer to the raw scores (if these are included) and/or the descriptive/inferential statistics presented in the findings
 - For descriptive stats this may comprise the mean/median/mode as measures of central tendency and the range/standard deviation as measures of dispersion
 - For inferential stats this may comprise a statement of significance and/or link to the level of probability used
- You should always state which condition of the IV performed better
- You should comment on what the stats seem to suggest about performance per condition
- If relevant, you should comment on what the data tells you about the population, e.g., is this a normal distribution or is it skewed?
- If the research is qualitative then you should focus on how the findings have been categorised/presented and whether there are drawbacks or limitations to how it has been gathered (e.g., sample size, potential bias)
- You should draw a conclusion based on what the data in the source/study tells you about what is being investigated
 - E.g., do the findings suggest that X does affect Y?



Your notes