

Eyes on the Price ze

Supplementary Analysis of the
Marriage, Parenthood and Success Survey 2025

March 2026

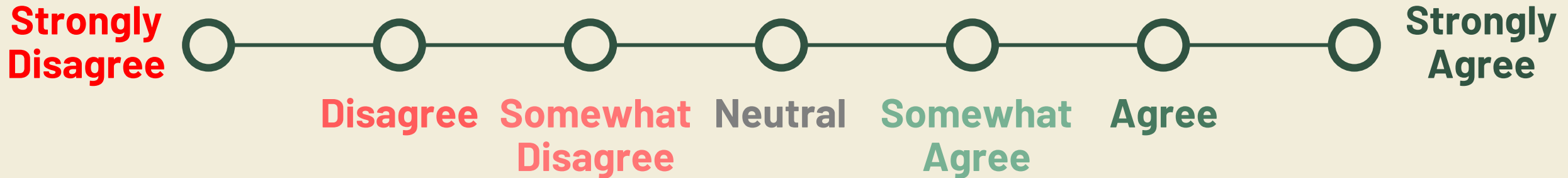
Contents

• Introduction and Executive Summary	3
• Respondent Groups	9
• Priorities concerning Marriage, Life’s Success, Parenthood and Parenting	13
○ Perceptions of Elements of Marriage	13
○ Perceptions of a Successful Life	15
○ Considerations that cause Parenthood Hesitation	17
○ Perceptions of Excellent Parenting	19
• Views on Marriage and Parenthood	22
• Key Predictors of Different Profiles	25
• Key Takeaways and Recommendations	30
• Annex	36

Introduction

- This supplementary analysis builds on our previously published Marriage, Parenthood and Success Report (2025) which explored individuals' various levels of orientation towards marriage and parenthood (MPO).
- The report is based on an online survey of 2,019 Singaporean and Permanent Resident respondents aged 21-45.
- This supplementary analysis of the same survey examines how respondents of different life status and MPO differ in their perception of prize and price of parenthood.

Marriage and Parenthood Orientation



1. On the overall, I have a positive view of marriage
2. On the overall, I have a positive view of parenthood
3. I want to be married / wanted to be married
4. I want to become a parent / wanted to be a parent

Marriage and Parenthood Orientation

Non-MPO

- Strongly disagree
-Neutral
- For all 4 statements

Moderate-MPO

- Neither against nor enthusiastic about marriage and parenthood

High-MPO

- Agree / Strongly Agree
- For all 4 statements



Executive Summary

- Four respondent groups were analysed:



MNC (Married, No Child) – Married individuals with no child and have no aspiration to become parents



PMNC (Potentially, Married and No Child) – Singles who aspire to marry but not to become parents



MNCY (Married, No Child Yet) – Married individuals without children but do aspire to become parents



MP-H (Married Parents, High MPO) – Married parents with a strong Marriage and Parenthood Orientation.

Executive Summary

Parenthood aversion is not merely about the affordability of children. It is whether Singaporeans believe that family life is worth re-ordering their lives around, and for.

When parenthood is perceived as a prize, its price undergoes “price-inelasticity” (i.e. less sensitive to the costs/challenges of parenthood).

The converse is true, when parenthood is not prized, it becomes **highly “price elastic”** (i.e. more sensitive to the costs/challenges of parenthood).

Executive Summary



Stronger convergence of values towards marriage except on parenthood.

Across groups, respondents broadly agree on the core elements of marriage. The clearest difference is the relative importance of having children in marriage.



Preference for Material and Lifestyle attainment, and Practical-Economic concerns are key factors for parenthood aversion

Respondents without parenthood aspirations tend to prioritise material and lifestyle attainment, and are significantly more concerned with the practical-economic costs of parenthood.

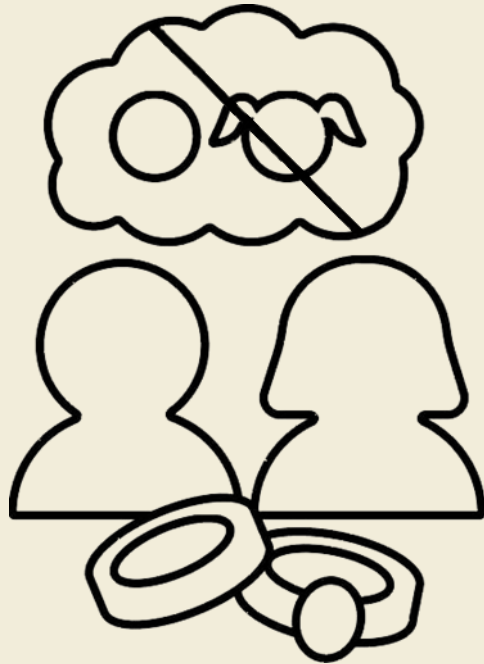


Parenthood hesitation is first economic, but confidence and health matters too

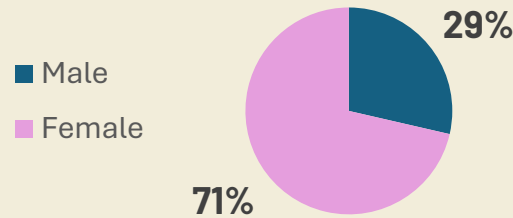
Financial cost surfaced universally as the top barrier to parenthood. But aspiring parents hesitate over concern for a lack of time with children, personal parenting competency and potential health issues of child(ren).

Married, No Child (MNC) N = 56

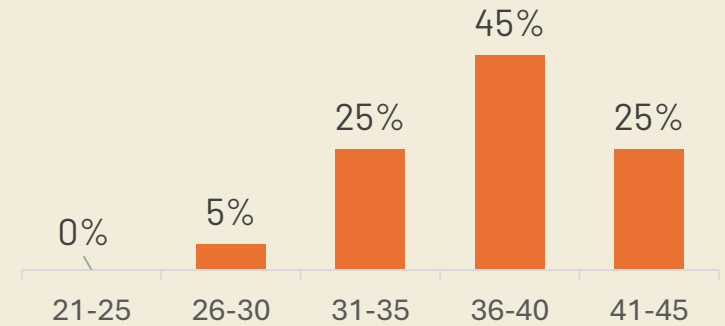
Respondents who are married, have no children and have no parenthood aspirations.



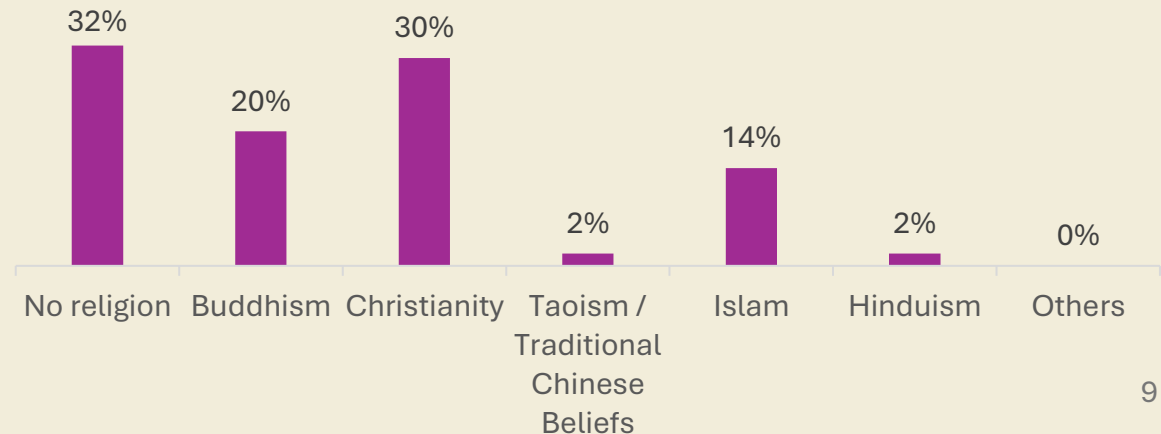
Respondents by Sex



Respondents by Age

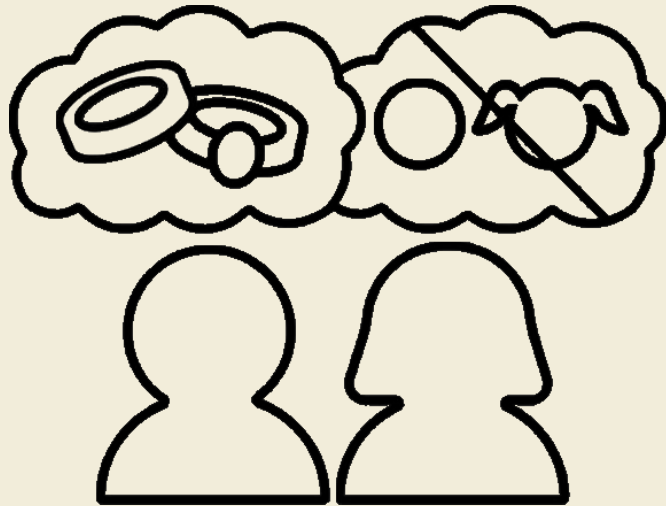


Respondents by Religion

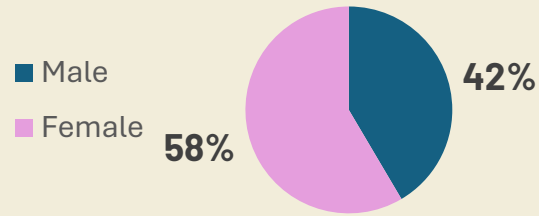


Potentially Marry, No Child (PMNC) N = 106

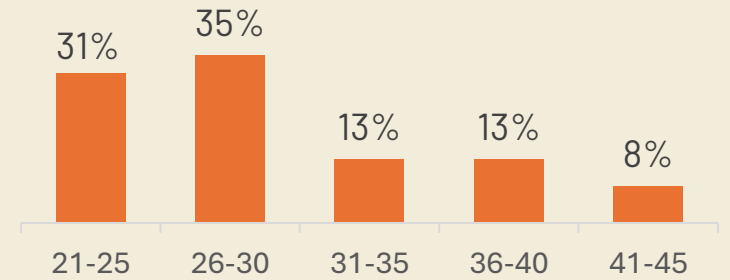
Respondents who are single and have no children.
They have aspirations for marriage
but not parenthood.



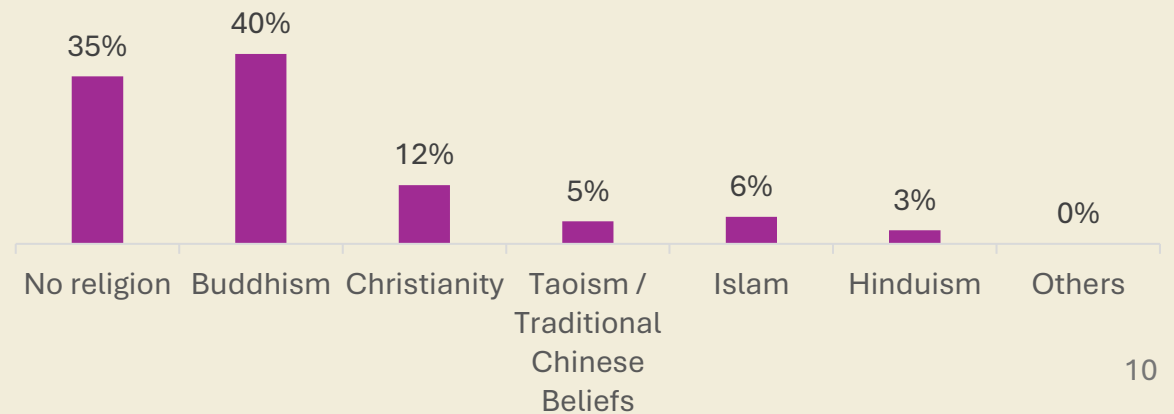
Respondents by Sex



Respondents by Age



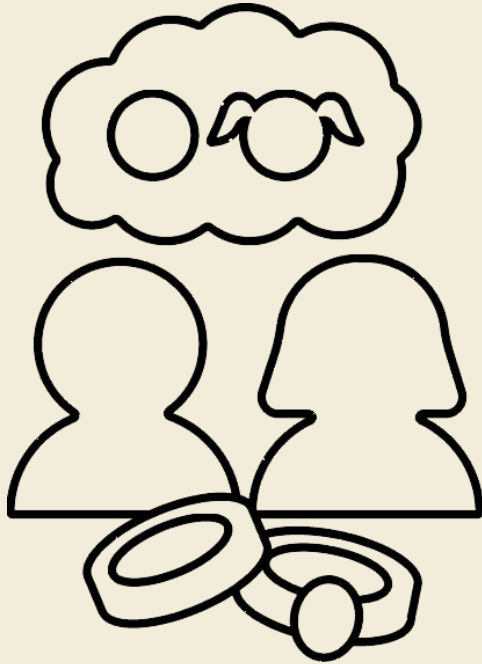
Respondents by Religion



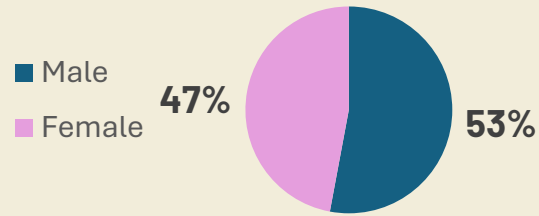
Married, No Child Yet (MNCY)

N = 85

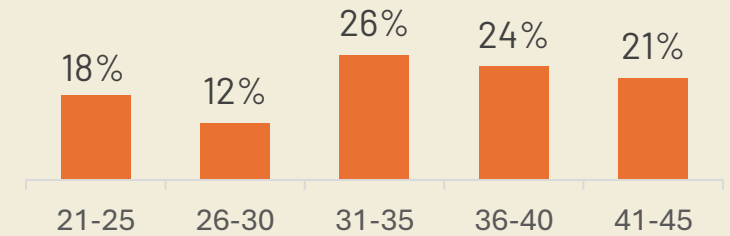
Respondents who are married, have no children but have parenthood aspirations.



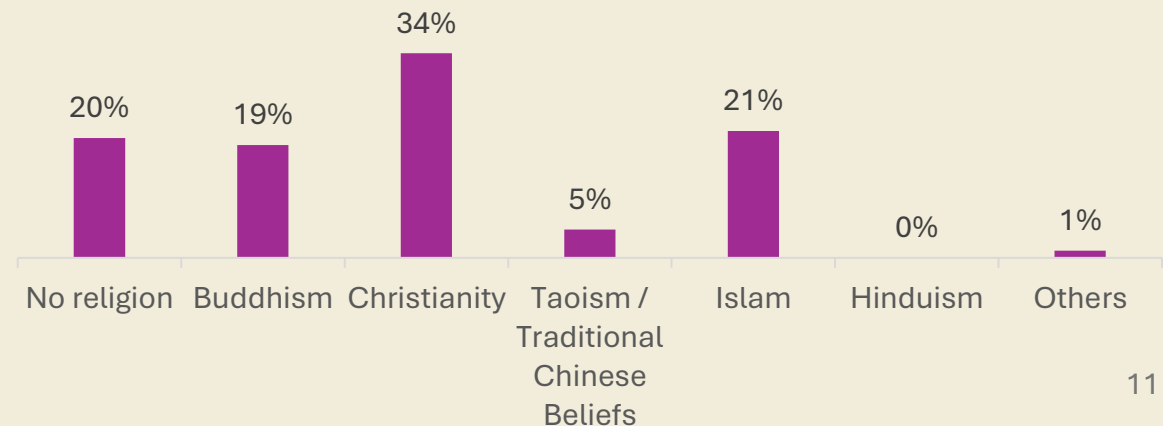
Respondents by Sex



Respondents by Age



Respondents by Religion

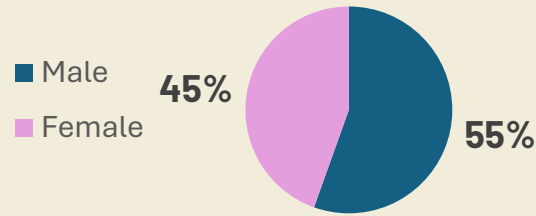


Married Parents, High MPO (MP-H)

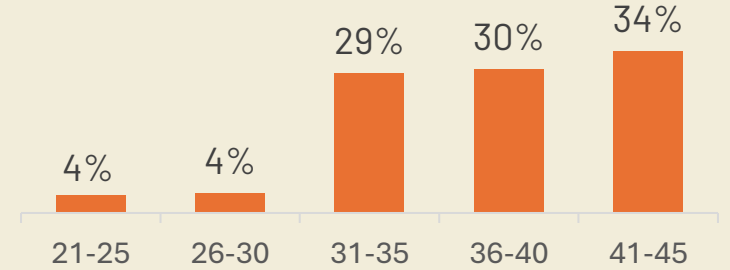
N = 393

Respondents who are married parents and have a high Marriage and Parenthood Orientation (MPO).

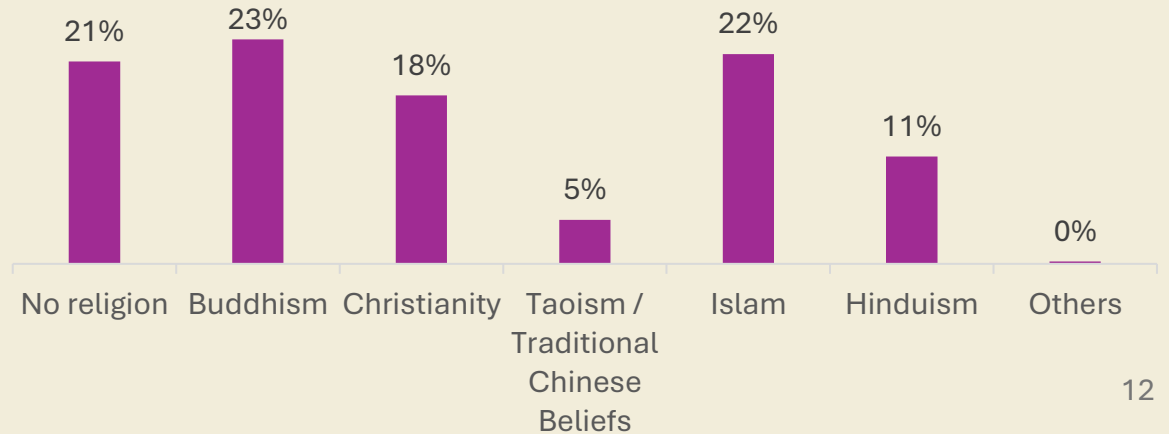
Respondents by Sex



Respondents by Age

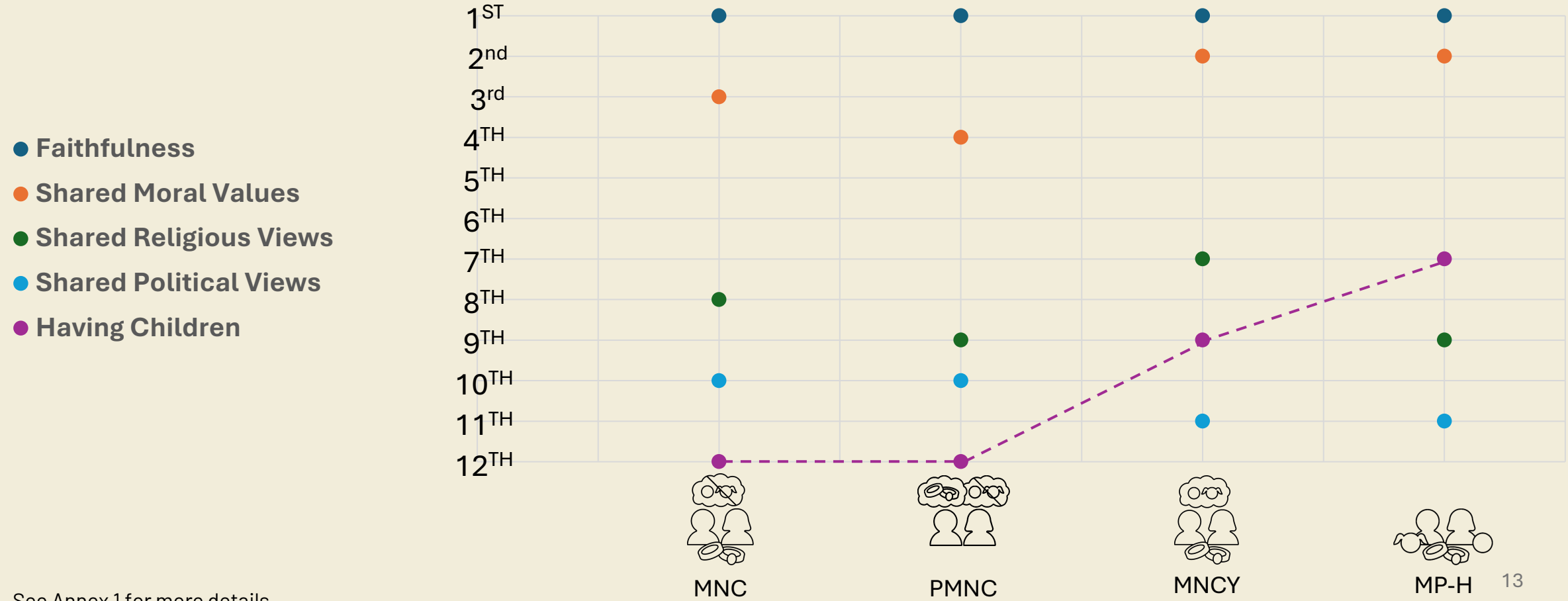


Respondents by Religion



Values regarding essential elements of marriage do not differ much between groups, with the exception of “having children”.

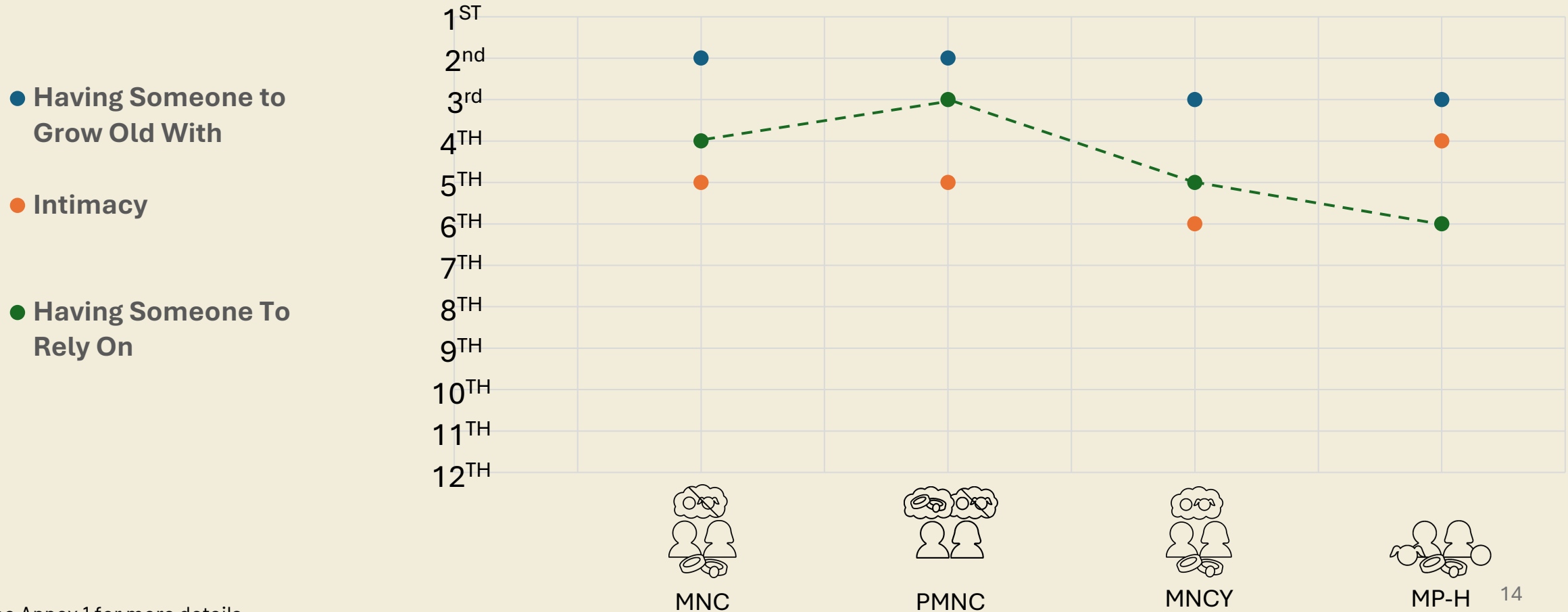
Relative Priority Among 12 Elements of Marriage



See Annex 1 for more details

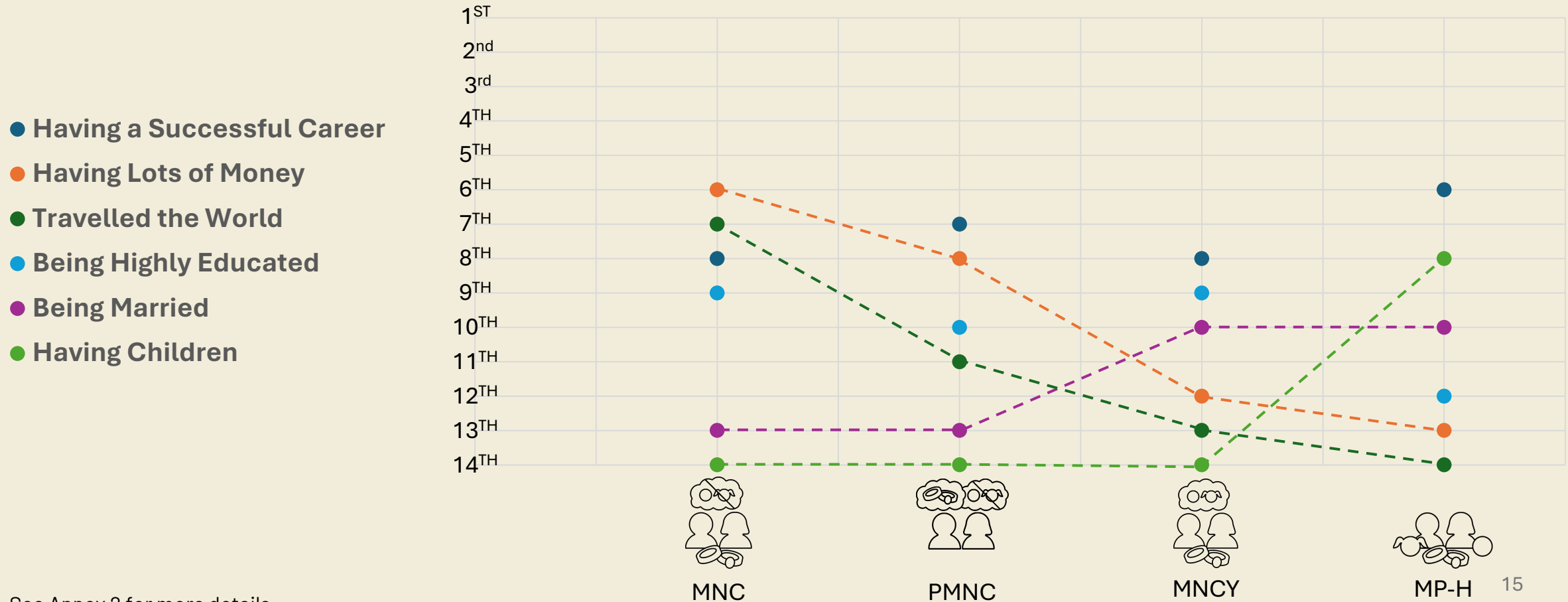
Couple-centric elements are similarly valued, but those more parenthood-oriented are less concerned about “having someone to rely on”.

Relative Priority Among 12 Elements of Marriage



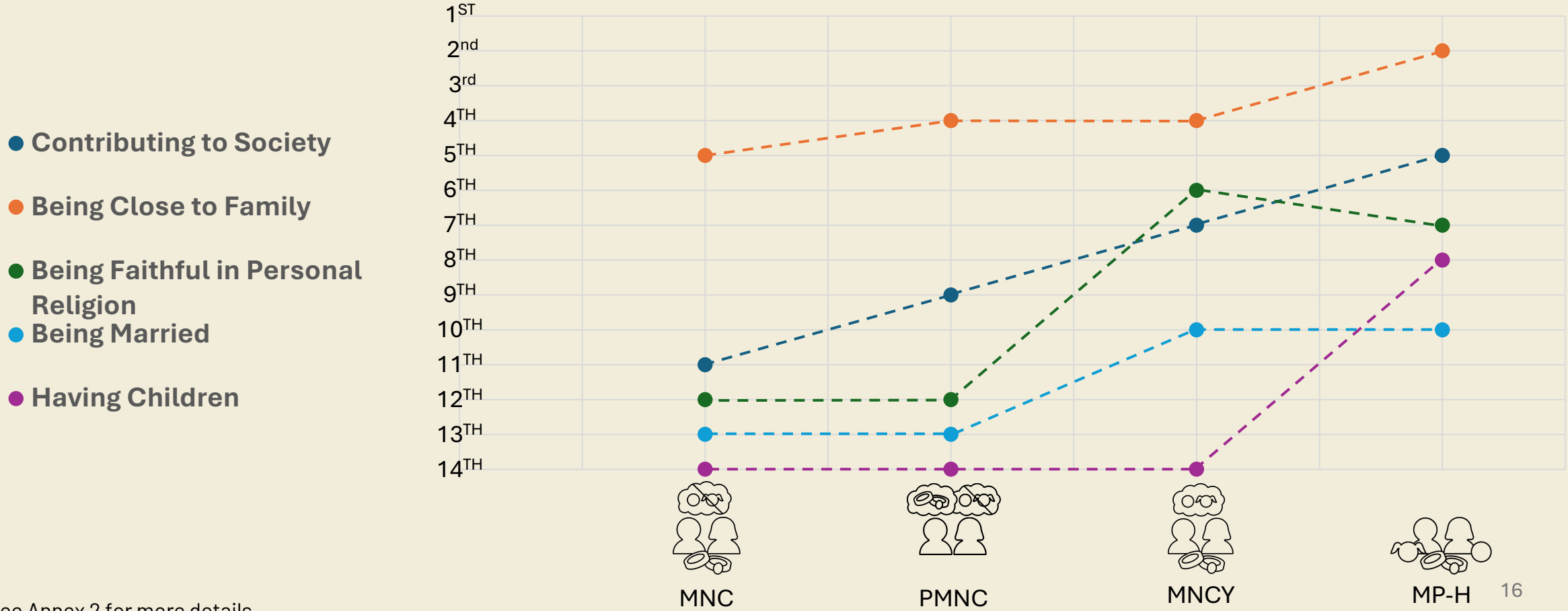
Those who deprioritise marriage and parenthood tend to prioritise material- and autonomy-related elements as markers of success.

Relative Priority Among 14 Success Markers



Those who prioritise marriage and parenthood tend to prioritise community- and other-centric elements as markers of success.

Relative Priority Among 14 Success Markers

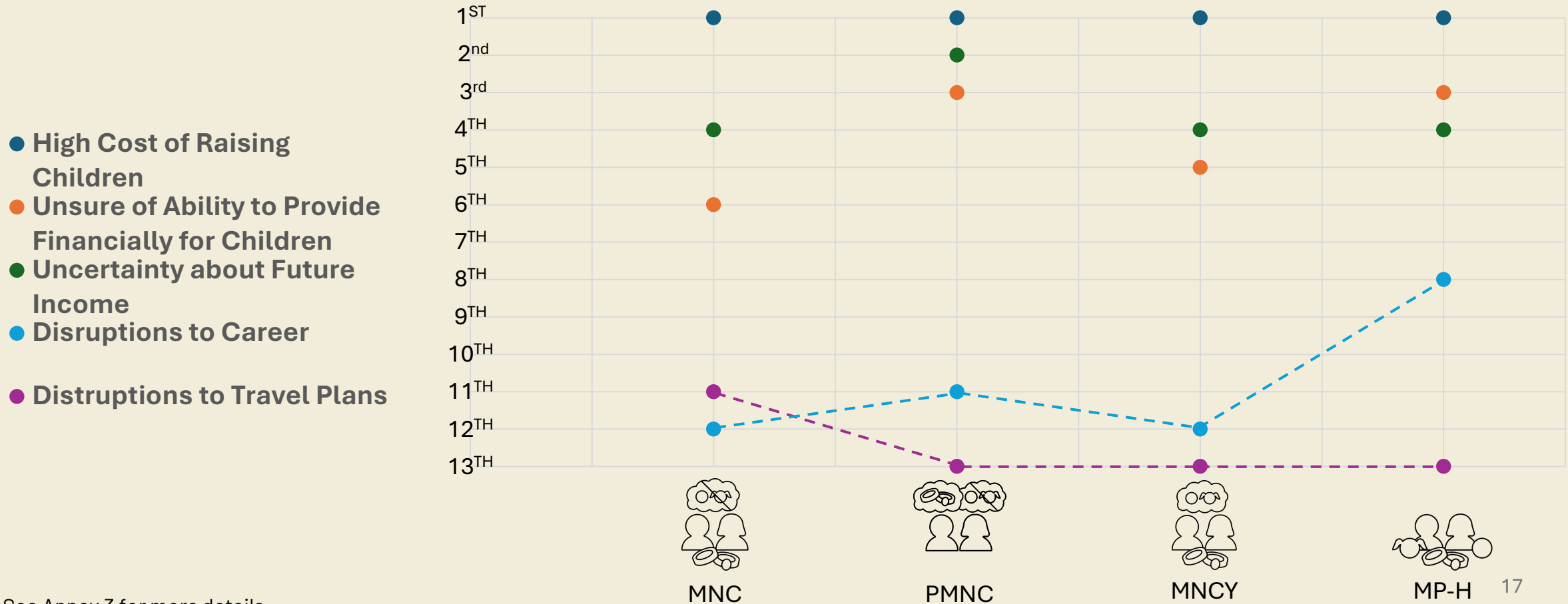


See Annex 2 for more details

Finances are the top factor discouraging parenthood.

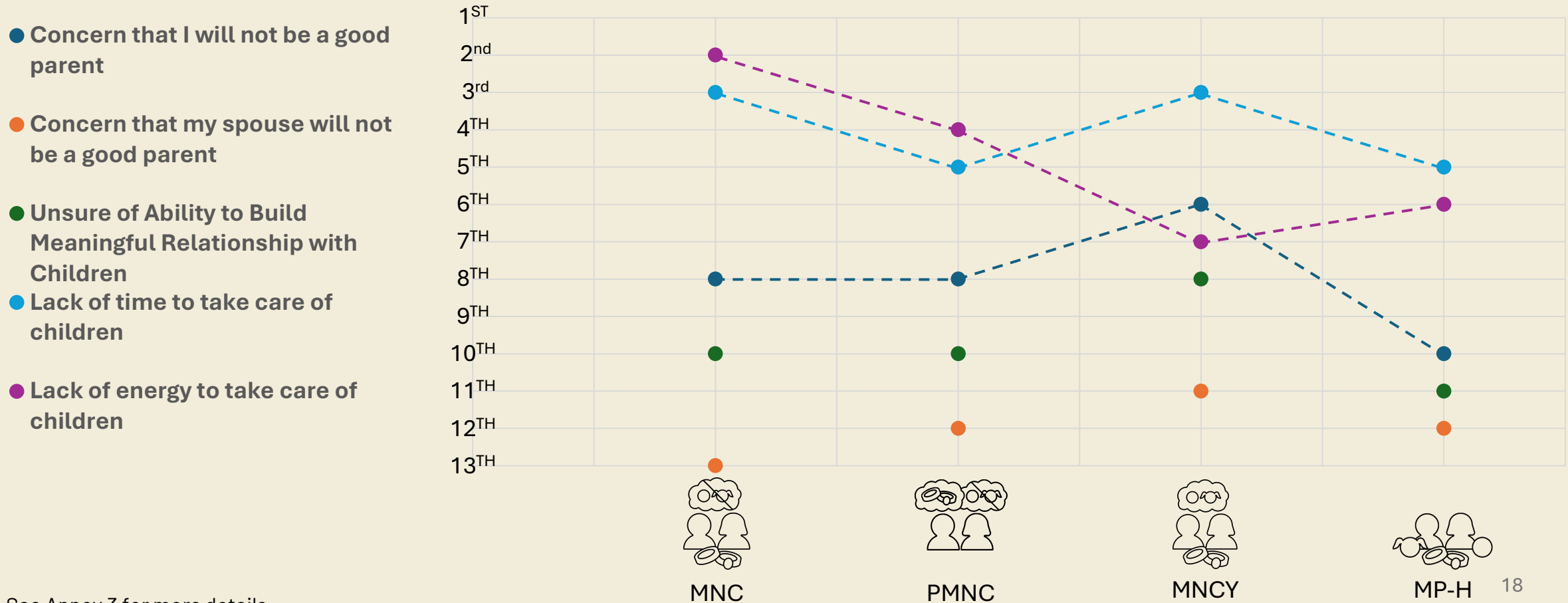
Those married without children are more sensitive about disruptions to travel plans, while High-MPO married parents are more sensitive to career disruptions.

Relative Priority Among 13 Parenthood Hesitations



Among factors discouraging parenthood, concerns about ability and availability to parent affect non-parents more significantly.

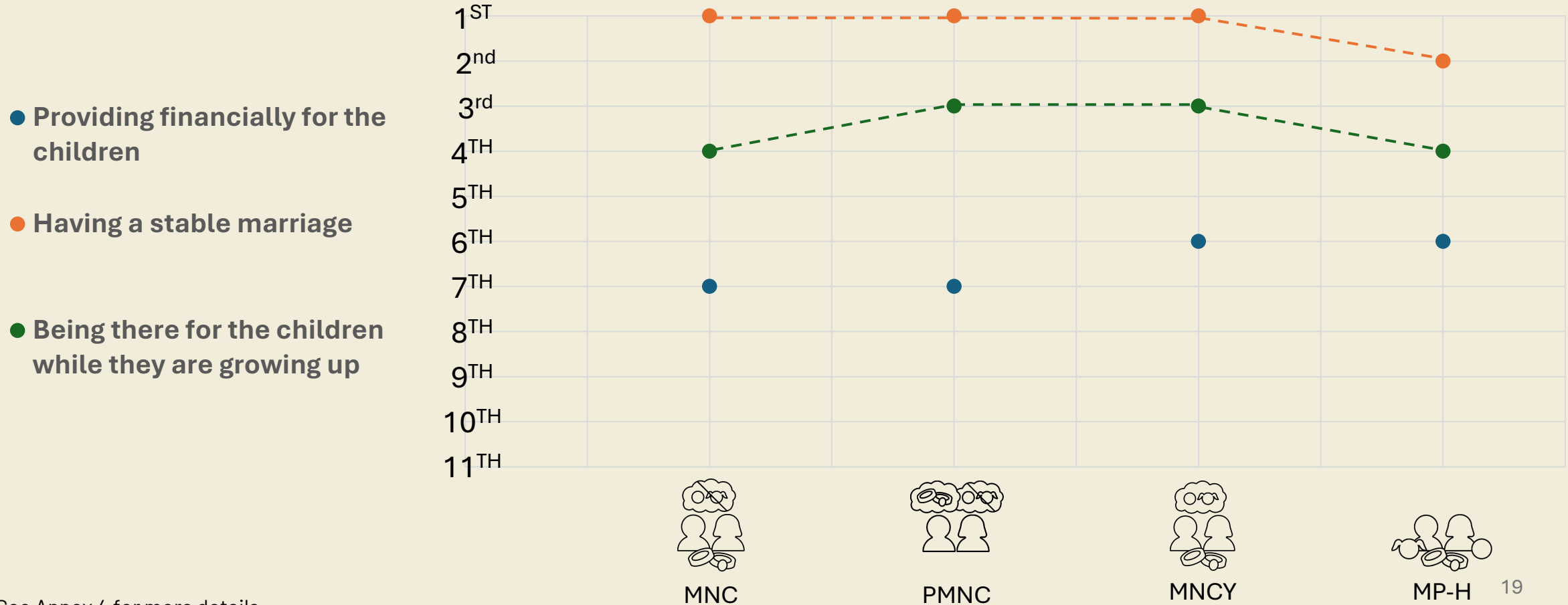
Relative Priority Among 13 Parenthood Hesitations



Across all groups, there is broad consensus that excellent parenting prioritises marital stability and parental involvement.

Financial provision ranks in the middle.

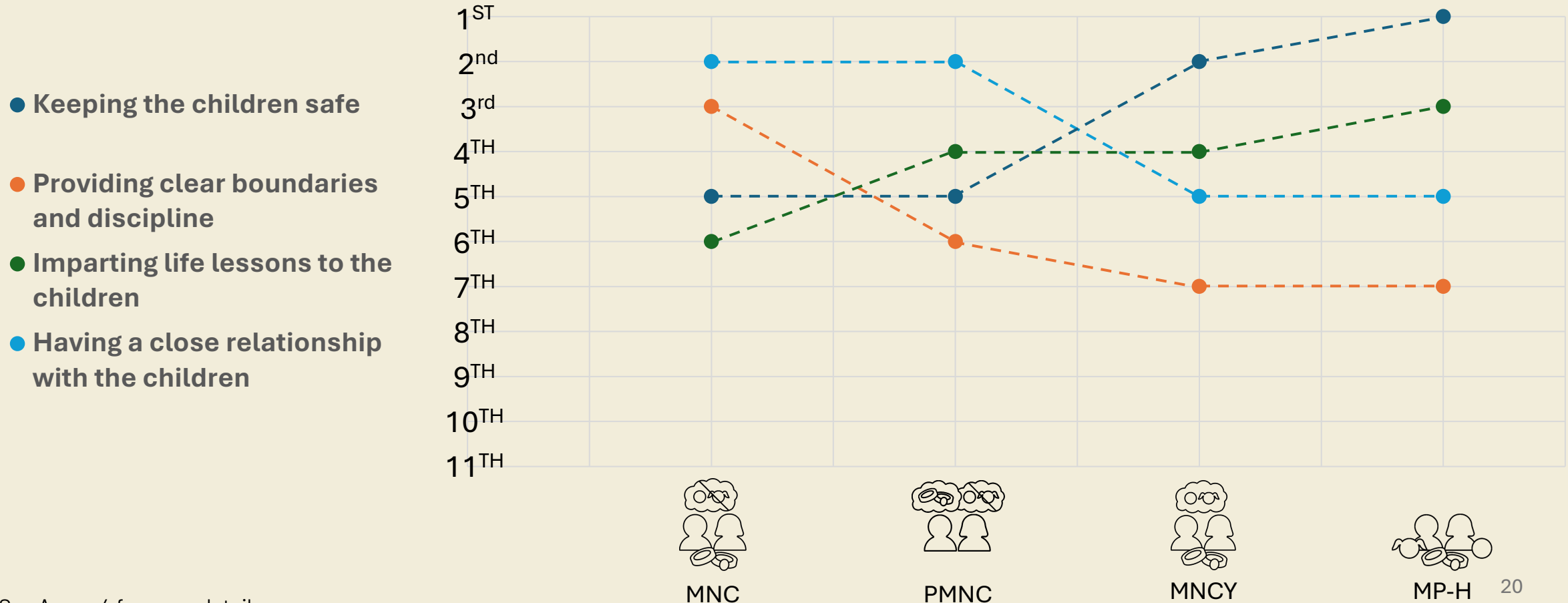
Relative Priority Among 11 Elements of Excellent Parenting



Priorities in parenting excellence are different across all groups.

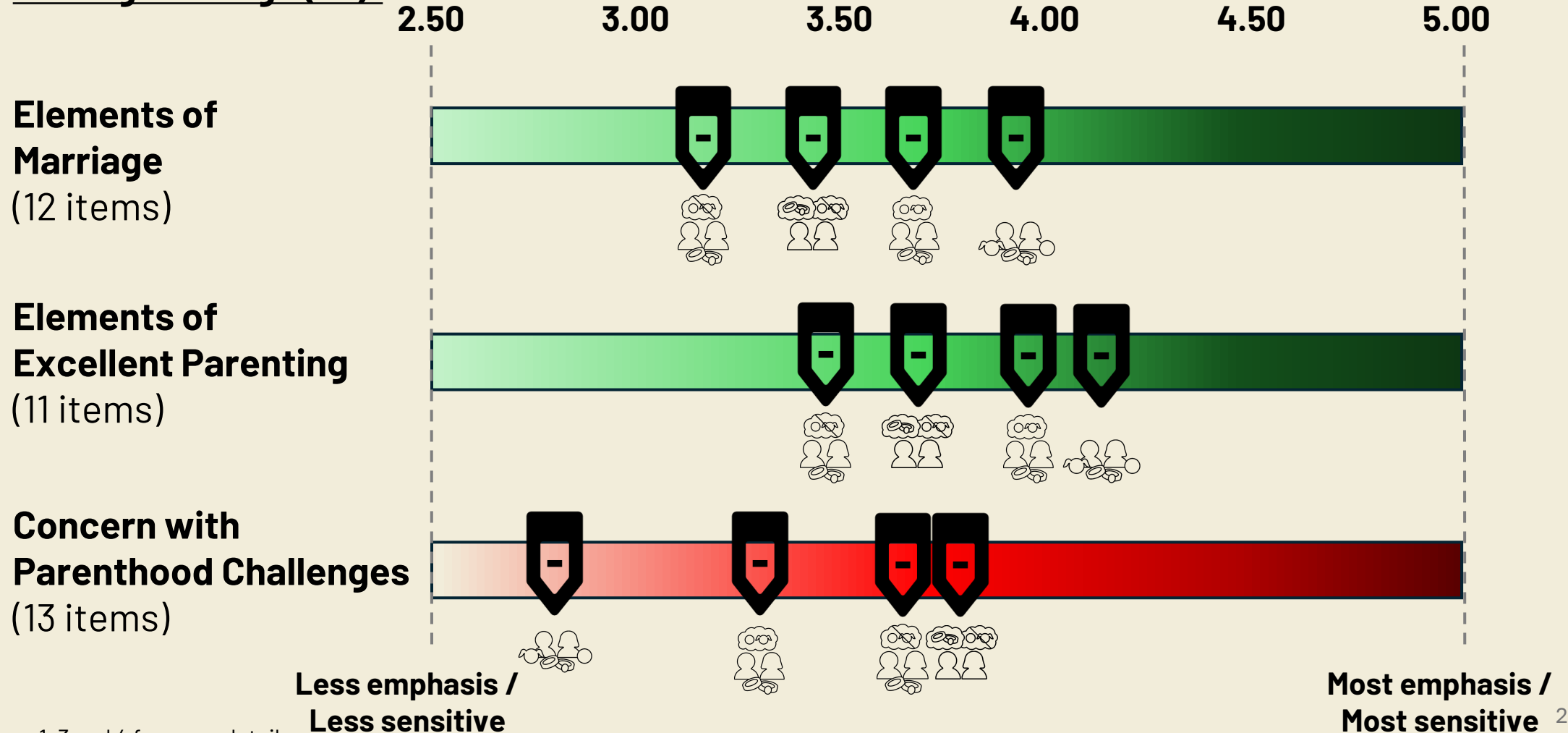
Those more oriented towards parenthood prioritise safety, while those less interested in parenthood prioritise close parent-child relationships.

Relative Priority Among 11 Elements of Excellent Parenting



On the whole, those with less interest in marriage and parenthood are more sensitive to factors that discourage parenthood, while placing less emphasis on elements of marriage or excellent parenting.

Average Ratings (/5):



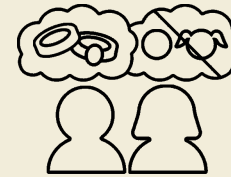
Those who desire children and those who do not have significantly different views on the connection and impact of parenthood in relation to marriage.

Agree / Neutral / Disagree

“Unless a couple is infertile, having children is a natural next step in marriage”



22% / 26% / 52%



33% / 31% / 37%



70% / 23% / 7%



83% / 13% / 3%

“Becoming parents in a marriage takes the marriage to a higher level”



31% / 31% / 37%



52% / 30% / 18%



86% / 8% / 7%



92% / 5% / 3%

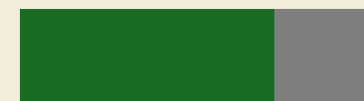
“Becoming parents in a marriage will strengthen the relationship between spouses”



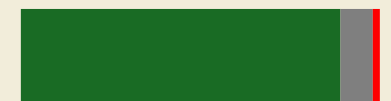
25% / 35% / 40%



46% / 41% / 13%



71% / 25% / 4%

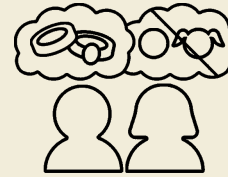


89% / 9% / 2%

% may not add to 100% due to rounding.

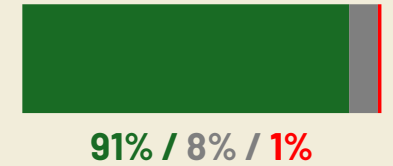
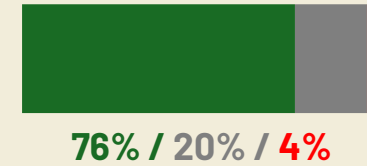
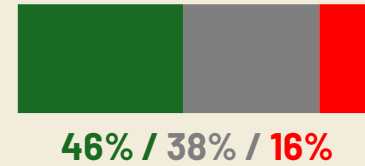
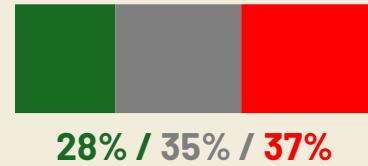
Those with no intentions to have children have a lower view of the positive transformative effect of parenthood on themselves, while married parents seem to be attesting to the effect.

Agree / Neutral / **Disagree**

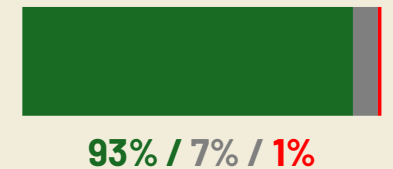
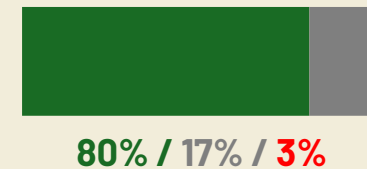
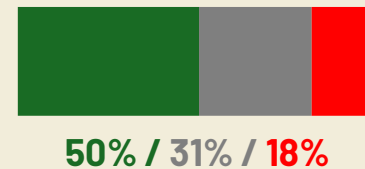
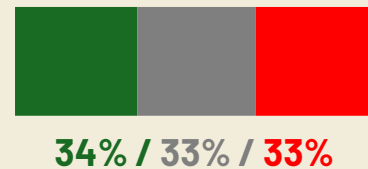


Being a parent will:

Make me a better person



Give me a sense of purpose in life



% may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Those with no intentions to have children have a lower view of the positive transformative effect of parenthood on their behaviours and habits, while married parents seem to be attesting to the effect.

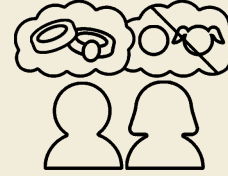
Agree / Neutral / Disagree

Being a parent will motivate me to:

Work harder at my job



38% / 32% / 29%



51% / 31% / 18%



83% / 13% / 4%



92% / 6% / 1%

Spend money more wisely



52% / 30% / 18%



66% / 21% / 13%



87% / 12% / 1%



94% / 5% / 1%

Quit my bad habits



44% / 23% / 33%



56% / 29% / 15%



82% / 13% / 5%



91% / 8% / 2%





% may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Those without parenthood aspirations tend to prioritise material and lifestyle attainment as markers of success in life.

Cluster of life success markers relative to MP-H

Legend:

↑ = higher likelihood
 ↓ = lower likelihood
 – = not statistically significant

	Material & Lifestyle¹ Success defined in terms of economic achievement, personal advancement, and lifestyle attainment.	Communal² Success defined in terms of closeness with friends and family, and social contribution.	Marriage and Parenthood³ Success defined as being married, and having children	Faith Success defined as being faithful in personal religion
 MNC	↑↑↑ (+190%)	↓ (-57%)	↓↓ (-73%)	–
 PMNC	↑↑↑ (+139%)	–	↓↓ (-71%)	↓ (-28%)
 MNCY	–	↓ (-53%)	↓ (-35%)	–
 MP-H (baseline)	–	–	–	–

¹ Material: Money, Career, Education, Travel, Home ownership, Work-life balance

² Communal: Contentment, Close family, Close friends, Contribution to society





³ Marriage and Parenthood: Being Married, Having Children

Those without parenthood aspirations are more sensitive to practical-economic costs of parenthood.

Hesitation and Concerns that Discourage Parenthood relative to MP-H

Legend:

↑ = higher likelihood
 ↓ = lower likelihood
 – = not statistically significant

	Practical-Economic Costs¹	Parenting-Relational Concerns²	Travel Disruption	World Suffering	Career Disruption
 MNC	↑↑↑↑ (+255%)	–	↑ (+47%)	↑ (+56%)	↓ (-29%)
 PMNC	↑↑↑ (+182%)	↑ (+45%)	–	–	–
 MNCY	–	↑ (+72%)	–	–	–
 MP-H (baseline)	–	–	–	–	–

¹ Practical-Economic:

High cost of raising children; Lack of time to take care of children; Lack of energy to take care of children; Uncertainty about future income; Unsure of ability to provide financially for children

² Parenting-Relational:

Concern that I will not be a good parent; Concern that my spouse will not be a good parent; Unsure of ability to build meaningful relationship with children; Unsure of ability to raise children with good moral values.

Reasons given by married non-parent respondents who have no aspirations for parenthood (MNC) for delaying parenthood are about preferring autonomy and a life without hassle.

“I don’t like getting into trouble”

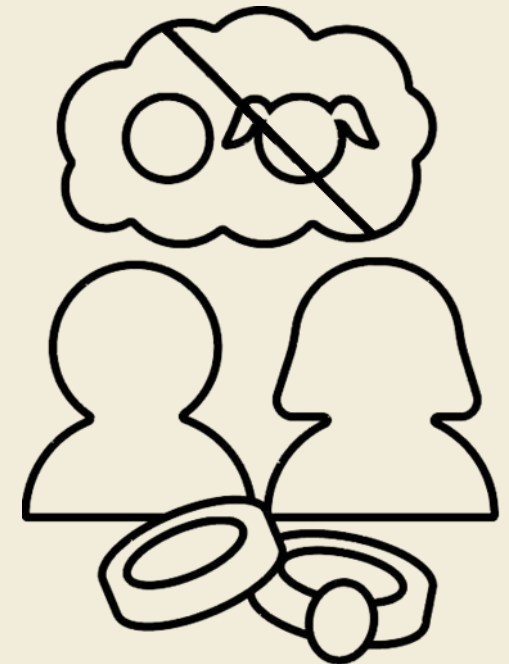
- 31 yr-old, Male, Malay Muslim, married for 4 years

“I don’t like to be limited by time”

- 39 yr-old, Male, Chinese non-religious, married for 3 years

“(I) don’t want added responsibilities”

- 39 yr-old, Male, Chinese Christian, married for 3 years



Only 8 respondents of this profile gave answers for why they choose to delay parenthood. The other 48 MNC respondents are firmly avoidant of parenthood.

There is a greater variation in reasons for delay and openness to having children in the future among those who are married non-parents who want children (MNCY).

These range from relational, time, practical-economic concerns, as well as difficulties in pregnancy.

“Because of work(,) so (I do) not (have) enough time”

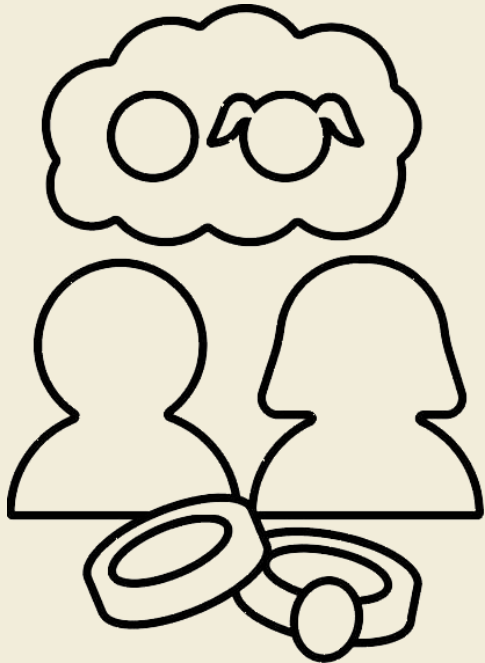
- 25 yr-old, Female, Chinese, No religion, married for 3 years

“Not ready. Need time to save money”

- 39 yr-old, Male, Malay, Muslim, married for 9 years

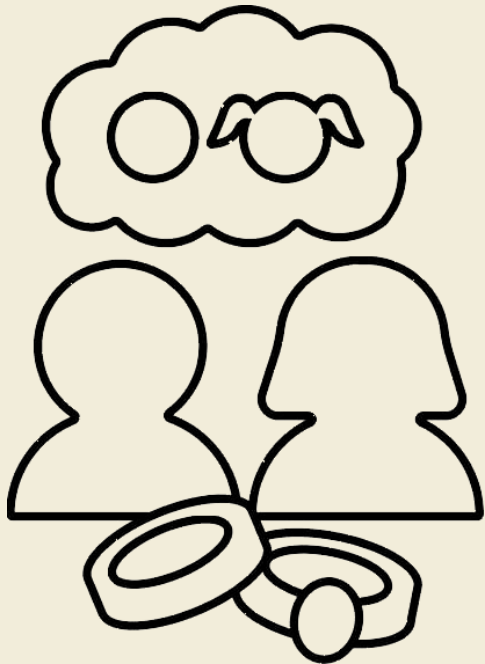
“Still want to enjoy marriage years before having kids”

- 39 yr-old, Female, Malay, Muslim, married for 4 years



There is a greater variation in reasons for delay and openness to having children in the future among those who are married non-parents who want children (MNCY).

These range from relational, time, practical-economic concerns, as well as difficulties in pregnancy.



“Unfortunately, I lost 2 pregnancies. Praying that someday, God will bless me and my husband with a wonderful and healthy child.”

- 41 yr-old, Female, Other Ethnicity, Other religion, married for 7 years

“I am conflicted about the future educational approach for my child.”

- 23 yr-old, Female, Chinese, No religion, married for 1 year

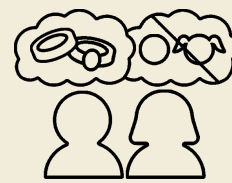
“I am in (the) accounting line, hence I feel (that having children) is stressful as in this line of work there are a lot of deadline(s) and overtime. (I) felt that if (I) were to get pregnant, it will (be) even more stressful and (tiring) from both ends. The delay got wors(e) as we had married later.”

- 40 yr-old, Female, Chinese, Buddhist, married for 2 years

At a glance



MNC



PMNC



MNCY



MP-H

Description

Married, have no children and have no parenthood aspirations.

May marry, have no children and have no parenthood aspirations.

Married, have no children but have parenthood aspirations.

Married, have children and have high parenthood aspirations.

Key Differentiating Factors

Practical-Economic Costs
Material & Lifestyle Attainment

Parenting-
Relational Concerns

Career Disruption
(relative to MNC)
Positive Aspiration
for parenthood

Recommendations

Address pre-existing perceptions of marriage and parenthood.

Empowerment,
encouragement and
exposure to High MPO
parents.

Change work
culture

Key Takeaways

- Singapore will require different approaches to address the record-low Total Fertility Rate (TFR) situation. The approach needs to be tailored to meet the needs and concerns of different demographics.
- Demography, when it comes to the TFR matter, has to do with the values, priorities and parenthood aspirations of individuals.
- We therefore recommend the following items in an effort to address concerns and empower people to get married and become parents.

Recommendations

On the overall, address values, norms and narrative concerning marriage and parenthood.

- Study and directly address negative perceptions of family life, coupled with promotion of the intangible joy of family life.
- Efforts must be multi-pronged and beyond material provision through policy.

Recommendations

A Singapore made for families; workplaces made for families

- Change work culture by introducing greater flexibility in work arrangements and create a regulated part-time or contract economy for parents who want better balance, including those with children under six years old or sandwiched families.
- Shorter work days and clear stipulation of protected time after work hours. This will enable people to spend more time with their families, especially those with younger children. An earlier bedtime routine is also thus enabled, potentially creating a chain of positive experiences.
- Normalise accepting people at work for taking career breaks to become caregivers at home. Consider measures to encourage employers to employ caregivers returning to the workforce.

Recommendations

Encourage earlier marriage and parenthood planning

- Through education, reinstate the importance of planning for family life at different stages of school and life.
- Integrate family life into career fairs and talks, thereby empowering youths to make better decisions about the kind of life they want to have.
- Include in sex education facts about human fertility. Through exposure to facts, enable youths to understand the cost of delaying marriage and parenthood, especially for those who do aspire for them (e.g. moderate-high MPO).

Recommendations

Encourage those hesitating to become parents

- Through public campaigns and intentional dialogues or community huddles, address concerns of becoming parents or having more children.
- Provide people with (some) aspiration to become parents with opportunities to hear from and interact with married parents. Couples who have multiple children are especially important to engage with as they can share genuine life experiences for those unsure about having more children.
- Provide subsidies for parenting skills upgrade. This can include financial planning, time management and communication skills between spouses and with children.
- Encourage parents of young couples to be more involved. Communicate expectations, boundaries so as to increase the capacity of couples in child-bearing ages to have and raise children, not on their own but with the support of their extended family.

Methodology

- This report focuses on the four mentioned groups of respondents from the Marriage, Parenthood and Success Survey (2025) commissioned by Cultivate SG.
- Pureprofile was commissioned to conduct the fieldwork from 22 Aug 2025 to 9 Sep 2025, reaching 2,019 Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents aged 21-45. The survey was a self-administered online questionnaire available only in English. We have chosen to only survey people between ages 21-45 as that is the mainstream age range for marriage and parenthood.

Methodology

- To ensure that the demographic proportions closely approximate the national 21-45 population, overall responses for each question covered in this report are weighted in terms of age cohort, sex, race and religion with reference to prevailing Singapore resident demographics.
- All figures in this report are rounded off for readability. As a result, percentages may not sum to exactly 100% due to rounding differences.

Limitations

- As this survey was conducted purely online and in English only, it may under-represent respondents who are less comfortable with English or less likely to participate in online surveys.
- By focusing on the age range 21-45, results reflect attitudes of those in mainstream marriage and childbearing years, but may not sufficiently reflect views of older adults or youths.
- While results are meaningful, groups with smaller sample sizes, e.g. MNC and MNCY, have relatively small base sizes. These results should be interpreted with appropriate caution.

Limitations

- Attitudes of respondents may change over time. Results reflect associations at the point of survey, and do not establish causation between values, life priorities, and marriage and parenthood orientation.
- Responses may be affected by social desirability, recall bias, or differences between stated views and actual future behaviour.

Annex 1 - Mean Ratings for Elements of Marriage

Rank (MP-H)	Elements of Marriage	Mean Score (/ 5)			
		MNC	PMNC	MNCY	MP-H
1	Faithfulness	4.07	4.32	4.24	4.46
2	Shared moral values	3.75	3.88	4.10	4.26
3	Having someone to grow old with	4.06	4.05	4.02	4.25
4	Intimacy	3.51	3.62	3.80	4.20
5	Gaining a sense of fulfilment from marriage	3.43	3.44	3.86	4.14
6	Having someone to rely on	3.71	3.96	3.85	4.08
7	Having children	1.91	2.10	3.45	4.05
8	Sharing of material goods / resources	3.25	3.37	3.50	3.85
9	Shared religious views	3.00	3.01	3.61	3.68
10	Having someone to financially provide for me	2.89	3.11	3.19	3.53
11	Shared political views	2.55	2.97	2.98	3.17
12	Gaining a higher social status from marriage	2.28	2.33	2.88	2.87

Annex 2 - Mean Ratings for Markers of Success

Rank (MP-H)	Markers of Success	Mean Score (/ 5)			
		MNC	PMNC	MNCY	MP-H
1	Being an upright person	3.80	4.05	4.10	4.30
2	Being close to family	3.53	3.86	3.97	4.25
3	Having work-life balance	4.00	3.92	4.10	4.19
4	Being contented	3.92	3.87	3.97	4.16
5	Contributing to society	3.09	3.41	3.48	4.03
6	Having a successful career	3.16	3.59	3.47	3.93
7	Being faithful in personal religion	2.92	2.91	3.57	3.89
8	Having children	2.08	2.20	3.19	3.88
9	Having close friends	3.10	3.77	3.42	3.88
10	Being married	2.71	2.84	3.45	3.81
11	Owning a house	3.72	3.67	3.74	3.80
12	Being highly educated	3.16	3.36	3.46	3.76
13	Having lots of money	3.32	3.41	3.36	3.48
14	Travelled the world	3.22	3.21	3.25	3.12

Annex 3 - Mean Ratings for Considerations which will discourage Parenthood

Rank (MP-H)	Considerations which will discourage Parenthood	Mean Score (/ 5)			
		MNC	PMNC	MNCY	MP-H
1	High cost of raising children	4.20	4.23	3.60	3.06
2	Fear that children will have health issues	3.61	3.68	3.56	3.00
3	Unsure of ability to provide financially for children	3.70	3.97	3.49	2.99
4	Uncertainty about future income	3.98	4.04	3.50	2.99
5	Lack of time to take care of children	3.99	3.89	3.54	2.84
6	Lack of energy to take care of children	4.03	3.90	3.45	2.75
7	I do not want to bring children into a world full of suffering	3.94	3.87	3.34	2.72
8	Disruptions to career	3.18	3.51	2.98	2.69
9	Unsure of ability to raise children with good moral values	3.40	3.78	3.33	2.67
10	Concern that I will not be a good parent to more children	3.48	3.69	3.46	2.63
11	Unsure of ability to build meaningful relationship with children	3.37	3.62	3.43	2.61
12	Concern that my future spouse / partner will not be a good parent	2.69	3.31	3.06	2.52
13	Disruptions to travel plans	3.30	3.03	2.82	2.22

Annex 4 – Mean Ratings for Elements of Excellent Parenting

Rank (MP-H)	Elements of Excellent Parenting	Mean Score (/ 5)			
		MNC	PMNC	MNCY	MP-H
1	Keeping the children safe	3.77	3.97	4.27	4.53
2	Having a stable marriage	4.10	4.26	4.37	4.45
3	Imparting life lessons to the children	3.75	4.02	4.18	4.41
4	Being there for the children while they are growing up	3.80	4.03	4.22	4.38
5	Having a close relationship with the children	3.94	4.12	4.11	4.38
6	Providing financially for the children	3.53	3.81	4.04	4.32
7	Providing clear boundaries and discipline	3.88	3.95	3.96	4.28
8	Have children achieving high levels of education	3.20	3.31	3.69	4.06
9	Raising children in the same faith / religious beliefs	2.84	2.87	3.66	3.69
10	Cultivating the children's talents by sending them for enrichment (e.g. music, arts, sports etc.)	2.95	3.13	3.44	3.60
11	Taking the children on an overseas trip at least once a year	2.34	2.54	3.21	3.21

Annex 5 – Multinomial Regression (Life Success Influences)

Dimension	Results
Model Fit	$\chi^2(15) = 222.5, p < .001$
Explained Variance	Cox & Snell $R^2 = .29$ Nagelkerke $R^2 = .33$ McFadden $R^2 = .16$
<p>Key factors associated with the absence of aspiration for parenthood (relative to the MP-H; less parenthood-oriented groups, with each 1-point shift)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material and Lifestyle attainment success increased the odds of belonging to less family-oriented groups: 190% higher odds for Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=2.90); and 139% higher odds for Potentially married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=2.39).
<p>Key factors associated with stronger aspiration for parenthood (relative to the MP-H; more parenthood oriented with each 1-point shift)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage–Parenthood as success was significant across all three group comparisons. A 1-point increase was associated with: 73% lower odds of being Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=.27); 71% lower odds of being Potentially married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=.29); and 35% lower odds of being Married, no child yet (OR=.65), relative to High-MPO married parents. • Communal / relational success also distinguished groups. A 1-point increase was associated with: 57% lower odds of being Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=.43); and 53% lower odds of being Married, no child yet (OR=.47). • Personal religion was significant only for Potentially married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood. A 1-point increase was associated with: 28% lower odds of being in that group (OR=.72).
Non-Significant Predictors	Being an upright person was not significant overall ($p=.210$) and across all three group comparisons.

Annex 6 – Multinomial Regression (Considerations for Parenthood Hesitation)

Dimension	Results
Model Fit	$\chi^2(18) = 203.2, p < .001$
Explained Variance	Cox & Snell $R^2 = .27$ Nagelkerke $R^2 = .31$ McFadden $R^2 = .15$
<p>Key factors associated with the absence of aspiration for parenthood (relative to the MP-H; less parenthood-oriented groups, with each 1-point shift)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical-Economic Costs were associated with disinterest in parenthood: A 1-point increase was associated with: 255% higher odds of being Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=3.55); 182% higher odds of being Potentially married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=2.82) • Parenting-Relational Concerns also distinguished groups. A 1-point increase was associated with: 45% higher odds of being Potentially married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=1.45); and 72% higher odds of being Married, no child yet (OR=1.72). • Travel Disruption and World of Suffering were only statistically significant for the Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood. A 1-point increase was associated with: 48% higher odds (OR=1.48) for Travel Disruption; and 56% higher odds (OR=1.56) for World of Suffering
<p>Key factors associated with stronger aspiration for parenthood (relative to the MP-H; more parenthood oriented with each 1-point shift)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career disruption moves in the opposite direction. A 1-point increase was associated with: 29% lower odds for Married, no child nor aspiration for parenthood (OR=0.71), relative to the High MPO Married Parents group
Non-Significant Predictors	Fear that children will have health issues was not significant overall ($p=.382$) and across all three group comparisons.