

CHAPTER FOUR

Social Behaviour of Young and Elderly Couples

This chapter examines the attitude and social behaviour of the respondents concerning marriage, birth control, child rearing, husband-wife relation, women, costume, modern appliances, recreation, mass media, and ethnic relations. For each variable, the comparison has been made between husband and wife on the one hand and between young and elderly couples on the other.

4.1 Marriage

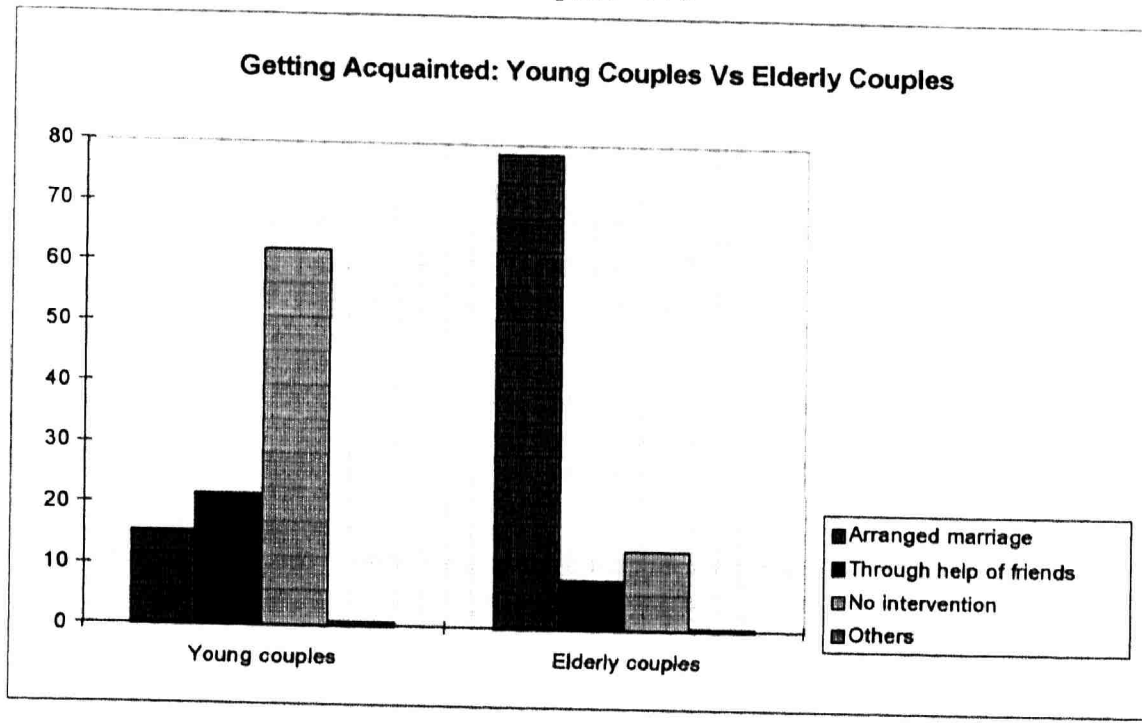
How the respondents got to know each other and eventually married is considered here; as well as the couple's attitudes towards the courtship styles of their young sons or daughters. The respondents were also asked to reply to a question about relationships between young men and women during the period between courtship and marriage.

4.1.1 Acquaintance and Marriage

Courtship among the Malays has changed over time. Young couples have become more independent in terms of courtship compared to former generations. Most of the young couples (62.1 percent) in the study became acquainted with each other without an intermediary (figure 4.1). Other means of getting acquainted for young couples are no intervention (21.7 percent) followed by

arranged marriage (14.6 percent). On the other hand, most of the elderly couples (78.3 percent) got to know each other through arranged marriage. Of the elderly couples, 13.2 percent became directly acquainted with each other and 8.1 percent with the help of friends and relatives.

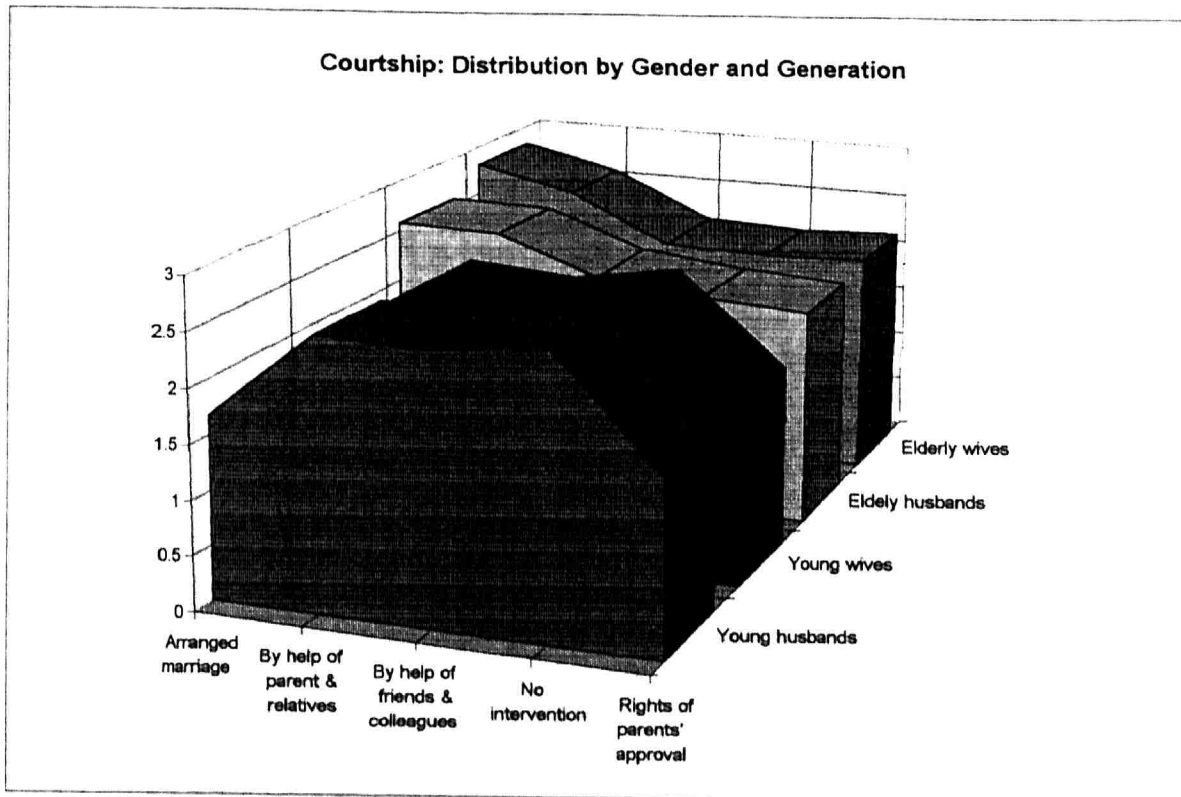
Figure 4.1



4.1.2 Finding a Marriage Partner

The selection of a mate for young sons and daughters of the respondents which is considered here, includes four ways: 'parental control of an arranged marriage', 'through the help of parents or relatives', 'through the help of friends or colleagues' and 'free from any intervention through advice or suggestion'. The scores are between zero (0) for 'strongly disagree' to four (4) for 'strongly agree'. Through an additional question, the respondents were also asked to identify the role of parents in their children's choice of a marriage partner.

Figure 4.2



Unlike their own way of courtship, most young husbands and wives, like elderly couples, prefer that their young sons and daughters find a marriage partner 'through the help of parents and relatives'. These choices are supported more strongly by the husbands than the wives (figure 4.2).

Differences exist between young and elderly couples on how they regard other ways of courtship for young people. The young couples support the option of 'through the help of friends and colleagues' but the elderly couples do not. An arranged marriage is rejected by the young couples while it is supported by the elderly ones.

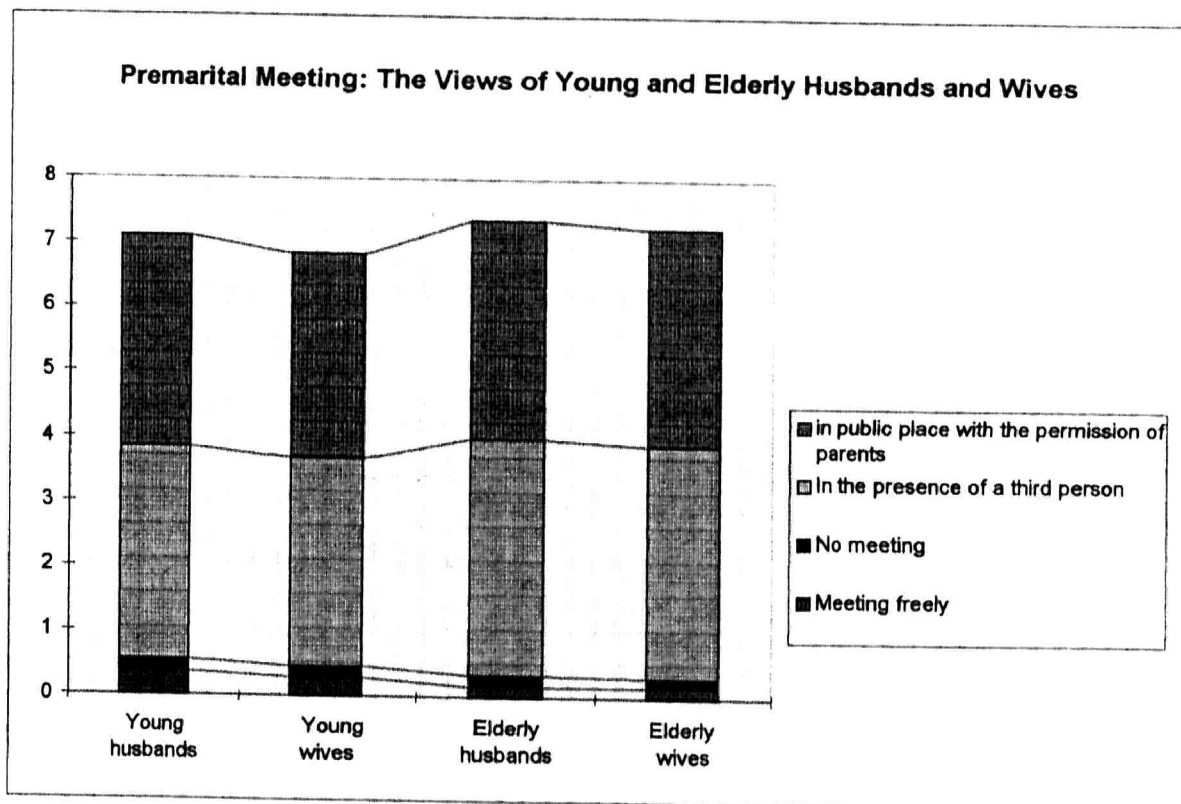
Both young and elderly couples believe that the children's choice of a marriage partner should be approved by their parents.

4.1.3 Premarital Meeting

After young men and women are introduced to each other, they may be given the opportunity to communicate with each other so that they can get to know each other better before they agree to marry. The options include:

- They should meet each other freely.
- They should not meet until the day of the wedding.
- They should meet in the presence of a third person.
- They should meet in public places with the approval of the parents.

Figure 4.3



Both young and elderly couples vigorously reject the options of 'free meetings before marriage' and 'no meeting until the day of the wedding' for young men and women (figure 4.3). Both young and elderly couples are also keen to accept the premarital

meeting of their young sons and daughters in the presence of a third person or in a public place if they have the permission of their parents.

The elderly couples show a stronger opposition to the first two options and stronger support for the last two options than the younger ones.

4.2 Birth Control

To find out about their attitudes towards birth control, the respondents were asked the number of children they wanted to have when they got married. They were then asked whether they used or had ever used any kind of contraceptive devices and in the case of non-users the reason for its non-use.

Number of Desired Children: The number of children they wanted to have in the early days of marriage indicates the respondents' image of family size. The elderly couples were inclined to have more children compared to the young couples at the time of marriage. The younger respondents desired an average of five children¹. The elderly respondents wished to have the average of almost six children at the time of marriage².

Practice of Family Planning: Over half of the young respondents (54.4 percent) and less than half of the elderly ones (44.9 percent) are practising birth control or have used contraceptive devices.

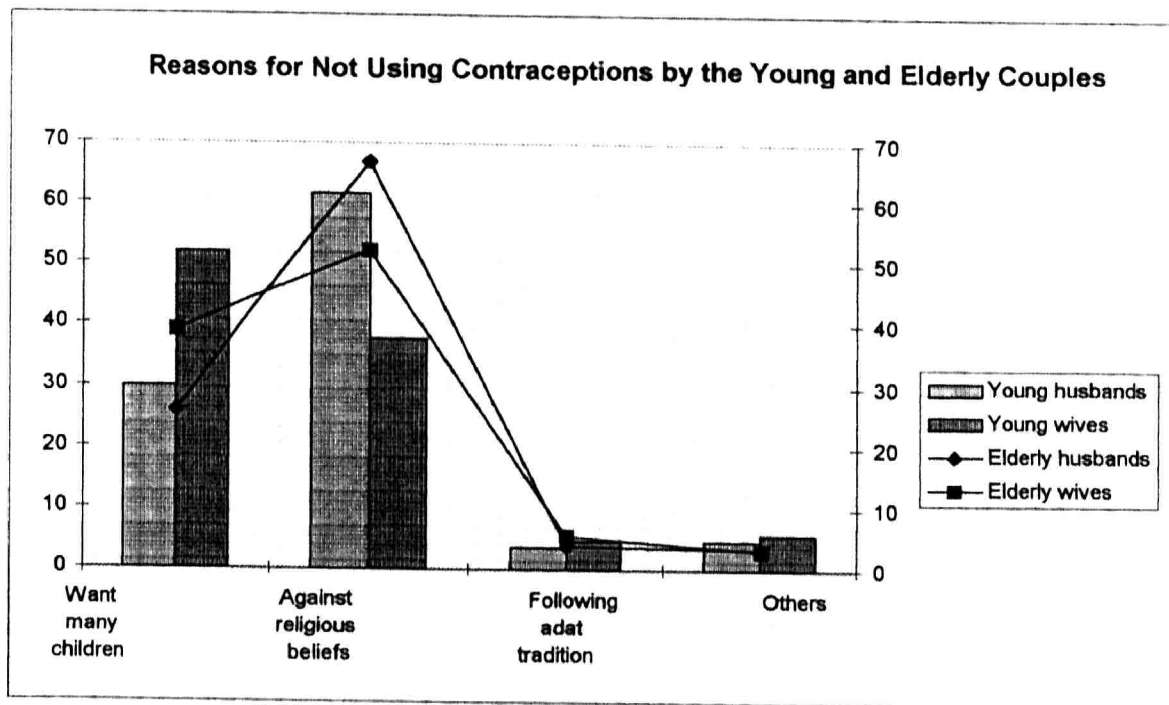
Non-Contraception Users: Among those who have had no experience in the use of contraceptives, 61.5 percent of young husbands and

¹M = 5.03 for the husbands, and M = 5.17 for the wives.

²M = 5.87 for the husbands, and M = 5.82 for the wives.

37.7 percent of young wives noted that they do not practice birth control because they believe that its practise is against the will of God (figure 4.4). This religious inhibiting factor is also mentioned more strongly by the majority of elderly husbands and wives (66.9 percent of the husbands and 52.3 percent of wives) as the reason for not practising birth control. To have many children as the reason for not using contraception is mentioned more by wives than by husbands, and more by young wives than elderly wives³.

Figure 4.4



4.3 Child Rearing

In a society undergoing rapid changes, social and cultural control may not be sufficient for the moral and behavioural control of the youth. The family as the primary unit of

³About 29.8 percent of young husbands, 51.9 percent of young wives, 26 percent of elderly husbands, and 39.1 percent of elderly wives.

educational institution plays a crucial role in teaching the moral and ethical values of the society on one hand, and in correcting the deviant behaviour of the children on the other. The respondents were asked about their main anxieties for their children and how they corrected their children's misbehaviours. They were also asked about their children's freedom of choice of work if the job was not according to the norms of the society.

4.3.1 The Main Anxieties

The families face several anxieties in the process of bringing up their children, more particularly those children who are of school going age. The respondents were asked to identify their main anxieties according to importance. They were given nine types of anxieties in three categories (A, B and C) rearranged according to seriousness in each category and then all together. Category A includes gambling, drinking and drug addiction. Category B includes not praying, lack of manners and propriety and lack of responsiveness. Category C includes not doing well in study, lack of work ethics and lack of ambition.

Figure 4.5

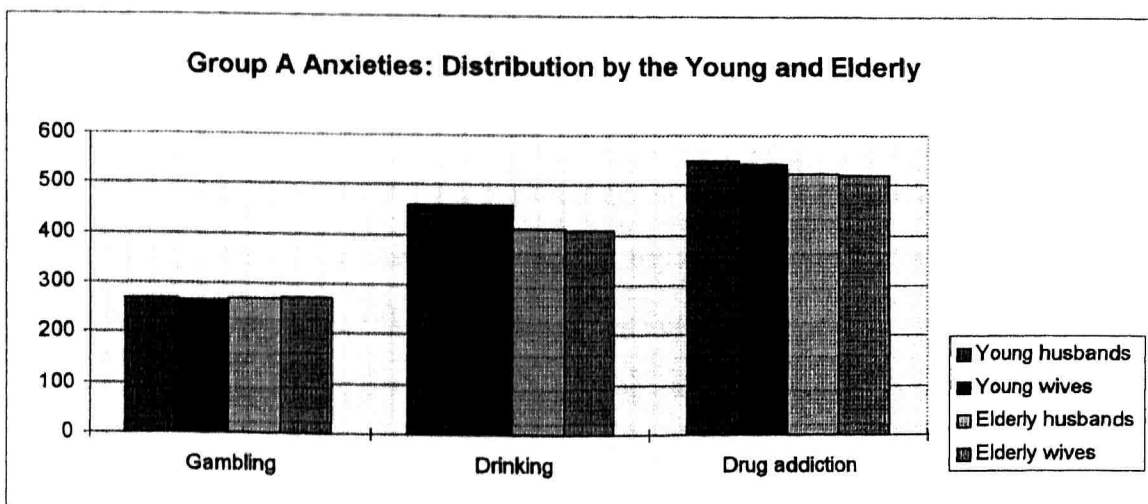


Figure 4.6

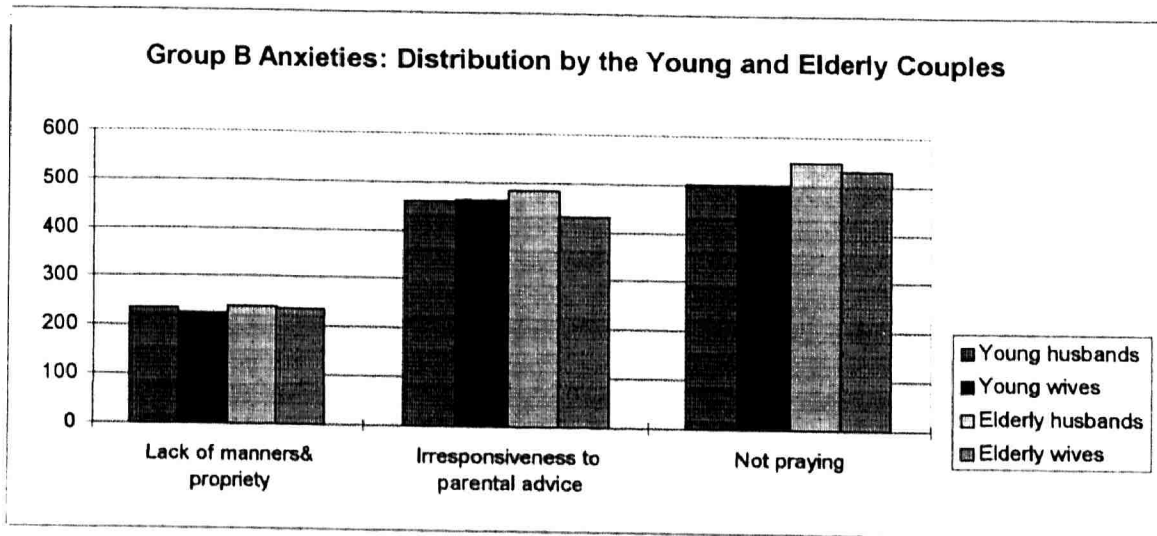
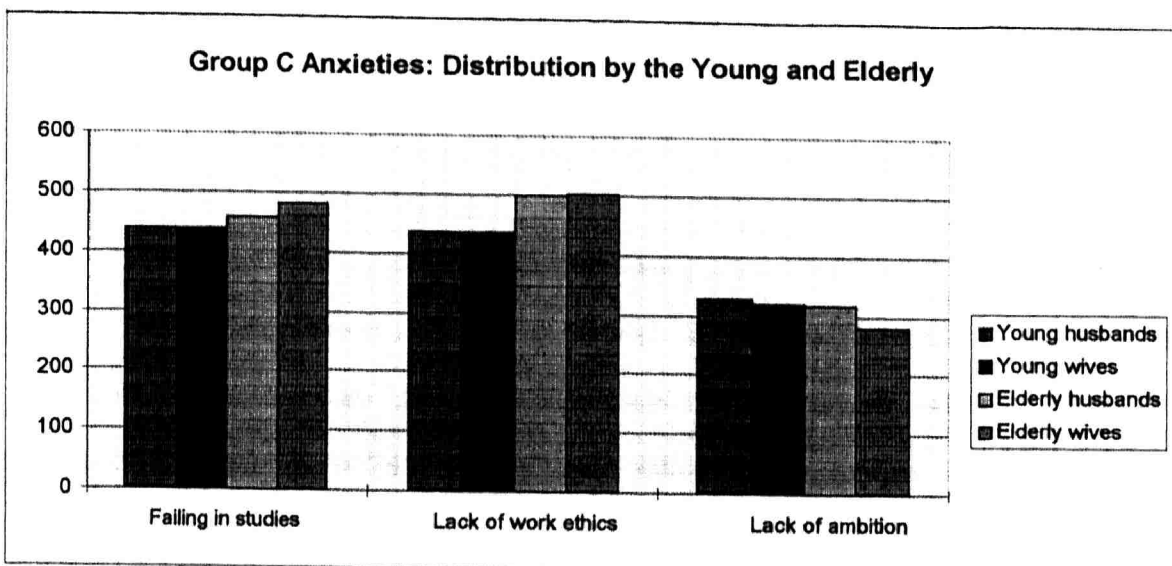


Figure 4.7



Topping the list in category A is drug addiction (figure 4.5). This feeling is shared by both couples. In the group B categories of anxieties, not praying is in the top of the list for both couples (figure 4.6). Not doing well in study in the group C categories of anxieties is more dreadful for young couples, while to elderly husbands and wives it is the lack of work ethics which is more worrying (figure 4.7).

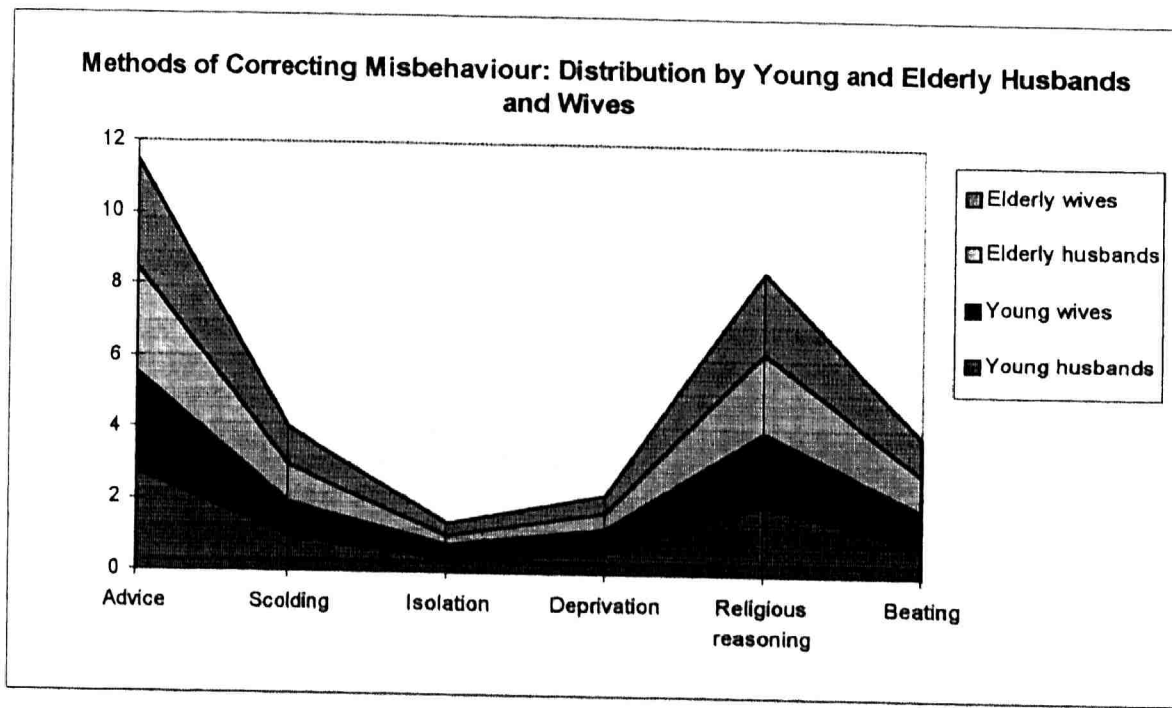
Thus, not praying is seen by religious husband and wives of both generations as the matter of most concern in the set of various anxieties related to religion and religious obligation. The second most mentioned anxiety, especially among the young couples and more religious elderly couples, is the lack of obedience to parental advice. One recent form of deviant youth behaviour is drug addiction which is one of the main sources of anxiety, it increases fear among the respondents of both generations.

4.3.2 Correcting Child Misbehaviour

The respondents were asked to identify the methods of correcting children's common deviant behaviour. The methods include advice, scolding, isolation, reasoning with the use of religious precepts, beating the child and depriving the child of privileges and pocket money.

Among the above-mentioned methods, giving advice is the most common one used by fathers and mothers of both generations (figure 4.8). Advice is always used and elderly parents use it more often than young parents. Using religious reasoning to rectify the misbehaviour of their children is the second most common method used by young and elderly parents. However, the elderly generation use this method more than the younger ones. The parents of both generations seldom scold and beat. Of those who use these methods, the elderly generation apply them more frequently than the younger one. Isolating the child and depriving her or him of privileges and pocket money, are rarely used by the respondents. However, the younger husbands and wives use these methods more frequently than the elderly ones.

Figure 4.8



4.3.3 Child's Choice of Career and Parental Tolerance

This section looks at the influence and power that parents have over their children with respect to their own values. The concern is with the child-parent relationship and the contrast between the new way of life based on modern and Western oriented values on one hand and traditional and religious oriented values on the other.

Three modern occupations - namely, movie star, musician and singer - were chosen to illustrate the issue. These occupations are normally regarded as different from traditionally accepted occupations as a child's choice for her or his future career. The respondents were asked to indicate their reactions if any of their children would want to pursue any one of these professions: rejecting the choice without any compromise (rejection), seeing the choice as undesirable but with a possible compromise (undesirable), disliking the choice but respecting the child's

interest (dislike), and accepting the choice as a desirable career for the child (desirable).

The respondents from both generations do not want their young children to become a movie star or a singer (table 4.1). They view these vocations negatively. This attitude is more pronounced among the wives than among the husbands and among the younger couples more than among the elderly ones.

Table 4.1: The Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives Attitudes Towards the Possible Choice of Young Child*

	Movie star	Musician	Singer
Young husbands	1.24	1.67	1.30
Young wives	1.19	1.48	1.22
Elderly husbands	1.32	1.65	1.36
Elderly wives	1.28	1.52	1.31

*The mean scores include: rejection = 0, undesirable = 1, dislike = 2, and desirable = 3.

Although for the young and elderly husbands and wives being a musician is an undesirable job for their young children, they may accept their children's choice of career. The wives have more negative attitudes towards this option than their husbands. However, there is not much difference between the attitude of the young and the elderly generation on this matter.

4.4 Husband-Wife Relationship

Husband and wife relationships can be seen from different perspectives. In this study some aspects of husband-wife relationships which are addressed are related to decision-making pertaining to child-rearing, where to live, what to buy and whether the wife should work or not. Each aspect is examined in

terms of the differences between husbands' and wives' perceptions of such matters. Thus each spouse expressed his or her view about the division of labour in the family about the above-mentioned family affairs.

4.4.1 Responsibility for Child-Rearing

The respondents were asked to identify who in a family makes the final decision about the instruction and education of the child. The findings indicate that the husband has slightly more responsibility than the wife over the issue of child-rearing. This is true for both generations of respondents (table 4.2). However there are differences between the views of spouses

Table 4.2: Husband-wife Responsibility for Child-Rearing By the View of Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives*

Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	2.80	2.68
Wife	2.68	2.71

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, Wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

over the degree of responsibility of wives on this issue. When the views of the young husbands were compared to the views of elderly husbands over child rearing it revealed that the responsibility of wives is less for the first group compared to the second. Similarly, when young and elderly wives' views were compared, it showed that the responsibility of wives is more in views of former than the latter.

Thus young husbands feel they have more responsibility over child-rearing than their wives; a point accepted by the young

wives but not to the point claimed by their husbands. It is the other way around for elderly couples. The responsibility that husbands feel over child-rearing is less than what their wives believe.

4.4.2 Where to Live and What Kind of Car to Buy

Buying a new car and renting or buying a house or an apartment are considered to be decisions that are to be made by both husband and wife. The young husbands and wives accept that buying a new car is dependent more upon the decision of the husband than that of the wife (table 4.3). The elderly husbands also believe that buying a new car comes as a responsibility of husbands more than that of wives, while their wives believe that it is the responsibility of both husbands and wives alike.

In matters like buying or renting a place of residence for the family, the elderly husbands and wives acknowledge that this is a more responsibility for husbands than it is for wives (table 4.4). The husbands pay more tribute to the role of husbands than the wives do so. The elderly couples believe more on the responsibility of the husband over matters related to the family's place of residence than the young couples do.

Table 4.3: Husband-wife Responsibility for Buying Car for the Family by the View of Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives*

Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	3.42	3.57
Wife	3.42	2.92

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

Table 4.4: Husband-wife Responsibility for Buying or Renting a Place to Live by the View of Young and Elderly

Husbands and Wives*		
Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	3.16	3.35
Wife	3.06	3.34

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

4.4.3 Subsistence of the Family

In this section, attempts are made to find out who has more responsibility in the decision-making on home economics and management. To illustrate this point two items were chosen, namely food and furniture.

The young husbands and wives agree that the amount of money per month to be spent on food is to be decided by both husband and wife (table 4.5). The elderly husbands and wives see that the influence of the wife on this subject is slightly more than that of the husband.

Table 4.5: Husband-wife Responsibility for House Expenditure on Food by the View of Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives*

Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	2.97	2.87
Wife	3.03	2.92

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

The husbands in both generations pay more tribute to the role of the wives in the decision-making on this matter than the wives themselves.

The young husbands and wives believe, more than the elder generation do, that wives views are more influential than their

husbands views in making decision to buy or to change house furniture (table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Husband-wife Responsibility for Buying House Furniture by the View of Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives

Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	2.71	2.81
Wife	2.71	2.92

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

4.4.4 Decision about Wife's Job

In the recent past, like in other traditional societies, the relationship between work and family in Malay society was divided along gender lines, with men as 'breadwinners' and women as 'homemakers'. But in recent years the urban Malay women have greatly increased their participation in the labour force⁴. This issue is critical since it creates crisis for division of labour at home particularly in matters relating to the care of their children⁵. The respondents of both generations, except the young

Table 4.7: Husband-wife Responsibility for Wife's Job by the View of Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives*

Respondent	Young	Elderly
Husband	2.84	3.11
Wife	3.11	3.34

*The means are result of the following scores: wife always = 1, wife more than husband = 2, wife and husband together = 3, husband more than wife = 4, husband always = 5.

⁴ At the time of the survey, 63.4 percent of the young wives and 10.9 percent of the elderly wives were working.

⁵ In Islam, the financial responsibility for family subsistence goes to the husband, and not to the wife.

husbands, agree that it is more the husband's decision than the wife's as to whether she should apply for a job, continue her job, or quit her job (table 4.7). The wives of both generations emphasise the role of their husbands in this matter more than their husbands do.

4.5 Women

The position of the woman in a family in terms of her individual and family needs as well as her authority over social and cultural activities is next considered in this chapter. The young and elderly wives were asked three sets of questions: a wife's authority over outdoor activities, a wife's right to work, and matters related to hair style and the use of cosmetics.

4.5.1 Wife's Authority over Outdoor Activities

The respondents were asked (both husbands and wives) to identify who gives permission for a wife's outdoor activities, namely shopping, going to social affairs, going to religious ceremonies, and visiting friends or relatives (figures 4.9 and 4.10). The scores are: her decision = 1, consult husband = 2, permission of husband = 3.

Shopping: The majority of the young and elderly couples say that the wives consult their husbands or get their husbands' permission before they go shopping. There is a difference between husbands and wives in their views concerning permission for wives to go shopping⁶. The husbands believe that their wives shop with

⁶The young wives' response (M = 1.91) show that this tendency is stronger than what their husbands believe (M = 1.77). The elderly husbands report that their wives shop mostly after consulting them (M = 1.87), while the response of the wives on this matter show that they mainly (M = 2.03) consult their husbands.

their knowledge or permission less than they claim. Also the younger wives are more inclined than the elderly ones to be independent where shopping is concerned⁷.

Social Activities: The majority of wives, according to both young and elderly couples, ask permission or consult their husbands before any attempt to go out for social activities. The study shows that the young wives tend to get permission from their husbands when they want to go out for social activities. The elderly husbands and wives say that the wives have a moderate tendency to ask permission from their husbands rather than consult them.

Wives' involvement in social activities is highly related to receiving permission or consulting their husbands for both generations. However, the elderly wives are more dependent on their husband's consent than the young wives⁸. Both young and elderly wives claim that husbands have more authority over them than what the husbands confess⁹.

Religious Activities: More than in any other outdoor activities the female respondents are independent in religious activities¹⁰.

⁷The young husbands say that 33.1 percent of their wives do not consult them when they go shopping, while 24.3 percent of the wives confess that they do not inform their husbands about it. Elderly husbands say that 27.7 percent of their wives go shopping without their knowledge, but only 19 percent of the wives admitted so.

⁸About 10.5 percent of the young husbands and 7.3 percent of elderly husbands say that their wives go out for social activities without consulting them or obtaining their permission. Only 3.8 percent of the young wives and 1.7 percent of elderly wives admit that they go out for social activities without even consulting or telling their husbands.

⁹The young wives' (M = 2.38) and the elderly wives' claim (M = 2.44) that they acquire permission are more than what their husbands confess (M for young husbands is 2.26 and for elderly husbands is 2.35).

¹⁰According to the husbands, 38.1 percent of young wives and 42.7 percent of elderly wives do not consult them or get permission when they go out for outdoor religious activities. About 27.6 percent of the young wives and 35.3 percent of elderly wives admit that they do not inform their husbands about such activities.

However, more than half of the respondents of both generations say the wives consult their husbands or ask for their permission before going out for outdoor religious activities.

Figure 4.9

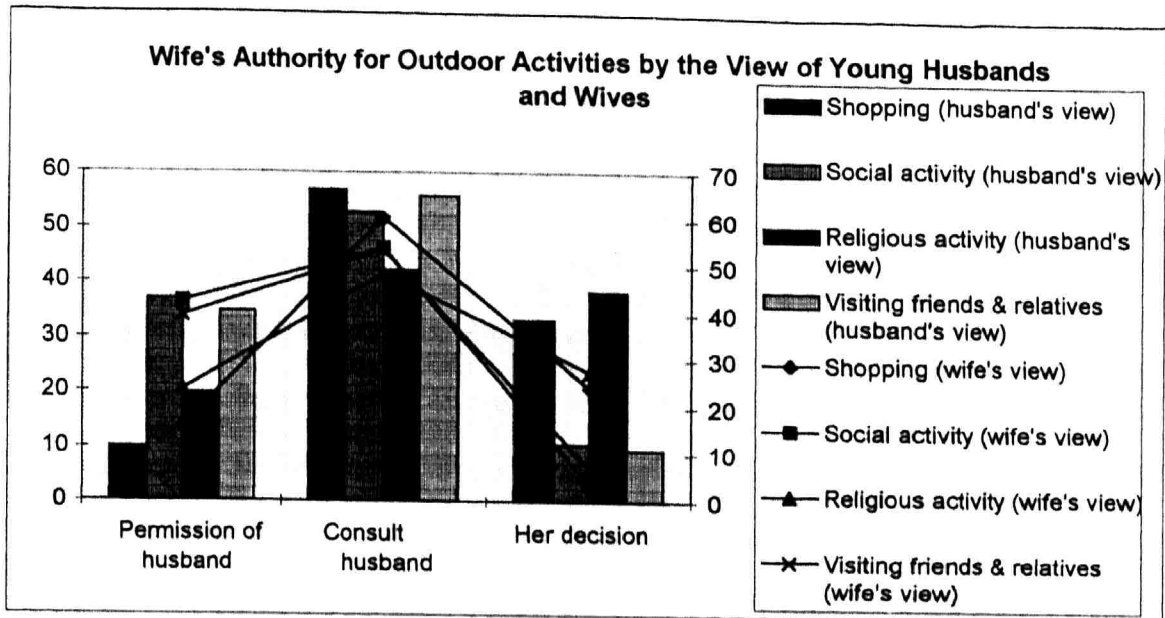
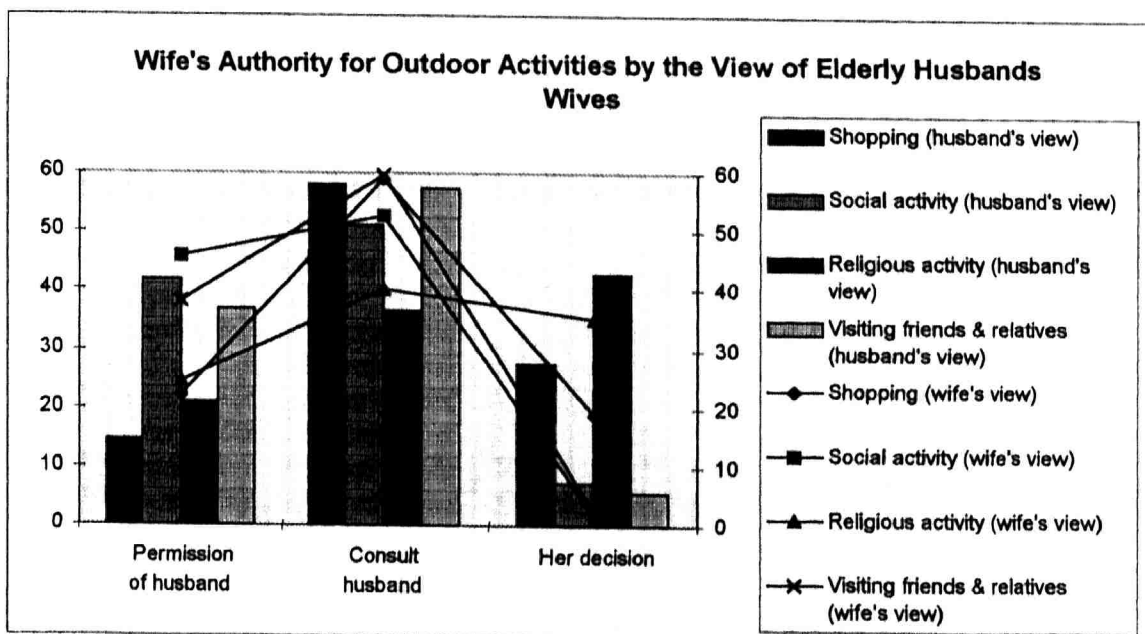


Figure 4.10



The percentage of wives who go out for outdoor religious activities without the permission of their husbands is higher

among the elderly wives compared to the young wives according to both husbands and wives¹¹. On the other hand, the wives' admission to not getting permission from their husbands is less than what their husbands believe.

Relations with Friends and Relatives: According to respondents of both generations, over 90 percent of the wives ask permission from their husbands or consult them before leaving the house to visit friends or relatives¹². The elderly wives are more eager to get permission than the young ones¹³.

4.5.2 Reasons for Wife Stop Working

Those female respondents who at the time of interview were not working were asked to relate their working experience, and identify the reason for not working (or quitting their jobs if they worked before). Among the non-working wives, 66.8 percent of the young wives and 19.3 percent of the elderly wives had working experience (figure 4.11).

The main reason given by both young and elderly wives for not working¹⁴ is having too much work at home, which makes it difficult for them to work outside the house. Another main reason

¹¹The mean by the young husbands' view is 1.82 and by the view of elderly husbands is 1.78. The young wives' responses (M = 1.96) and the elderly wives (M = 1.89) indicate the higher tendency for going out for religious activities depending upon consultation with their husbands.

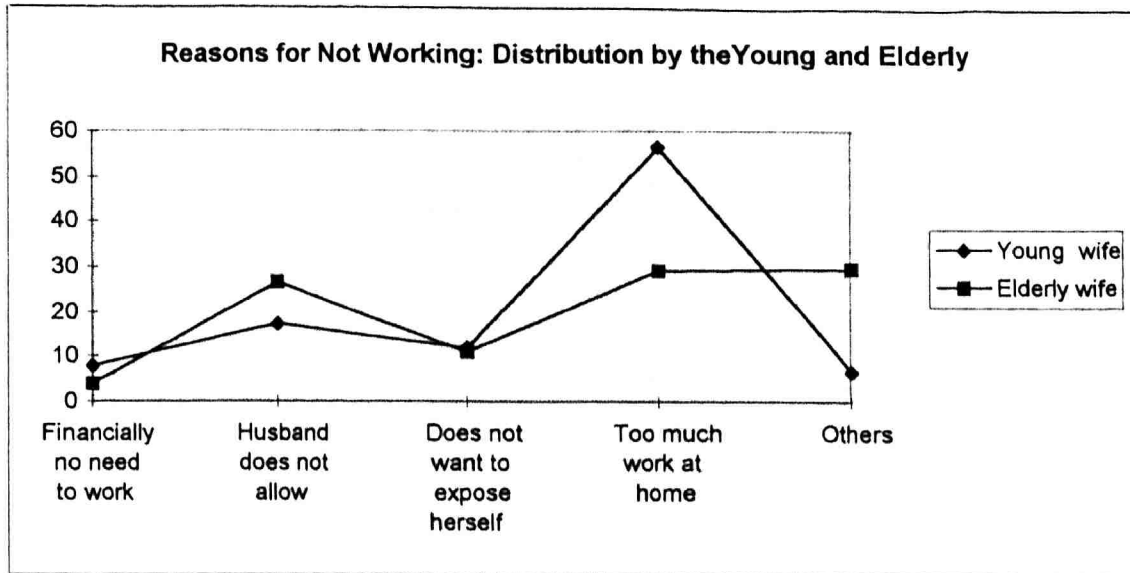
¹²According to the husbands, 9.7 percent of the young wives and 5.6 percent of elderly wives visit their own friends and relatives on their own. The wives admit that 7.1 percent of the young wives and 2.2 percent of elderly wives do not seek their husbands consent for such a purpose.

¹³The wives' view (M = 2.31 for both young and elderly wives) indicates a stronger tendency on this matter than the husbands' view (M = 2.25 for young wives and M = 2.33 for elderly wives).

¹⁴About 56.6 percent of young wives, and 29.1 percent of elderly wives.

for stop working is that the husband is opposed to the idea of a wife having a job outside the house¹⁵.

Figure 4.11



4.5.3 Hair Style and Use of Cosmetics

The female respondents were also asked about their hair style and use of cosmetics.

Who Styles the Female's Hair: The female respondents were asked to identify the frequency with which they style their hair, who help them in doing so or whether they go to a hair-dresser.

The young and elderly wives always have the tendency to style their hair by themselves (table 4.8). They never have the tendency to go to a male hairdresser. The other ways of hair styling are seldom used by the young wives and even more rarely by the elderly wives .

The young wives use different ways to style their hair more than the elderly ones do (figures 4.12 and 4.13). Also, the young

¹⁵ It is cited by 17.1 percent of the young wives and 26.3 percent of the elderly wives.

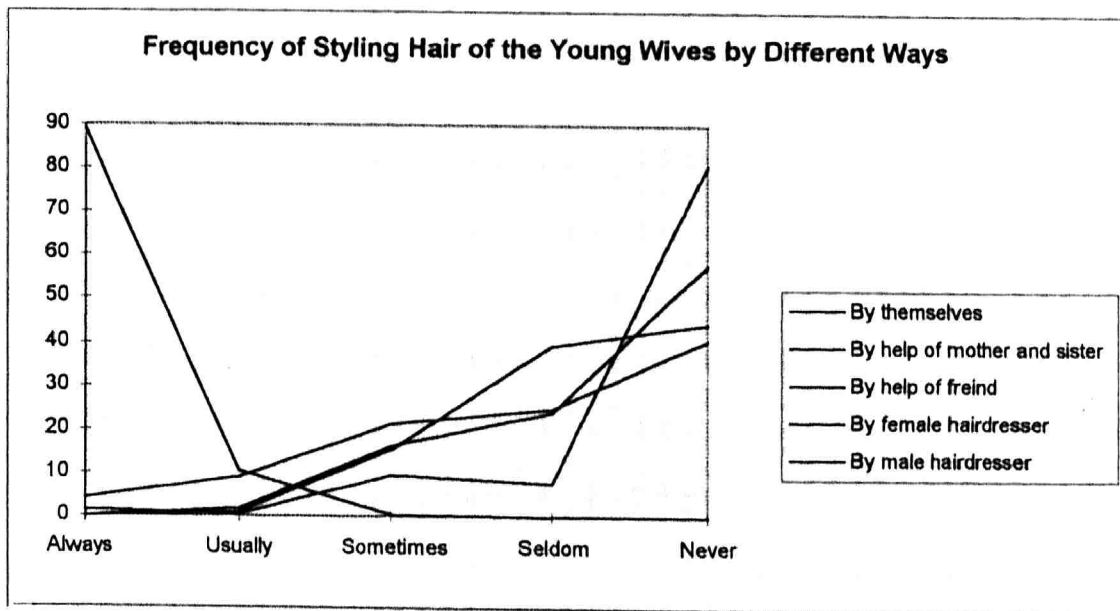
wives, more than the elderly ones ask relatives, friends and hair-dressers to style their hair.

Table 4.8: Who Does the Hair Style of the Wives by the young and Elderly Generations*

	Young wives	Elderly wives 1990s	Elderly wives 1960s
By themselves	3.89	3.85	3.75
With the help of mother or sister	0.73	0.14	1.73
With the help of a friend	0.62	0.09	0.96
By female hair dresser	1.11	0.11	0.29
By male hair dresser	0.33	0.03	0.07

* The mean scores include: 0 = never, 1 = seldom, 2 = sometimes, 3 = usually, and 4 = always.

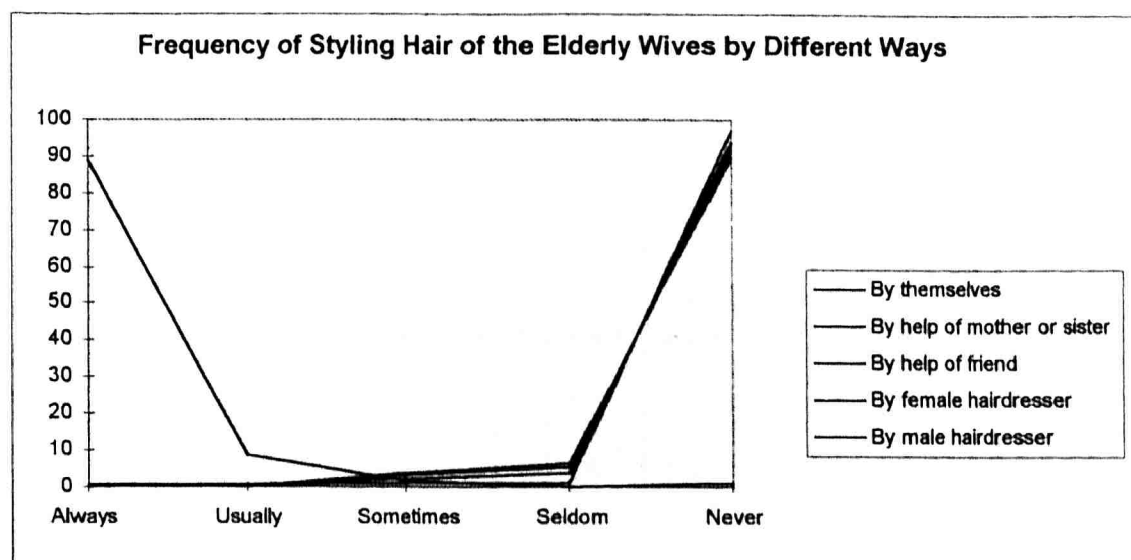
Figure 4.12



The young wives of present time, more than the young wives of the 1960s, style their hair by themselves and go to male or female hairdressers. However, the elderly wives when they were young got help with styling their hair from their relatives and friends more than the young wives now. Now-a-days the elderly wives use less variety in the ways of styling their hair compared

to when they were young, particularly where the help of others and hairdressers are concerned.

Figure 4.13



Use of Cosmetics: The female respondents were asked to identify the frequency of their use of cosmetics in the following ways: simple facial make up, complete facial make up, manicuring the nails, applying perfume, and applying deodorant. Simple facial make up is common among young and elderly wives (figures 4.14 and 4.15). The most common cosmetics among the female respondents is simple make up; the young wives between 'usually' to 'always' and elderly wives 'usually' apply simple make up (table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Use of Cosmetics by the Young and Elderly Wives*

Types of Cosmetics	Young Wives	Elderly Wives	
		1990s	1960s
Simple facial make up	3.47	2.91	3.23
Complete facial make up	1.40	0.29	1.06
Manicuring nail	0.84	0.15	0.53
Applying perfume	2.37	1.00	1.36
Applying deodorant	2.19	0.87	1.29

* The mean scores are from 0 = never to 5 = always.

Complete facial make up is 'more than seldom' used by young wives while elderly wives almost 'never' use it. Having a manicure is seldom used by young wives and elderly wives. The young wives more than 'sometimes' and elderly wives 'seldom' apply perfume and deodorant.

Figure 4.14

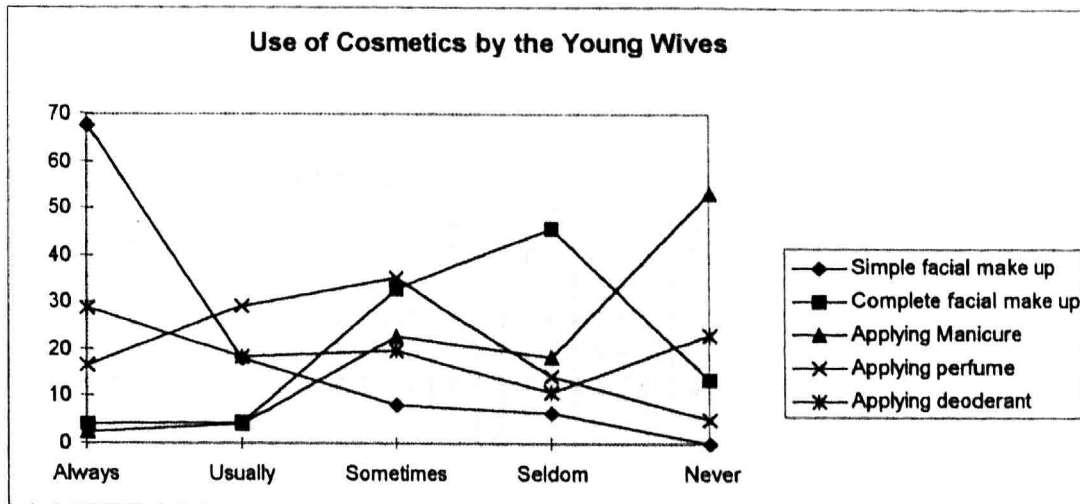
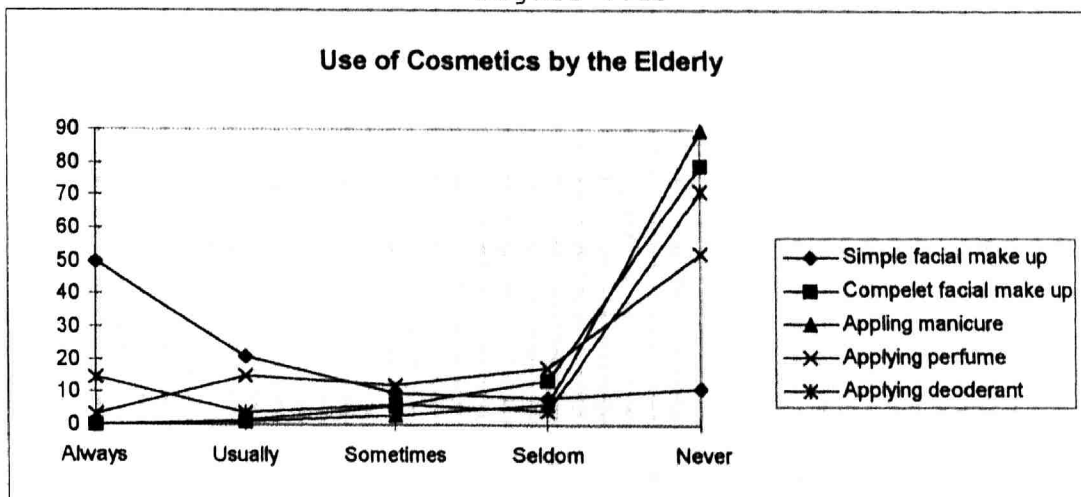


Figure 4.15



The use of cosmetics is more common among young wives of present time as compared to the elderly wives when they were young. The difference between the young wives now and those of

the 1960s is also discernible in their use of perfume and deodorant. Elderly wives used more cosmetics when they were young compared to now-a-days, particularly where complete facial make up and manicuring their nails are concerned.

4.6 Traditions and Ceremonies

Malay culture is rich in traditions and ceremonies. There are many aspects of culture which may be related to the present study. However only two aspects of Malay culture are examined for the purpose of this study, namely the marriage ceremony and costume.

4.6.1 Marriage Ceremony

The relation between the way the marriage ceremony is conducted in terms of attachment to *adat* and modernity is considered here. Then, relationship is examined in the context of gender, generation and in the next chapter, of religiosity.

Extravagant Adat Ceremony: The extravagant celebration of the marriage ceremony according to *adat* is a costly ceremony affordable only by middle and high income group. An extravagant *adat* ceremony was more common in the past than in recent years. The elderly couples were married in an extravagant kind of ceremony over two times more than the young couples were (table 4.10).

Simple Adat Ceremony: The respondents were mainly married in a simple ceremony according to the *adat*. The simple *adat* ceremony is a type of ceremony that is affordable by all income groups including the low income group. The young couples had married in a more simple way than the elderly ones had done so.

Table 4.10: Types of Ceremony by the Young and Elderly Couples (%)

Types of Ceremony	Young Couples	Elderly Couples
The extravagant adat ceremony	14.6	33.9
The simple adat ceremony	75.3	64.4
Modern ceremony	6.7	1.3
Others	3.3	0.4

Modern Ceremony: The respondents were not keen to marry in a modern fashion. A modern ceremony is a type of ceremony that is not based on the *adat* ceremony. This type of marriage ceremony was more practised among the young couples than the elderly ones.

4.6.2 Attire

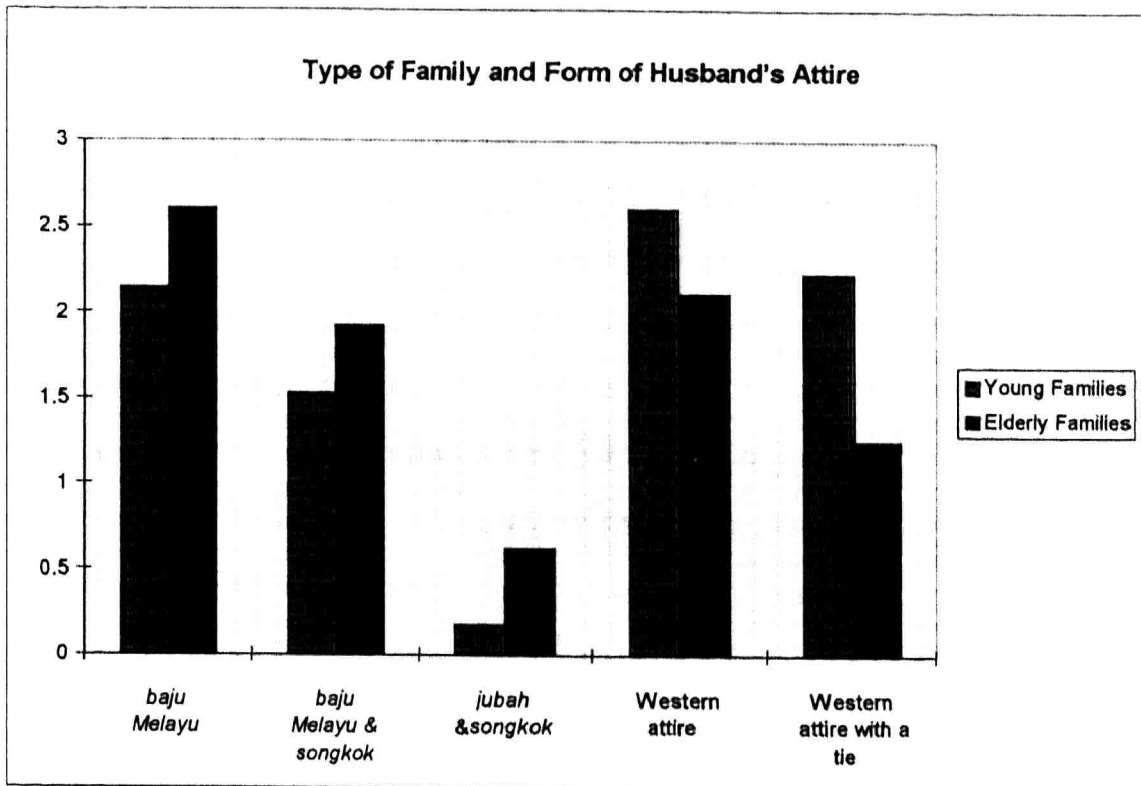
Malay costume is influenced by the traditional pre-Islamic *adat* and also by Islamic beliefs and traditions associated with the Muslims of South Asia and the Middle East. Modern Western clothes have also become part of both male and female Malay costume. Costume among Malays is an important socio-cultural issue.

Male Attire: Male Malay attire mainly includes the following:

- *Baju Melayu*: a traditional Malay costume;
- *Baju Melayu* and *songkok*: this is more towards an indication of religious values than the practice of ethnic tradition;
- *Jubah* and *songkok*: this type of male clothing is linked to religious beliefs and is influenced by Middle Eastern traditions;

- Western clothes: include those clothes which originated in Western societies. This type of clothes has become a feature of urban life;
- Western clothes with tie: this is more characteristic of the bureaucratic life of the city.

Figure 4.16



The attire is related to the age of the respondent (figure 4.16). For young husbands the most common clothing is Western without a tie ($M = 2.60$)¹⁶. *Baju Melayu* is the most common attire for elderly husbands ($M = 2.60$) and this type of clothes was also more common ($M = 2.78$) for elderly husbands when they were young in the 1960s. The second most common attire for young husbands is Western clothing with a tie ($M = 2.22$), while for

¹⁶ The mean scores include: never = 0, seldom = 1, sometimes = 2, usually = 3, and always = 4.

elderly husbands it is Western clothing without a tie ($M = 2.11$). The latter type of clothing was also the second most common attire ($M = 2.06$) for elderly husbands when they were young (in the 1960s). Of the attire mentioned, the '*jubah and songkok*' is the least worn by both young and elderly husbands, but the former wears it less ($M = 0.28$) than the latter ($M = 0.62$). This kind of clothing was seldom worn ($M = 0.50$) by elderly husbands when they were young¹⁷.

Thus the younger generation is more eager to wear western clothes than the elderly. Although traditional and religious attire plays an important role in the cultural life of the young husbands, they are less keen to wear these kinds of clothes as compared to their elders.

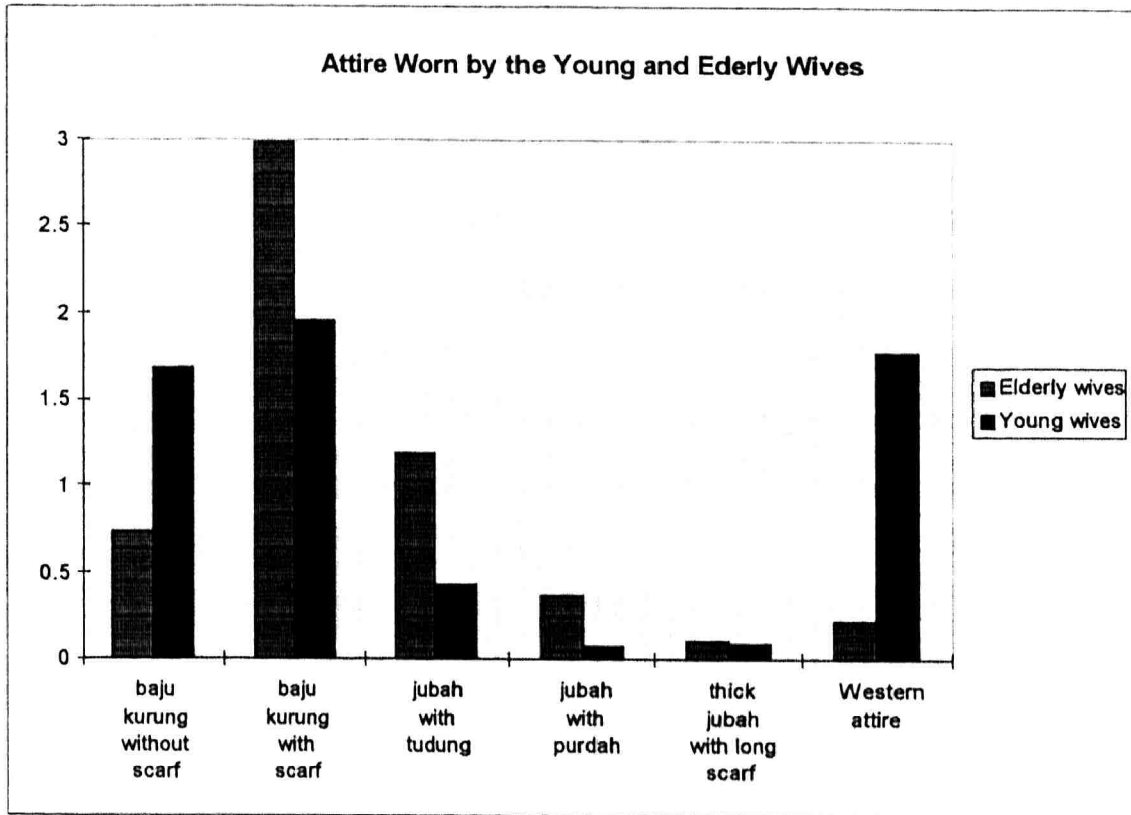
Female Attire: Malay female attire is more diverse than the male attire. The following forms of attire are the more common among the urban Malay females.

- *Baju kurung* without scarf: this is regarded as the traditional Malay dress.
- *Baju kurung* with scarf: typical traditional dress with an indication of religious values.
- *Jubah* with *tudung*: typical religious attire (long and loose) with complete head dress.
- *Jubah* with *purdah*: complete religious attire with a veil.
- Thick *jubah* with long *tudung*: This allows more coverage than '*jubah with tudung*'.

¹⁷ The elderly husbands who were born in an urban area comprise 62.2 percent of total elderly husbands compare to 69 percent of young husbands. Only 1.7 percent of elderly husbands were born in Kuala Lumpur compared to 6.7 percent of young husbands, the rest of those who were born in urban areas come from other Malaysian states mostly from small towns.

- Western dress: include those dresses that are not related to Malay tradition and religious beliefs.

Figure 4.17



There are differences in what to wear between young and elderly wives. Although traditional dress is accepted by both generations, the elderly wives wear more the *baju kurung* with a scarf than the younger ones; and the younger wives wear more *baju kurung* without scarf as compared to the elder ones (figure 4.17). The young wives sometimes wear traditional ($M = 1.95$ with scarf and $M = 1.68$ without scarf) and western dress ($M = 1.78$). Elderly wives usually wear the *baju kurung* with a scarf ($M = 2.98$). Wearing the *jubah* with *tudung* ($M = 1.19$) is the second most common attire among elderly wives while it is seldom used by young wives ($M = 0.43$). Other form of attire are not popular among the female respondents (means are between 0.07 to 0.74).

However, all forms of religious attire are accepted more by elderly wives than younger ones. Western dress which is common among the young wives is not very popular with elderly wives.

4.7 Use of Modern Appliances

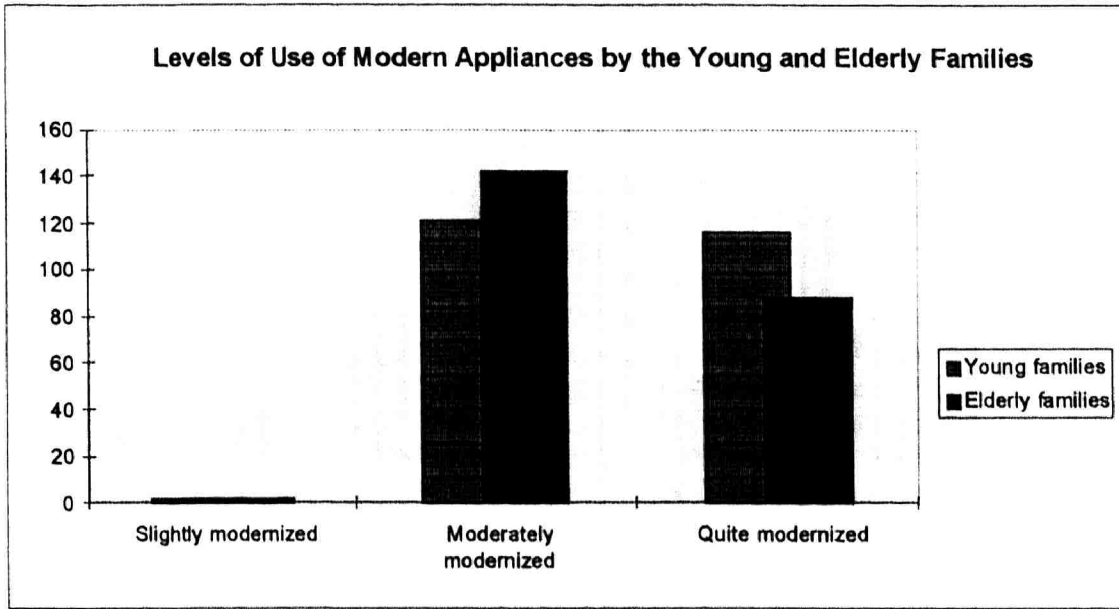
Seventeen items, classified into two sets, which are usually used in a modern, urban middle class society were chosen and the respondents were asked to state whether these are found in their houses. Items in the first set include refrigerator, radio-cassette, oven(gas), dining table, furniture, electric fan, iron, television, and electric rice cooker. Each of these items have a score of one. Items in the second set include mixer, oven (electric), car, telephone, washing machine, air-conditioner, musical instrument, and video player. Each of these items have a score of two. If the sum of the scores of the mentioned items was nine or less then the household is labelled 'slightly modernised'. With a score of between 10 to 18 the household is considered 'moderately modernised', and with a score of 19 or more it is labelled as 'quite modernised'¹⁸.

Both young and elderly families can be considered more than 'moderately modernised' (figure 4.18). The young families benefit more from modern appliances ($M = 2.48$) than the elderly generation ($M = 2.37$). However, both generations use most of the 17 items and have a strong tendency to become 'quite modernised'. Only 0.8 percent of the young and 0.9 percent of the elderly

¹⁸ The mean of the above labels is the result of the following scores: less modernised = 1, moderately modernised = 2, and quite modernised = 3.

families live in houses which have few modern appliances and are labelled slightly modernised.

Figure 4.18



4.8 Recreation

Among the many kinds of recreational activities, the respondents were asked to identify the frequency of being involved in the following selected activities: visit to the park, involvement in family club activities, going to the movies or theatre, playing or listening to music and playing or watching sport.

Park: Going to the park is a hobby for young families; they 'sometimes' spend their time getting fresh air in a park (table 4.11). The elderly families 'seldom' go to the park; that is less than the young families do (figure 4.19).

Club: The club is not a popular place for urban middle income group respondents. One important factor is that the membership is expensive (figure 4.20). The young families 'seldom' get involve

in club activities. The elderly families almost 'never' go to a club for recreation activities.

Figure 4.20

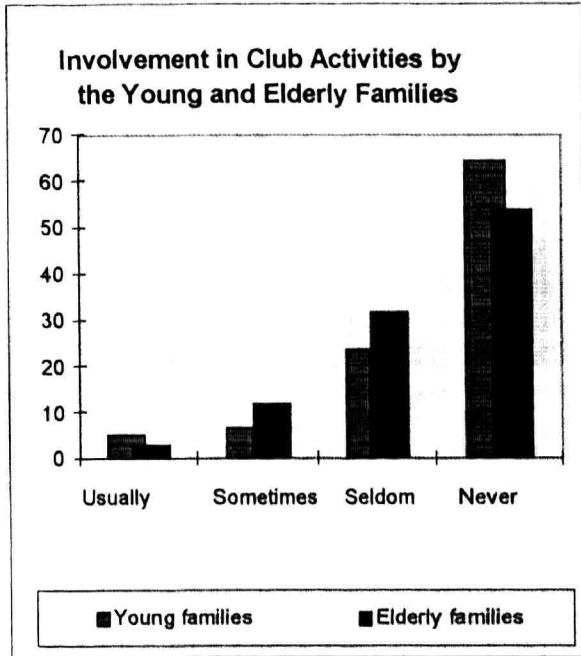


Figure 4.19

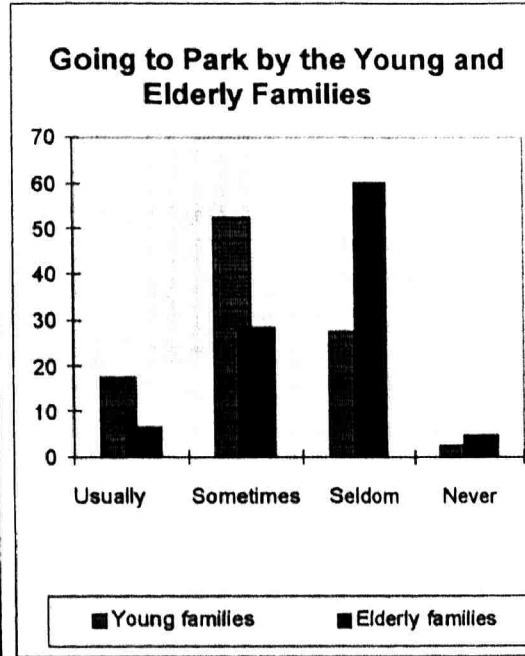


Table 4.11: Recreational Activity by the Young and Elderly Families*

	Park	Club	Cinema/ theatre	Playing music	Listening to music	Playing sport	Watching sport
Young families	1.80	0.51	0.58	0.70	2.12	1.88	2.10
Elderly families	1.35	0.32	0.32	0.48	1.72	1.43	1.90

*The mean scores include: never = 0, seldom = 1, sometimes = 2, and usually = 3.

Cinema and Theatre: Going to the cinema or theatre is not a common activity for couples of both generations (figure 4.21). The young families 'seldom' go to the cinema (or theatre), while the elderly families almost 'never' go to the cinema.

Figure 4.21

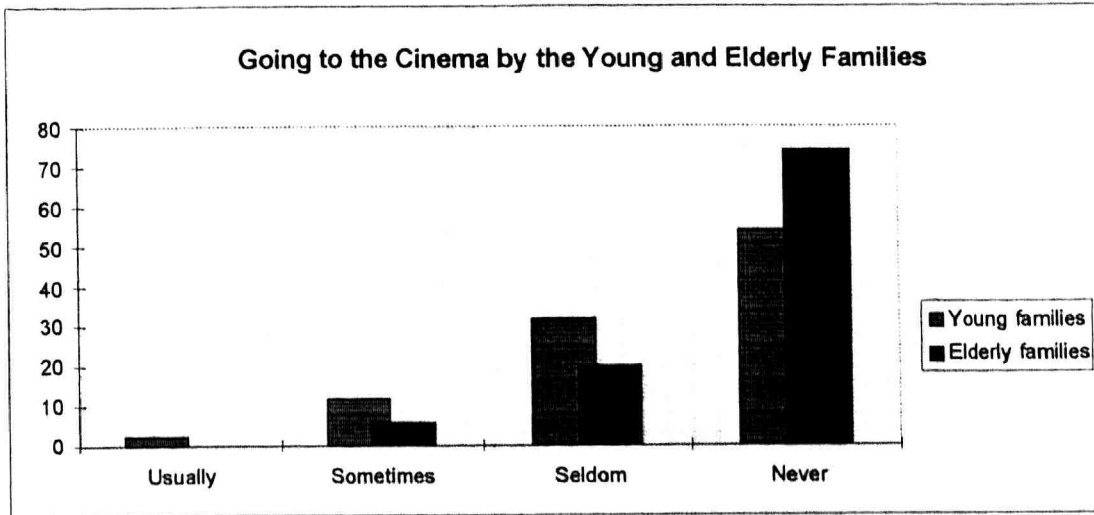


Figure 4.22

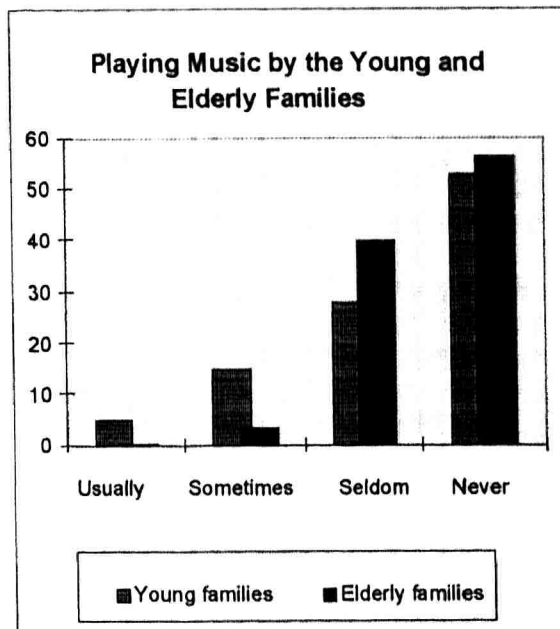
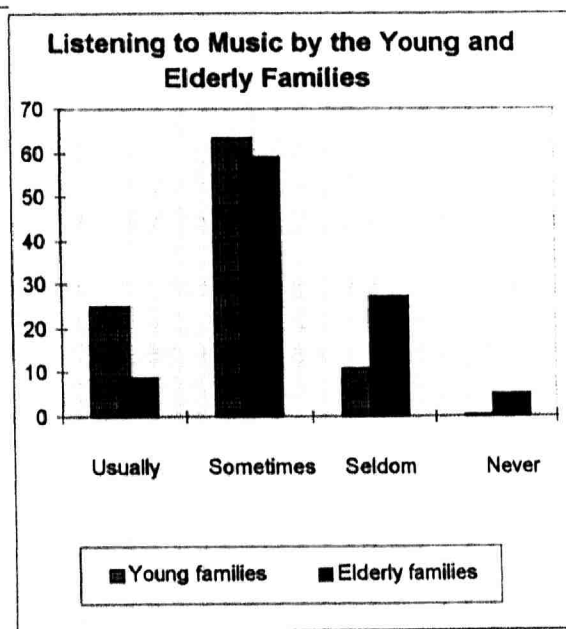


Figure 4.23



Music: Playing music is not a common hobby among young and elderly families (figure 4.22). Both generations 'seldom' play an instrument during their free time.

Although in most of the respondents' families there is a lack of knowledge of how to play a musical instrument, most young and elderly families 'sometimes' listen to music (figure 4.23).

The young families listen to music more than the elderly families do.

Figure 4.24

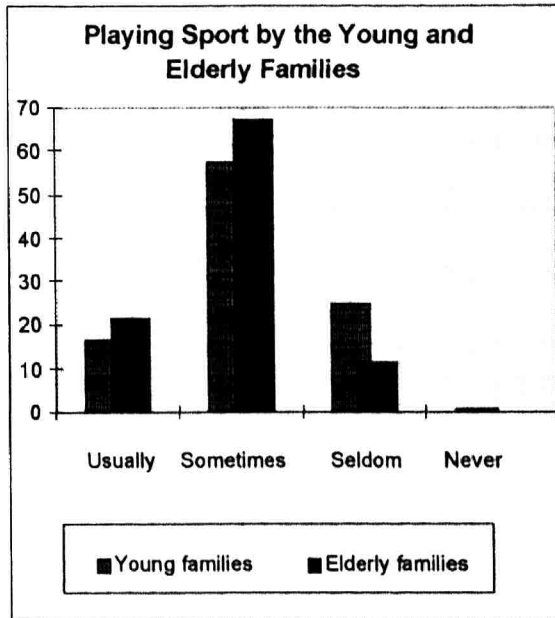
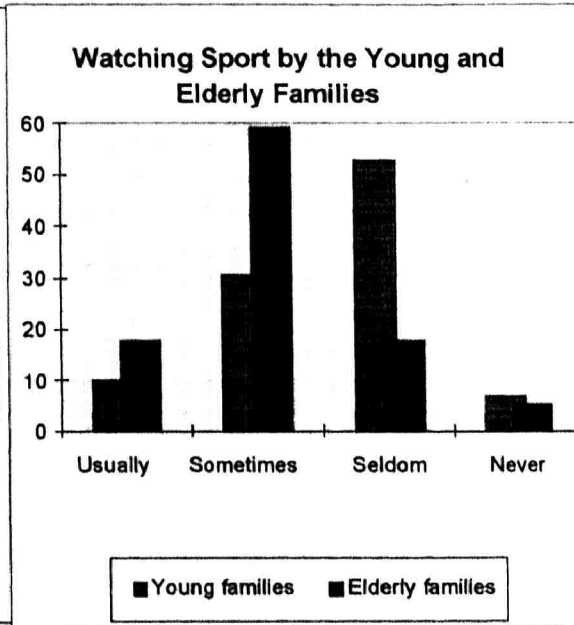


Figure 4.25



4.9 Mass Media

The mass media in the present study includes television, video, and magazine. They are chosen because of their important influence on family values and affairs as well as on the child's education. About 99.2 percent of young families and 99.6 percent of elderly families own television, and 74.5 percent of young families and 64.2 percent of elderly families have a video player. The couples were asked about their television and video viewing habits and about the kind of programmes or films they usually watch. Those respondents who read newspapers or magazines were asked to identify the kind of materials they usually read.

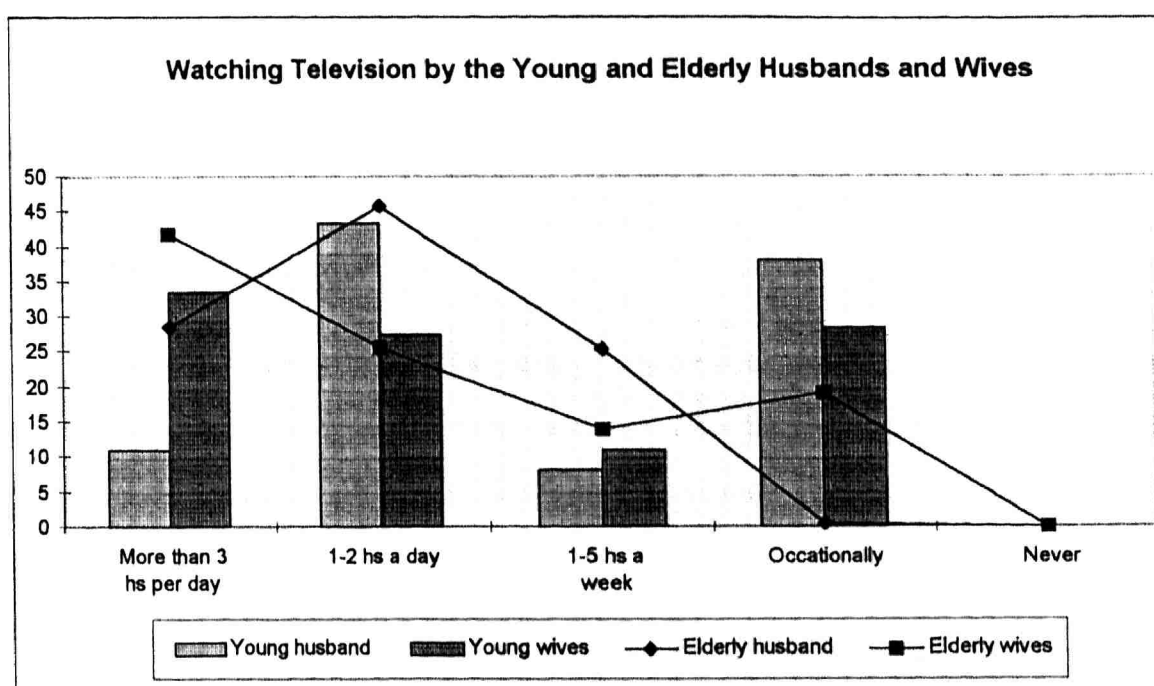
Television: The elderly husbands and wives are slightly more interested in watching television than the young couples¹⁹. The

¹⁹M = 2.27 for young husbands, M = 2.46 for elderly husbands, M = 2.66 for young wives and M = 2.90 for elderly wives.

young and elderly husbands watch television between one to five hours a week. They spend less time watching television than their wives. The female respondents watch television between one to two hours a day (figure 4.26).

Video: The video is less popular than the television among the respondents. But amongst those who watch it, there is not much differences in viewing patterns (figure 4.27). The young and elderly families occasionally watch video²⁰.

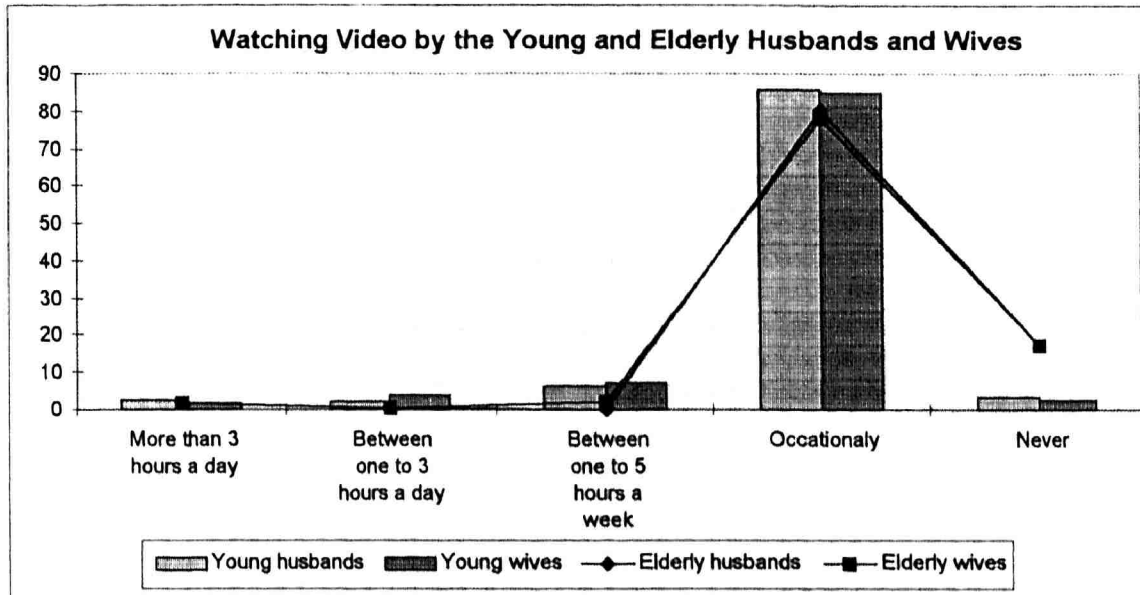
Figure 4.26



Newspapers and Magazines: Printed materials such as newspapers and magazines are popular among all groups of respondents. Over 98 percent of young couples and 98.1 percent of elderly husbands and 94 percent of elderly wives read different magazines and newspapers.

²⁰ M = 1.19 for young husbands, M = 1.20 for young wives, M = 1.07 for elderly husbands, and M = 1.10 for elderly wives.

Figure 4.27



4.10 Ethnic Relation

Ethnic relations is one important aspect of Malaysian society. Relationships between Malays and non-Malays are examined here with respect to public eating-places, neighbourhood and friendship.

Restaurants and eating places are found all over urban areas, especially in Kuala Lumpur; and urban Malaysians often dine out. Malays as Muslims are particular about *halal* food, and because non-Malay restaurateurs are mostly non-Muslims it becomes a contributing factor in the social distance between Malays and non-Malays. Thus, Malay restaurants have no religious limitations; while some Indian restaurants and most Chinese restaurants due to their having a non-Muslim cook, serving alcoholic drinks, and cooking with pork, are regarded as being *non-halal*. The fast food restaurants, although mainly serving

halal food, may not be popular among some families because they may suspect the *halalness* of the food served.

As described in chapter two, until recently Kuala Lumpur was mainly populated by Chinese. But during the last thirty years the composition of the population of the city has gradually changed in favour of the Malays. The Malay new comers have mostly migrated from rural areas, where they have little opportunities with living or dealing with non-Malays. Therefore, having as neighbours people from other ethnic groups is something new for many of them. Living in a busy urban centre implies intensive communication with different groups of people, mostly for business purposes and some for friendship. Every Malay living in Kuala Lumpur, in one way or another, needs to communicate with non-Malays in his or her every day life. The degree of getting along with each other indicates the degree of social distance between them.

4.10.1 Patronage of Eating Places

The respondents were asked about four types of restaurant - Malay, Indian, Chinese, and fast food - to find out whether there is any relationship between eating place and ethnicity.

Malay Restaurants: Malays are keen to go to Malay restaurants more than any other type of restaurant when they dine out. Over 80 percent of the respondents always go to Malay restaurants whenever they eat outside their homes. The pattern is, however, more discernible among elderly families than young families (table 4.12).

Indian Restaurants: Indian restaurants are not favoured by over three-quarters of the respondents. More than 70 percent of them never go to the Indian restaurants when they dine out. This negative attitude is slightly less among the husbands compared to the wives and among the young couples compared to the elderly ones.

Table 4.12: Types of Restaurant by the Young and Elderly Husbands and wives*

Respondent	Malay restaurant	Indian restaurant	Chinese restaurant	Fast food restaurant
Young husbands	3.78	0.30	0.17	2.0
Young wives	3.66	0.25	0.12	1.94
Elderly husbands	3.84	0.23	0.03	1.14
Elderly wives	3.67	0.22	0.02	1.12

* The mean scores include: never = 0, seldom = 1, sometimes = 2, usually = 3, and always = 4.

Chinese Restaurants: The respondents hold more negative attitudes towards Chinese restaurants than Indian restaurants. About 89 percent of the study population never go to Chinese restaurants. The young couples are slightly less particular though, as about 10 percent of them do patronise Chinese restaurants occasionally compared to about 5 percent of the elderly husbands and wives who reported doing so.

None-local foods: Recently, fast food restaurants have made inroad into many Malaysian urban centres. As a modern eating place, this type of restaurant is more popular among the younger couples.

4.10.2 Neighbourhood

The issue of neighbourhood in Malaysia's multiracial society is a sensitive one, since there are many dissimilarities between

the different ethnic and racial groups in terms of customs and beliefs, language, occupation and skills and world-view. Of the total sample, 71.8 percent have non-Muslim neighbours, while 26.5 percent have no non-Muslim neighbours.

The percentage of having non-Muslim neighbours, in both young (73.5 percent) and elderly families (72.4 percent), is nearly identical. However, it shows there is a strong presence of non-Malay neighbours in the respondents' localities.

4.10.3 Having Non-Malay Friends

The respondent were asked to identify which non-Malays they have established friendships with²¹.

Both young and elderly husbands and wives are more acquainted with Chinese than with other groups, closely followed by Indians. Thus, about 85 percent of the young couples and 80 percent of the elderly couples have Chinese friends (table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Having non-Malay Friends by the Young and Elderly Husbands and Wives (%)

Respondent	Chinese	Indian	Eurasian	Foreigner	Others
Young husbands	85.6	79.4	15.4	8.2	15.4
Young wives	84.5	79.2	11.1	9.4	15.9
Elderly husbands	80.3	74.6	3.8	0.9	15.0
Elderly wives	79.7	72.2	2.8	1.4	15.1

The young couples also have more Indian friends (about 79 percent) than the elderly ones (about 73 percent). The young and

²¹ Friend in this study means a person known well to another and regarded with liking, affection, and loyalty.

elderly husbands get along with Chinese and Indians more than their wives do.

The young couples more than the elderly ones have Eurasian and foreigner friends, but, these groups of non-Malay friends are very much smaller compared to Chinese and Indians.

4.11 Conclusion

The examination of the social behaviour and attitudes of urban Malays has revealed differences in their inter-generations and inter-gender attitudes. The differences are related to a type of variable. Each variable plays a different role in the process of modernisation. Some are involved directly and some indirectly. While mass media, recreations, modern appliances, and to some extent some variables related to husbands-wife relationships and the authority of the wife over family affairs are directly involved in the process of modernisation the remaining variables attempt to do so indirectly.

Inter-generation attitudes

The young couples more than elderly couples, use modern appliances, go to the park and the cinema, get involve in club activities, listen to music and play or watch sports; but, the former watch television less than the latter.

The young wives, on the other hand, are given more responsibility for buying furniture and they have more authority for outdoor activities compared to the elderly wives. The young couples are more tolerant in accepting their young sons' and daughters' choice of career in the field of entertainment, than

the elderly couples. The number of children desired by the young couples is less than the number desired by the elderly ones; and the former has more experience in using contraception than the latter. In matters related to the wife's work, the elderly couples more than young couples believe it depends on the husband's decision.

The young couples were mostly free to choose their spouses while the elderly couples mostly married as arranged. Unlike some of the elderly couples, the young couples held the view that an arranged marriage is not a proper way for their young sons and daughters to get married. Most of the young couples had their marriage conducted according to the simple adat ceremony, while the elderly couples had experience with both simple and extravagant wedding ceremonies. Besides 'not praying' and 'drug addiction', for young couples 'not doing well in study' is also one of their main anxieties for their children. For elderly couples it is 'lack of work ethics'. To correct their child's misbehaviour, the young couples use less advice and religious reasoning compared to elderly couples. The young couples more than the elderly couples believe on the authority of the husband over matters related to the family's place of residence and less than them pay tribute to the role of wives where house expenditure on food is concerned. The young husbands and wives wear Western clothes more often than the elderly couples and wear traditional and religious attire less often than them. There are also differences between the two generations in terms of eating places, neighbourhood and friendship with non-Malays. The negative attitude towards non-Malay eating places (Chinese and

Indian restaurants) is stronger among elderly couples, while the positive attitude towards friendship with non-Malay Chinese and Indians is stronger among the young couples.

Inter-gender Attitudes

The wives watch television more than the husbands, particularly in watching movies and entertainment programmes. The wives' claims about getting permission from husbands or consulting them for their outdoor activities are slightly higher than what their husbands believe. In addition,, the wives believe that husbands have more responsibility over a wife's job compared to what their husbands believe. The husbands belief that they are responsible for where the family lives is more than what their wives believe. The wives have more negative attitudes towards their young sons and daughters' choice of career than the husbands. The wives have weaker inter-ethnic relationships compared to the husbands and more negative attitudes towards non-Malay eating places.

Therefore, the young couples more than the elderly couples in many aspect of their family life, are directly and indirectly influenced by the process of modernisation. They give more authority to wives for outdoor activities and in other matters related to family affairs; and, are more sociable in dealing with non-Malays as compared to elderly couples. The main differences between husbands and the wives are related to the wife's social activities.