

Be Fruitful and Multiply: Fertility and Tradeoffs in Latter-Day Saints

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INTRODUCTION

- There are evolutionary trade-offs between energy allocated to reproduction and the self, known as **embodied capital**.
- The members of the Latter-Day Saint (LDS) faith are urged to marry young and reproduce frequently.
- We expect to see selection toward early and frequent reproduction over embodied capital in the Latter-Day Saint (LDS) culture.
 - Seen in the young average age of first marriage and the average amount of children per household.

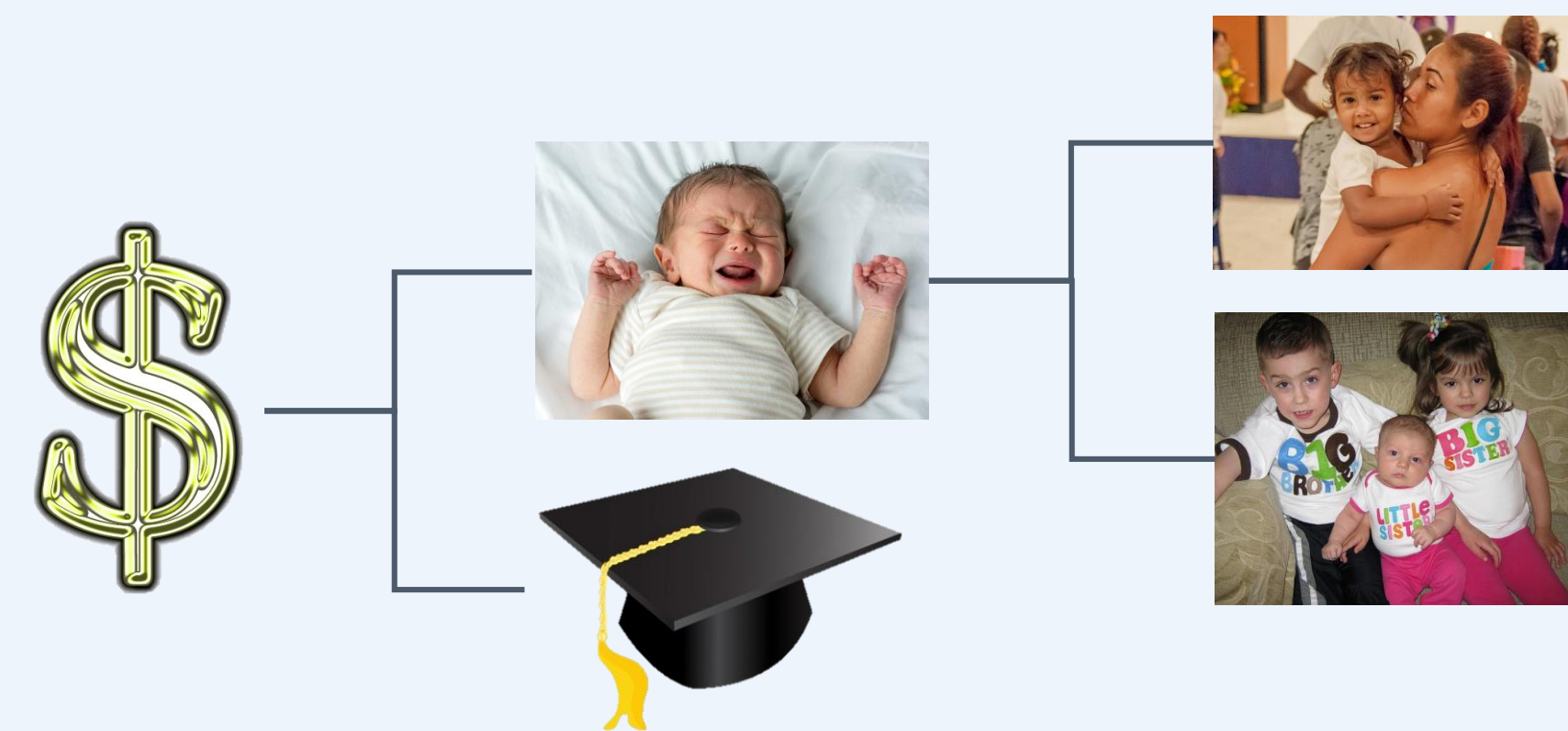
BACKGROUND

The principle of allocation

- Limited amount of resources for growth, maintenance, and reproduction.

Human life history trade-offs

- Characterized by trade-offs between energy for current and future reproduction and energy allocated to the self, known as embodied capital.
- Early reproduction produces more children, but limits embodied capital in the form of education and economic success (Hill and Kaplan 1999).



LATTER-DAY SAINTS

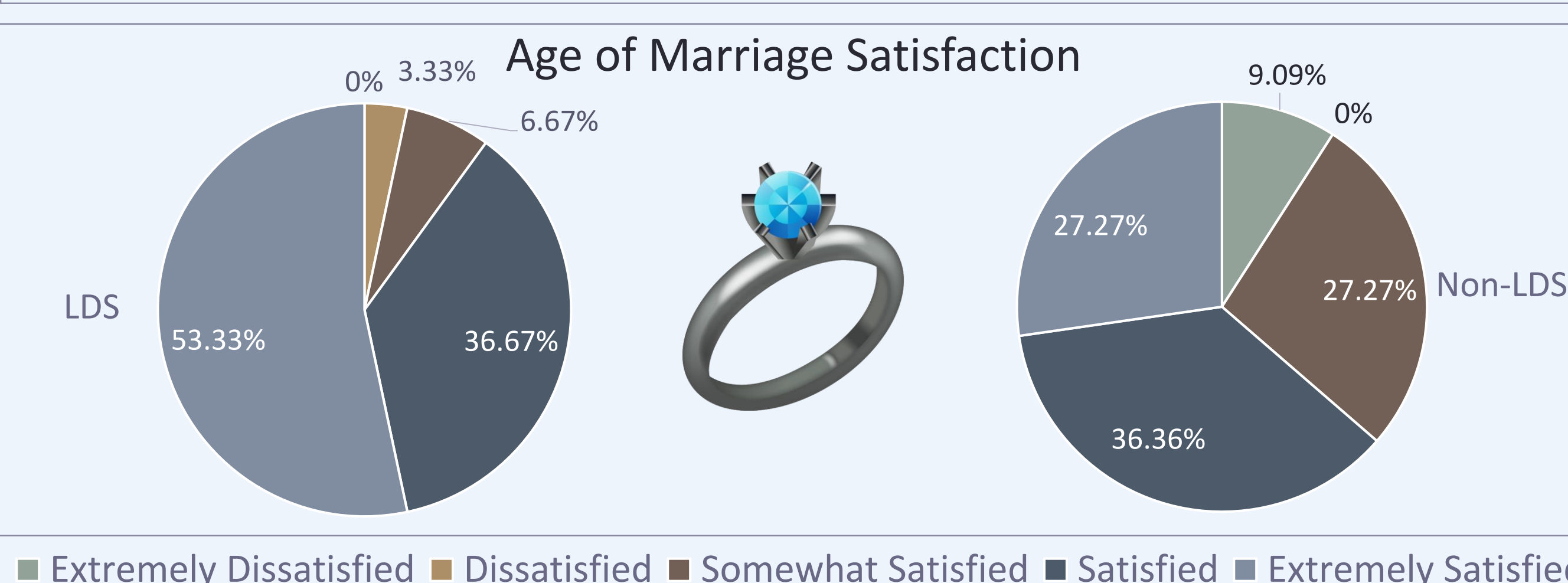
- Doctrine
 - A former prophet of the LDS church, Gordon B. Hinckley, in a General Conference message titled "Thou Shalt Covet" said, "To our young adults of marriageable circumstances, I hope you will not put off marriage too long."
 - The LDS faith relies heavily on the concept of marriage and family. According to a talk given by Neil L. Andersen, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles the second-highest governing body of the church, marriage and family are integral to "God's plan" (2011).
- Strong social pressures toward a young age of marriage, reproduction, and high reproductive frequency (Hinckley 1990).



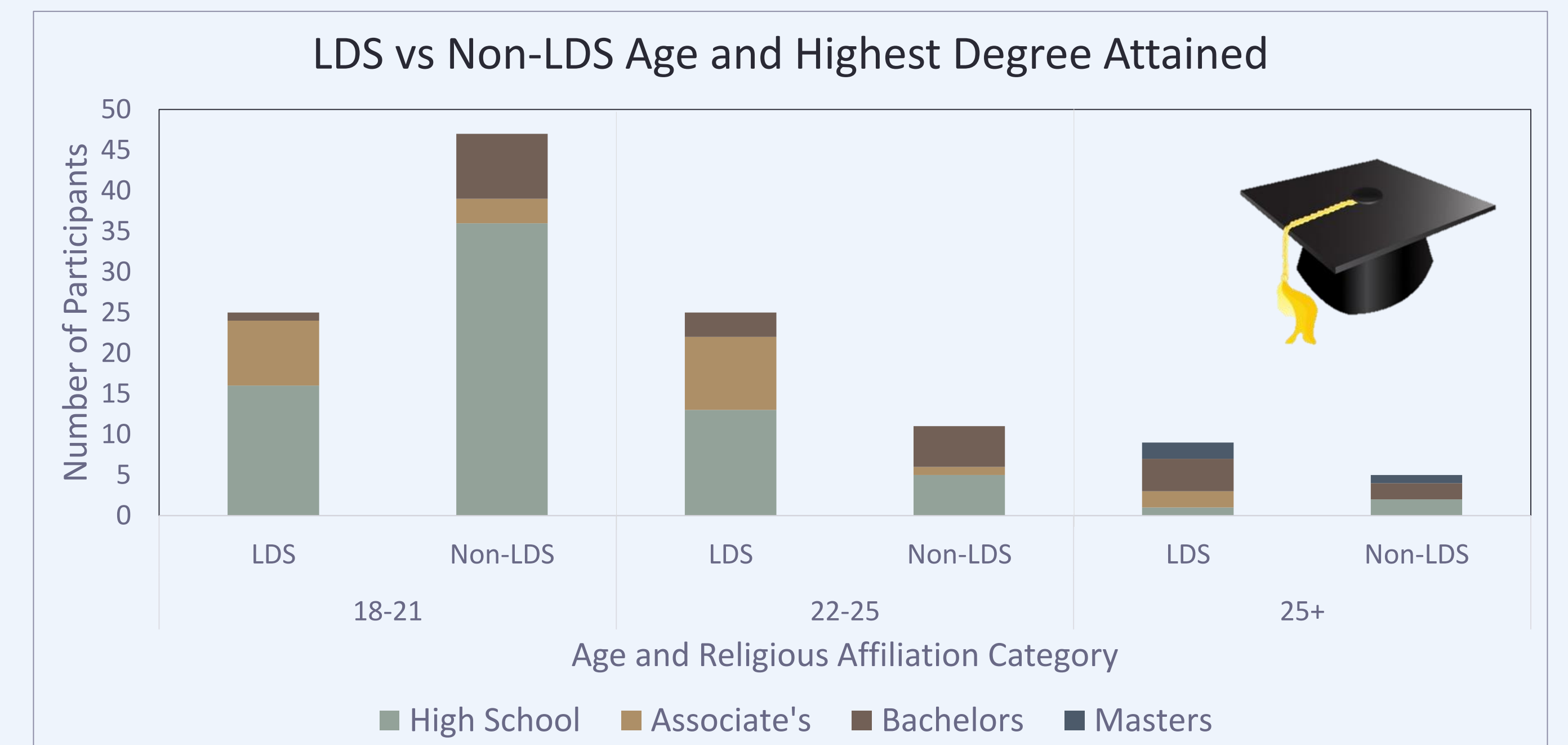
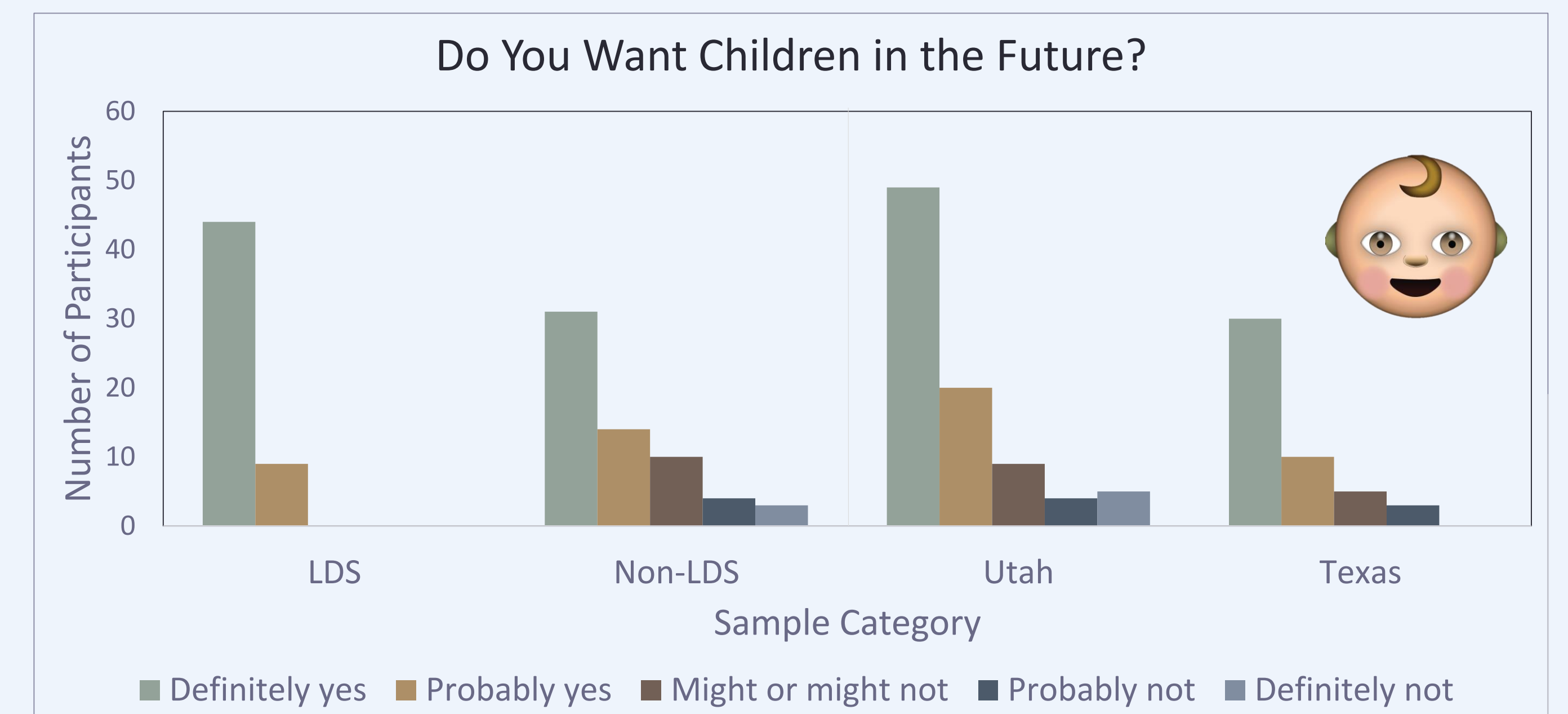
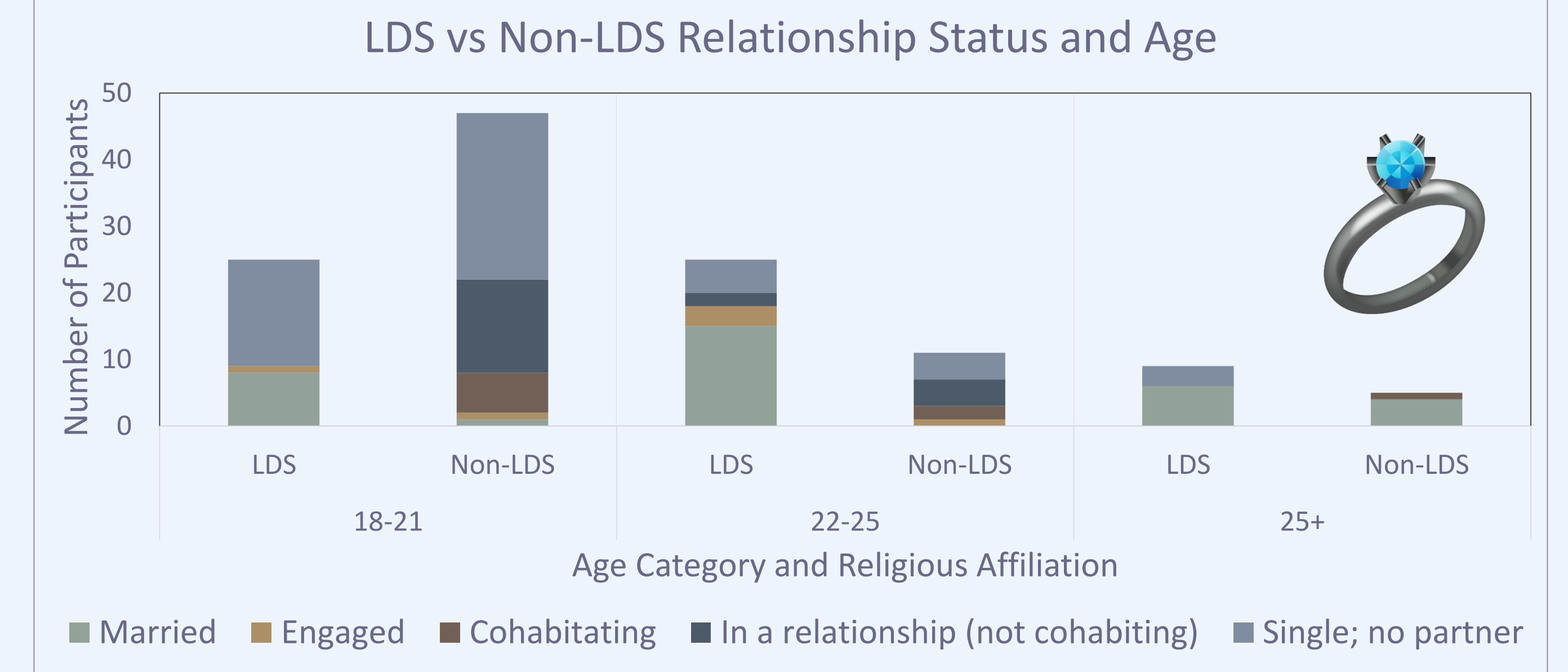
Gordon B. Hinckley



RESULTS



RESULTS



HYPOTHESIS AND PREDICTIONS

- Hypothesis
 - Encouragement toward reproduction in LDS culture has greater trade-offs with embodied capital in comparison to non-LDS populations.
 - LDS culture may influence early and frequent reproduction., this results in energy trade-offs allocated toward embodied capital (Hill and Kaplan 1999).
- Predictions
 - Correlation between younger age of marriage and being LDS
 - Positive correlation between fertility and age of first reproduction
 - Negative association between both age of marriage and age of first reproduction with education

METHODS

- Online Qualtrics questionnaire using a stratified random sample from Utah State University in Logan, UT and Texas A&M University in College Station, TX.
- N = 149
 - n = 59 practicing Utah LDS members
 - n = 64 non-LDS from both states
 - n = 100 Utah
 - n = 49 Texas
- Unambiguous questions about fertility, first age of reproduction, age at first marriage, and their activeness within the LDS church.

CONCLUSIONS

- Predictions supported:
 - LDS have an earlier age of marriage
 - Strong desire for children and satisfaction with marriage
 - Less satisfaction with education and longer to complete degree
- Evolutionary trade-off between young age of marriage and education.
- Religious affiliation affects life history traits.