




Investigating the Low Motivation of Young Couples for Childbearing in Shiraz Through Developing a Conceptual Model Using a Quantitative Approach

Maryam. Fakhar¹, Nadereh. Sohrabi Shekefti^{2*}, Siamak. Samani³


¹ PhD Student, Department of Psychology, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran



³ Professor, Department of Psychology, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: Sohrabi_sh2006@yahoo.com

E d i t o r

Bahram Jowkar
Professor of Psychology
Department, Shiraz University, Iran
jowkar@shirazu.ac.ir

R e v i e w e r s

Reviewer 1: Mohammadreza Zarbakhsh Bahri
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran. Email: M.Zarbakhsh@Toniau.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Seyed Ali Darbani
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Counseling, South Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.
Email: Ali.darbani@iau.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction would benefit from a clearer distinction between the broader fertility trends in Iran and the specific factors that have led to the decline in fertility. While you mention demographic transitions, you do not explore the key determinants of fertility decline in Iran until later in the paper. Consider introducing a brief theoretical framework earlier to give readers a roadmap of the factors influencing fertility rates in Iran, such as socio-economic factors, family planning policies, or cultural shifts.

The introduction mentions a significant shift in family planning policy starting in 2010, but there is no discussion of the specifics of these policy changes. Expanding on these policies would provide greater insight into how governmental action (or inaction) has influenced fertility decisions. What specific measures were taken to encourage higher fertility rates, and how effective were these?

The description of the study design as "descriptive-survey" is appropriate, but more detail could be provided regarding how the survey questions were developed. Were the questions tested for reliability or validity before the study? Providing this information will enhance the rigor of your methodological approach.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a robust statistical method; however, it is not clear why SEM was chosen over simpler alternatives such as regression analysis. Could you justify this choice more clearly? Specifically, why is SEM a suitable method to test the conceptual model in this study? Expanding on this rationale will enhance the methodological rigor.

The mention of the "second demographic transition theory" is well-placed but lacks integration with the findings of your study. How do the values associated with personal development in Iran relate to the theoretical underpinnings of the second demographic transition? Including a more detailed theoretical analysis would help position your findings within a broader academic context.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The discussion on "young couples" and "declining fertility" could be expanded. While the text mentions a broad range of factors affecting fertility, it might be useful to directly reference studies that explore how these factors specifically influence younger couples. For instance, are young couples in Iran more likely to delay childbearing due to economic instability, education, or career goals? Citing such studies would add more depth to the argument.

The argument about fertility decline in Iran being "unique among Muslim countries" could be presented more cautiously. While this is a striking claim, it is necessary to provide more comparative analysis with other Muslim-majority countries. Are there other countries with similarly drastic fertility declines? This comparison would strengthen the claim. Additionally, a reference to global fertility trends would add context to the discussion.

There seems to be an inconsistency in the fertility rates mentioned (e.g., 2.8 children per woman in 1996 vs. 1.2 children in 2016). A clearer explanation of these figures would help avoid confusion. Are these rates specific to different regions of Iran or based on national averages? Clarifying this would make the argument more transparent.

The discussion of "social responsibility" and the role of economic insecurity in fertility decisions is very relevant. However, you could provide more concrete examples or quotes from participants to illustrate this point more vividly. How do respondents express their concerns about economic instability, and how does this affect their childbearing intentions in practical terms?

The link between "body self-concept" and low fertility is intriguing. However, the discussion of body image as a factor influencing fertility decisions could be expanded. Could you provide more information on how these concerns about body image are related to cultural norms in Iran? How might these concerns differ from those in other countries with similar fertility patterns?

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.