

**Effective Factors on Attitudes of Two Successive Generations towards  
Marriage and Fertility  
Case Study: Women in Shiraz, Iran**

By:

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### **Introduction**

Marriage, as a permanent social linkage between man and woman, is one of the significant events through which has experienced great and deep transformations. Tangible changes occur in family around the world. The increase of age at marriage, decrease of regulated marriage, and enhancing of freedom in mate selection are the common parameters of marriage in different societies. Patterns of marriage and childbearing changed as a result of a contemporaneous, society-wide shift in values. So this research was conducted to know if attitudes of women towards marriage and childbearing have changed in recent years and if so what the most important factors which affect these changes are.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In this research, theories of attitude changes, marriage theories, and fertility theories were combined to explain the subject. The present discussion will draw first from theories of attitude changes. Consistency Theory explains that people should get some new information about marriage and fertility which is inconsistent with their beliefs to change them. Congruity Theory determines that observers alone must decide the level of congruence, before doing one of two things. Dissonance Theory posits that when a person has

two situations for selecting a mate, she/he tries to bring some explanation about benefit of marriage to one of them and disapprove the other situation. Regard to Social Judgment Theory, attitude change is most likely to occur when a communication falls inside a person's latitude of acceptance. Attribution Theory shows us that people can create new attitudes depending upon the explanations they make. On the basis of Balance theory between girls and their mothers should be a balance in their attitudes toward marriage and fertility. Inoculation theory says that the nature of the presentation of the message is important.

Regard to marriage theories, Rational Choice Theory can be used about marriage. Social Exchange Theory, in mate selection reveals how social interaction is often guided by what each person stands to gain and lose from each other in a relationship. Regard to Marriage Market Theory, Individuals who have more chances in marriage market, try to select that one who is more similar to them, but Individuals who have less chances for selecting mate, become satisfy to marry with a person although she/he is not similar to them. Role theory is concerned that kinship and marriage systems are important for the assignment of distributed social roles. Regard to Alliance theory small close-knit groups must make their members to marry outside of their circle in order to achieve the cultural, political, and economic benefits. Communication theory explains that we take action in relation to information we receive. Personal Construct theory states that by the experiences which people have about marriage, they formed their thought.

Regard to fertility theories the Supply-Demand Framework explains that couples try to maintain a balance between the potential supply of children and the demand for children. Relative Income theory assumes that if you can easily improve your income as an adult relative to your late childhood level,

then you will be more likely to marry early and have several children. Within the framework of Innovation/Diffusion perspective, community level factors such as transport, communication and educational facilities influence the way in which individual factors affect fertility. Caldwell's 'wealth flow' theory maintains that as long as wealth flows from children to parents, fertility will remain high. If Change and response theory is used about marriage, to have small family size is highly responsive to price and perhaps to income. Gender equity theory can be employed to describe the influence of husband and wife relationship.

### **Research Method and Data Collection**

This research was conducted based on the survey method. Data was collected by a questionnaire which presented for this reason. Sample in this study were 383 women in age group 20-29 and 30-39 years old which were selected by multistage sampling method. Then data was processed and analyzed by SPSS software. It is designed to run both descriptive and inferential statistics.

### **Main Findings**

From the findings, we see that there are different attitudes between two successive generations about marriage ( $p < 0,001$ ) and also fertility ( $p < 0,005$ ) in whole and also in details there are different attitudes between two generation about marriage price ( $p < 0,002$ ), the rate of dowry ( $p < 0,004$ ), engagement ceremony ( $p < 0,002$ ), celibacy ( $p < 0,001$ ), marry with foreigner men ( $p < 0,007$ ), economic and social level of husband ( $p < 0,005$ ), relative sovereignty in family ( $p < 0,008$ ), desired number of children ( $p < 0,009$ ). But there isn't any different attitudes about traditional ceremony of

suit ( $p > ., \Delta 46$ ), magnificent wedding ceremony ( $p > ., 493$ ), endogamy marriage ( $p > ., 122$ ), polygyny ( $p > ., \Delta .8$ ), parents' satisfaction in marriage ( $p > ., 241$ ), chance in finding best person for marriage ( $p > ., 454$ ), marry with whom had sex relationship before marriage ( $p > ., 839$ ), the place of living after marriage ( $p > ., 935$ ), age at marriage for girls ( $p > ., 322$ ), age at marriage for boys ( $p > ., 679$ ), base of marriage ( $p > ., \Delta \Delta 6$ ), basic aim of marriage ( $p > ., 446$ ), marry with men from other religion ( $p > ., 826$ ), selecting husband ( $p > ., 357$ ), relationship between boys and girls before marriage ( $p > ., .86$ ), educational level of husband ( $p > ., 887$ ), desired sex ( $p > ., 498$ ), desired age of childbearing ( $p > ., .5$ ), birth spacing ( $p > ., 195$ ).

In this study the effect of some factors as, marital status, employment status, education, income of household, exposure to mass media, household size, level of religious, region of resident, access to modern consumer goods, tradition of respect to parents, on attitudes about marriage and also fertility, separately were tested. Between all independent variables, marital status ( $p < ., .01$ ), and income of household ( $p < ., .17$ ), have affect on attitudes about marriage and none of them has affected on fertility attitudes.