International Journal of Education and Cognitive Sciences
Volume 4, Number 1, 21-25, April 2023
https://iase-ijeas.com
ISSN: 3041-8828

Investigating the Relationship between Hope for Life and Tendency towards Childbearing among Kamyab Farhangian University Teachers

Morteza Heydari[1], Mahdiye Afrouzi[2*], Nasrin Delshad[2]

1. *PhD, Department of Consulting, Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran.*
2. *BA, Department Guidance and Counseling, Farhangian University, Mashhad, Iran.*

Keywords:
Tendency towards childbearing, Hope for life, Correlation

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing among successful teacher trainees. The research method was correlational, and a sample of 54 individuals was selected using simple random sampling for the research sample size. The tools used in the present study were the Snyder Hope Scale and the Tendency towards childbearing Questionnaire. Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple variable regression were used for data analysis. The results showed that there was no significant positive correlation between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing among students, and hope for life did not explain changes in tendency towards childbearing.

* **Corresponding Author Email: mhdieaf213@gmail.com**

Introduction

Childbearing is one of the aspects of life that, according to the Quranic verses (e.g. Kahf: 61 and 83; Isra: 6; Nuh: 12; Shu'ara: 133 and 134; Shura: 11; Nahl: 72; Furqan: 74 and 75) and numerous narrations, is an important criterion in both this world and the hereafter for Muslims. Population is a source of power and a crucial pillar for the progress and development of society; therefore, attention to population and its composition is of great importance. In recent years, significant demographic changes have occurred worldwide, including an unprecedented decline in fertility rates and a trend towards it in all regions. Iran has also experienced extensive changes, such that over the past three decades, the fertility rate has decreased remarkably. The total fertility rate, or the number of live births expected per woman during her reproductive years, has decreased from about 6.3 in 1365 to 2.6 in 1996, indicating a more than 50% decline. The country's population growth rate has continued to decline in recent years, reaching 1.29 in 2011 from 1.62 in 2006. In fact, since 2006, the total fertility rate has fallen below the replacement level (Kaboudi et al., 2013). Such widespread changes have led to increased attention from researchers, policymakers, and even the general public to the issue of fertility, and a significant portion of theoretical and empirical literature in social sciences and other related fields has been devoted to this topic. Today, modernization and societal transformation in Iran, along with urbanization and social changes, have created a profound transformation in the mindset and spirit of families. Most transitioning countries, especially Iran, are witnessing profound changes in all dimensions, including cultural, economic, social, and demographic, and are moving away from traditional patterns towards modern ones. Regarding demographic dimensions, we are also witnessing a decline in fertility rates below the replacement level, and society is moving towards limiting births. When social structures and institutions are undergoing prominent changes, we see rational and profit-seeking attitudes in all dimensions of social life, and societal renewal is actually a process that distances itself from the norms and customs of society and gradually fills their place with new attitudes and beliefs.

"From both an individual and a social perspective, there is no institution that is as globally stable and constant as the family institution. Therefore, no institution is immune to social transformations like the family institution (Michelle, 1975). When structural transformations occur at a macro level, such as urbanization, proletarianization, and the like, ideological transformations also occur at a macro level, and at a micro level, families adapt to these transformations (A'zazi, 2004). In today's urban societies, with changes in norms and dominant values, individualism has increased, a new lifestyle has emerged, and people's close ties to their birth families, traditions, and customs have decreased (Matza, 1964). Fertility and childbearing, as a unique factor in the global population increase, are of greater importance, and the most important factor that can transform the age structure of a population is the level of women's fertility. Optimal access to social indicators such as family, marriage, fertility, etc., is all related to the population status. Access to better economic indicators is also related to the population of society. Therefore, addressing the phenomenon of population and the tendency towards fertility is a prerequisite for any social and economic development in society (Sheikhi, 2001).

Social scientists believe that fertility and the tendency towards childbearing are influenced by a set of social, cultural, economic, and political factors, which play a significant role in the hope for life. While in the past, most demographers emphasized economic and biological factors and were indifferent or less attentive to cultural factors, in recent years, attention to social and cultural factors has played an important role in explaining fertility and the tendency towards childbearing. Therefore, population thinkers such as Caldwell (1976), Van Dual (1986), and Listaq (1983) emphasized the mediating effect of culture on biology by shaping norms and standards that guide entry into the childbearing period and fertility behavior (Mansourian & Khoshnavis, 2006). According to social and cultural researchers, fertility behavior based on stimuli, decision-making processes, and related attitudes can be considered as social behavior that occurs in a social environment. Social relationships between members of a society can organize values and norms related to fertility behavior, which is not just about having children but includes all aspects of childbearing, such as marriage, desire to have children, and attitudes towards stimuli for fertility regulation (Naghdi & Zare, 2013). Additionally, modern norms and values such as industrialization, urbanization, expanding education, increasing interest in employment, increasing hope for life, etc., have washed away the previous general proposition that anyone who has teeth can give bread".

Unfortunately, in recent years, due to the economic, cultural, and social situation and the propaganda that has been carried out to reduce the population, and the problem of population decline and aging as a result of the policy of limiting generations, it has now become a fundamental problem that has attracted the attention of

caring individuals and intellectuals. However, various groups of people have not welcomed the efforts made to increase the population. Continuing this population trend will result in consequences such as the population reaching below the replacement level and the aging of the population over the next decades.

The results of recent research by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution indicate a disaster worse than all predictions and research in the field of population in the country. Since 2015, with the decline in the birth rate, we have faced a crisis of population decline and a decrease in the young population of the country. Along with these issues, the country's population growth rate, which is one of the most important demographic components, has taken a downward trend in the 1990s, to remind everyone of the seriousness of the population decline crisis (Mehr News Agency, 2020). According to the results of the latest national census in 2016, the population of Iran was 79,926,270. From 2006 to 2011, it was 4,653,887, and from 2011 to 2016, it was 4,776,601. Accordingly, the average annual population growth rate of the country in the period of 2006-2011 was 1.29%, which decreased to 1.24% in the period of 2011-2016 (Official Portal of the Iran Statistics Center). This decline in the index is very dangerous and experts believe that it is very difficult to get out of the 1.24 index. One of the factors that can be a solution to the problems of population decline is the role of hope and optimism in families. Due to the importance of the issue of hope and optimism, research has been conducted on hope and its various dimensions. Snyder defines hope as an active and learnable process and describes it with three interconnected components: "goal setting", "pathway thinking", and "willpower", so that hope cannot take shape without these three interconnected components.

The findings of the research indicate that the three components of hope and their sub-components are: agency (personal agency - divine agency), means (material means - metaphysical means), and goal (material goal - monotheistic goal).

Methodology

Since the aim of the present research is to investigate the relationship between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing among successful students of Farhangian University, the research method is descriptive and correlational. This is because no manipulation or changes are made in the society or subjects, and the aim of the research is to examine the relationship and study the approximate changes of one or more variables. Hope for life is the predictor variable and tendency towards childbearing is the criterion variable. Therefore, this research design is descriptive and correlational.

Statistical population and sample

The statistical population of the present study consists of female undergraduate students of Farhangian University of Khorasan Razavi province (Kamyab campus), from which 20 female students were randomly selected and completed the Hope for Life and Tendency towards Childbearing questionnaires.

Materials

1. The Hope for Life questionnaire by Snyder and colleagues consists of 12 questions, each of which is answered on a 5-point Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree. This questionnaire examines the level of hope for life in individuals in two components: agency thinking and pathway thinking. There are also four questions in this questionnaire that are designed to detect response bias and deception. The Snyder Hope for Life questionnaire is designed for individuals over the age of 15 and scores range from 8 to 64. The questionnaire has validity and reliability.
2. The Tendency towards Childbearing questionnaire consists of 8 questions and aims to evaluate the level of tendency towards childbearing among young people, scored on a Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree.

Findings

Table 1: Descriptive findings of the scores of research variables

Index	N	Kurtosis	Skewness	Mean	SD
Hope for life	54	-0.053	-0.367	40.06	4.423
Tendency towards childbearing	54	-0.311	-0.302	26.13	6.393

In Table 1, the statistical description of scores related to the variables of hope for life and tendency towards childbearing, including skewness and kurtosis indices, as well as median, mean, and standard deviation scores, are presented. Based on the obtained information, the mean of the hope for life variable is 0.40 and the tendency towards childbearing is 13.26. Also, given that the values of skewness and kurtosis are between 2+ and 2-, the data are normally distributed at the 0.05 level.

Table 2: The results of Pearson correlation test to investigate the relationship between life expectancy and propensity to have children

Variables	N	R	Sig.
Hope for life and Tendency towards childbearing	54	0.156	0.259

To investigate the relationship between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing at the successful teachers' university, the Pearson correlation test was used. The results obtained are presented in Table 2. The results of the Pearson correlation test for examining the relationship between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing are shown in Table 2. Based on the results listed in Table 2, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is 0.156, and its significance level is greater than 0.05 ($p>0.05$). Given the non-significance of the obtained correlation coefficient, it can be concluded that there is no relationship between hope for life and tendency towards childbearing in the students of the successful teachers' university.

To predict the tendency towards childbearing through hope for life, the regression test was used. The Durbin-Watson statistic was used to examine the independence of the residuals. The value of the Durbin-Watson statistic was 106.2, which, given that its value is between 1.5 and 2.5, indicates that the assumption of independence of the residuals has been met. The normality of the score distribution was examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

Table 3: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results to check the normality of the distribution of scores

Variable	K-S z-value	Sig.
Hope for life	0.133	0.271
Tendency towards childbearing	0.099	0.627

Given the non-significance of the obtained values ($P>0.05$), the assumption of normality of the score distribution was accepted. The F-value obtained for examining the regression model is 353.1, which is not significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that hope for life does not explain the changes related to the tendency towards childbearing significantly.

Table 4: The results of regression analysis to predict the tendency to have children based on the life expectancy variable

	Standard coefficient		Non-standard coefficient	t	Sig.				
	B	Standard error	Beta			R	R^2	F	Sig.
Constant	16.911	7.974		2.121	0.039	0.159	0.025	1.353	0.250
Hope for life	0.230	0.198	0.159	1.163	0.250				

The results of the regression analysis for predicting the tendency towards childbearing based on hope for life are presented in Table 4. According to the results, the multiple correlation coefficient between the independent variables and the dependent variable is 0.159. Also, the value of R^2 is 0.025, indicating that hope for life explains 2.5% of the variance in tendency towards childbearing. The standard regression coefficient for hope for life is $\beta=0.159$ ($P<0.05$). The results obtained indicate that hope for life is not a significant predictor of tendency towards childbearing.

Conclusion

The present study shows that there is not a significant relationship between the variables of hope for life and inclination towards childbearing. This suggests that the variable of hope for life alone cannot predict changes in the variable of inclination towards childbearing, and other factors play a role in this inclination that need to be discussed in order to examine the extent of their relationship and influence on the variable of inclination towards childbearing. Given the importance of the issue of childbearing for societies and its impact on the power positions of countries, such research undoubtedly provides useful information for population experts and

has fruitful functions for their population planning. Especially since our country, Iran, has faced a population decline in recent years, and there are many concerns about the future of the country's age pyramid.

Iran has experienced significant demographic changes in recent decades, with a decrease in fertility from about seven children in 1358 to about 2.1 children in 1379 (2004 Abbasi Shavazi et al). Numerous reasons have been cited to explain Iran's fertility transition, including a decrease in mortality, an increase in urbanization, the development and improvement of the healthcare system, and more. (2010 Abbasi Shavazi & Alimad Negari)

The results show that having a child makes parents feel that they have a fruitful role in society and that their existence is not useless. It can also bring mental health to parents, and with a child, their lives become more meaningful. Additionally, parents with children look forward to their old age and hope that someone will support them in the future. Furthermore, receiving spiritual support after death is one of the blessings of having a child. (Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Sabhaninia, Director of the University of Tafresh's Knowledge Group)

A combination of cultural, economic, social, egalitarian, and demographic characteristics that play a role in an individual's hope for life are the determining and significant factors in predicting the likelihood of a tendency towards childbearing among women. In the study by Hayari Mehrizi and colleagues, the results showed that solving economic problems is the most important reason for not wanting to have children. In the study by Afarini and colleagues, no relationship was found between the intention to have children and social support, but factors such as age and economic status were involved. Therefore, attention to economic, cultural, and social issues is of great importance.

References

Sohrabi, A., & Askari Taebi, M. (2022). Investigating solutions for increasing population in Iran based on Islamic lifestyle . (In Persian)

Thavabi, M., & Firouzrad, S. (2014). Investigating fertility trends and related social factors . (In Persian)

Sadeghi, M., & Roshan Nia, M. (2016). Investigating the role of family population on the psychological dimensions of children: hope for life, resilience, and differentiation . (In Persian)

Kalantari, M., Abbasi Zadeh, M., Mozafari, A., & Rakei Bonab, N. (2010). Sociological study of tendency towards childbearing and some related factors . (In Persian)

Enayat, J., & Parnian, M. (2013). Study of the relationship between cultural globalization and tendency towards childbearing . (In Persian)

Ekhter Moghaddam, M. (1979). Social capital of Tehran . (In Persian)

Hoseini, H. (2011). An introduction to economic and social demography and family planning . (In Persian)

Sarajzadeh, M., & et al. (2008). Changes in fertility in Iran . (In Persian)

Abasi Shavazi, M., & et al. (2004). Changes in family and fertility decline in Iran . (In Persian)

Enayat, J., & et al. (2013). Study of the relationship between cultural globalization and tendency towards childbearing . (In Persian)

Ghodrati, J., & et al. (2011). Analysis of social capital and women's fertility in urban areas of Sabzevar. Geographical studies of regions. (In Persian)

Becker, G. ad Barro, R. (1986). Altruism and the Economic Theory of Fertility. population and Development Review. (12), P.p. 69-79.

Abbasi Shavazi, M.J. & Hosseii, H. (2007). "The ethnical differences of fertility in Iran: the effective factors and processes on it", Iran Sociology Magazine, 8th Series, NO. 4, 3-36. (In Persian)

Abbasi Shavazi, M.J. et al. (2004). "The evolutions of fertility in Iran, the evidences of four selected provinces", The Health Assistant of Sanitary, Treatment and Medical Training Ministry. (In Persian)

Buhler, ch; Fratczak, E. (2004). Social Capital and Fertility Intentions: The Case of poland. Maxplanck Institute for Demographic research. 4 (3), P.p. 1-42

Buhler, ch; philipov, D. (2005). Social Capital Related to Fertility: Theoretical Foundations and Empirical Evidence from Bulgaria. Vienna Yearbook of population Research, P.p. 53-81.

United nation (1990). Socio-economic development and fertility. V. 102: Pp. 3-8