

Determinants of Couples' Family Participation in the Low-Fertility Context of Tehran

Introduction

Throughout history, societies have maintained gender divisions of labor in both the home and the workplace, with women historically performing a greater amount of unpaid domestic chores. Although many advanced societies have made progress in terms of women working more, men participating more, and gender equality improving, true equality remains uneven. In Iran, cultural norms continue to prioritize men as breadwinners, which restricts women's employment opportunities. However, recent developments have resulted in an increase in the number of women in managerial positions, higher education, and legal protections (Mikula & Riederer, 2010; Dierdoff & Ellington, 2008; Torabi, 2020; Mehrbani, 2017; McDonald, 2000). These results enhance comprehension of the extent to which reproductive behaviors are influenced by gender-based division of labor, gender attitudes, and overall gender equality within the household.

Methodology

This investigation utilizes data from 456 married women between the ages of 15 and 49 who reside in Tehran. The dependent variable is household division of labor, while the independent variables are the ages of women and their husbands, the education levels of women, the employment status of women, the presence of a child under six in the household, the marital cohort, and gender attitudes. Household division of labor: This variable is assessed by asking questions about the division of household chores, such as cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, supervising children's homework and preparing them for school or kindergarten, monitoring children's sleep and preparing them for bed, staying home when children are sick, and transporting children to or from school, kindergarten, or educational classes.

Results

The household division of labor was investigated through multivariate regression analysis, which encompassed all variables associated with domestic tasks, childcare, and caregiving. The variable was classified as dichotomous, with two categories: women who participated alone and women who participated in a shared capacity. The analysis was conducted on three models:

- **Model 1** incorporated the personal characteristics of women, including their education level, employment status, and gender attitudes.
- **Model 2** included the number of children in the household and whether there was a minor under the age of six.
- **Model 3** included the husband's education level and marital cohort.

The regression results indicated that the probability of their husbands participating in household chores was significantly correlated with the education level of the women in Model 1. Men who were the husbands of women with secondary education or less (including high school diplomas) were less likely to participate than those whose spouses held university degrees. The likelihood of male participation was not significantly influenced by gender attitudes or employment status.

The number of children and the presence of a child under six were combined in Model 2. The education of women continued to be a significant predictor; in comparison to other women, women with a child under six had spouses who were more involved in housework.

The husband's education level and marital cohort were incorporated into Model 3. The importance of women's education and having a child under the age of six was diminished in this context; however, the husband's education became a significant predictor. Specifically, women whose husbands had secondary education or less were less likely to report their husbands' involvement in domestic chores than women whose husbands held university degrees.

The likelihood of male participation in household duties was lower for men married in the 1360s (Iranian calendar) than for those married in the 1390s in terms of marital cohort. No significant differences were observed among other cohorts. The increase in explanatory power as variables were incorporated is suggested by the change in Nagelkerke R^2 among the three models. The chi-square statistic indicates that the independent variables entered the model significantly (at a 99% confidence level), and the model explains approximately 15% of the variance in household division of labor in Tehran.

Conclusion

In order to enhance the quality of life of couples and improve gender equality, it is necessary to develop and execute effective policies and strategies. Education regarding gender equality and household division of labor should be integrated into curricula at all educational levels. This initiative can better equip young people with the skills necessary for shared responsibility within the family by increasing awareness among them from adolescence. Furthermore, the significance of effective social support in encouraging men's involvement in domestic affairs should not be disregarded. The conduct of workshops for fathers and men can heighten their awareness of the importance of a fair division of domestic responsibilities and its impact on the health and stability of the family. Additionally, the media can considerably influence public attitudes and foster a culture of equality by showcasing successful family models that have achieved equality.

Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicting interests in the present article.

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