Men’s gender attitudes and their fertility intentions in Tehran

Hajiieh Bibi Razeghi Nasrabad1, Fateme Modiri1*

1 National Population Studies and Comprehensive Management Institute, Iran

Corresponding author and reprints: Fateme Modiri. No.5, Second Street, Pakesht Street, Shahid Beshshiti Avenue, National Population Studies and Comprehensive Management Institute, Iran.
Email: fateme.modiri@psri.ac.ir

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Abstract

Background: Total fertility rate has fallen below the replacement level in 2006 in Iran. In family demographic research, gender attitude is considered as an affecting factor to understand low fertility intention. The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between men’s gender attitudes and their fertility intention.

Methods: The data were drawn from a survey entitled "Married Lifestyle and its Determinants in Tehran City in 2015" using multi-stage cluster sampling method and a structured questionnaire. 618 married men were selected with wives aged between 15 to 49 years. Crammers V estimate and logistic regression were used in bivariate and multivariable analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 22.0.

Results: The results showed that 249 (40.3%) of the men in Tehran had egalitarian gender attitudes and 141 (22.8%) of them had traditional gender attitudes. The mean number of intended children in traditional men was 2.1, but 1.6 in egalitarian men. Multivariate logistic regression showed that gender attitudes had a significant impact on the intention to have a(nother) child only in one-child men. The odds ratio of intention to have a(nother) child was lower among egalitarian men (OR=0.271, \( P=0.016 \)).

Conclusion: Men’s gender attitudes on their fertility intention vary across parities. In one-child men, egalitarian gender attitudes are related to low fertility intention.

Keywords: Attitudes; Fertility; Gender Identity; Marriage


Introduction

Iran experienced a dramatic fertility decline during recent decades. Since 2006, the total fertility rate (TFR) in Iran has fallen below the replacement level (2.1 children per woman). Tehran has had low fertility rate for more than two decades and it is currently a city with very low fertility rate (TFR=1.2) (1).

At the same time, there has been an increasing trend towards greater gender equality in women's and men's role in society and in family life. During the recent years, the status of women in Iran has also improved relatively. According to the results of the census in 1956, only 8% of females (aged 6 or higher) were literate, raised slightly since 1966, reaching around 35.5% in 1976, and it rose rapidly therefore to reach 81.1 percent in 2011 (85.6% in urban and 69.4% in rural areas) (2). More importantly, girl’s share to enter universities has increased to 64% in 2016 (3).

In family demographic research, gender attitude has become an important factor to understand low fertility intention. However, there are few studies in our country that show whether the low intended fertility in Iran is influenced by gender perspectives or not.
The basic question is whether egalitarian gender attitudes lead to lower fertility intentions or, on the contrary, cause higher fertility intentions. Gender attitudes are beliefs that are associated with the roles, responsibilities, and activities of men and women in society (4, 5). Changes in attitudes toward the roles of women and men affect the family dynamics. Attitudes are important because they define gender roles and they affect people's behaviors (6).

The question for many researchers is how do gender attitudes affect fertility. According to a number of studies conducted recently in many countries to explain low fertility, gender attitudes have been considered as a major challenge. There are different views in this regard, which indicate that egalitarian gender attitudes lead to lower fertility intentions or, on the contrary, cause higher fertility intentions.

Nock et al. indicated that childbearing has a different meaning for men and women with egalitarian gender attitudes compared to those with traditional attitudes, and fertility decisions reflect the views of individuals about their role in society (7). Traditional women consider motherhood as the basis of their life and identity. However, women with egalitarian view see childbearing as a way to fulfill their needs and their individual demands, and being a mother is only a small part of their identity and life. For men, ideas about childbearing are based on gender attitudes, and men with traditional gender attitudes look for goals such as job success, marriage, and childbearing, and wives who care for their children and facilitate fatherhood for them and affirm their masculinity. Therefore, based on this theory, traditional gender attitudes increase fertility intentions (8).

Goldsheider states that egalitarian gender attitudes, at the general level, may have a negative relationship with fertility. In contrast, egalitarian gender attitudes, especially men’s attitudes, in the private sphere may have a positive relationship with fertility (9). Goldschieder et al. (10) also stated that egalitarianism may differ qualitatively in young women and men in the response to questions about the division of labor in the family. While women with egalitarian attitudes may want to reduce their responsibilities in family and home affairs, men’s egalitarianism means sharing in activities that focus on children and families, and egalitarian attitudes are seen as family friendly attitudes. If gender attitudes and beliefs put the responsibility of managing house affairs and children on women, fertility intentions and the actual fertility decrease, as women enter the workforce and continue their education. However, if men have egalitarian gender attitudes, they will be more involved in housework, and the cost of opportunities for childcare and housework will be reduced for women (9). These men may care more about family and paternal role (11). Therefore, these families may have more childbearing intentions.

During the recent years, in response to the rapid decline in fertility rates over the past two decades in Iran, demographic policies have shifted towards population increase (12). In this regard, several studies have been conducted so far to explain the decline in ideals and actual fertility. Due to the improvements in gender equity in person-centered institutions and its coincidence with the decline in fertility in the late 1990s, some studies have examined the relationship between fertility and gender equity (13, 14). The influence of gender attitudes on various aspects of social life and attitudinal changes has been confirmed in numerous studies in the recent years (15, 16). Considering the lack of a study on men’s gender attitudes and fertility, the present study was carried out to investigate the relationship between men’s gender attitudes and their fertility intention.
**Methods**

The data for the present article was extracted from Married Lifestyle and Its Determinants survey conducted in 2015 (17). That project was approved by the Research Council of the National Population Studies and Comprehensive Management Institute (approval number: 20.15280).

Since in the current paper we focused on men's gender attitudes and their fertility intentions, we selected 618 male participants with their wives' age ranging from 15 to 49 years old. The sample size was considered based on 95% confidence level, a sampling error of 0.05 based on Cochran's formula \( n = \frac{N\pi^2 p(1-p)}{N d^2 + t^2 p(1-p)} \), and taking into account a design effect of 2 and adjustment factor of 0.25 for unresponsiveness. The sampling method was probability proportional to size and samples were chosen from 50 districts (2). For sampling, interviewers visited people at home and collected data with the distribution of the final questionnaire, developed after testing of the preliminary questionnaire. Questionnaires were assessed by the project manager and invalid or incomplete questionnaires, comprising 13.2% of the total, were excluded. To check face validity, the questionnaire was revised by nine experts and faculty members of the National Population Studies and Comprehensive Management Institute. In addition, exploratory factor analysis was run to make sure about construct validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to check the reliability of the items in Likert scale. Missing data were replaced using the mean. Because the impact of gender attitudes on the childbearing intention in each birth order was important to us, we used three logistic regression models. So, we identified the impact of gender attitudes in transition to parenthood, to two children and more than two children.

Three multivariable binary logistic regression models were run (Enter method) to explain the impact of gender attitudes on the intention to have a(nother) child. The first model includes men who do not have children and who want to have a child. The second model includes those who have one child and want to have another child. Finally, the third model includes those who have two children and want to have another child.

Dependent variable: Fertility intention was the dependent variable measured by two items:

1. How many children do you have? 2. How many children do you intend to have? The intention of having a(nother) child was measured with subtraction of two items. If the result of the subtraction was zero, it indicated the desire not to have a(nother) child and if it was more, it indicated the desire to have a(nother) child.

Independent variable: Gender attitude is the key independent variable. According to Spence et al. (18), Swim et al. (19) and Glick et al. (20) a seven-item Likert-scale was designed to measure Gender attitudes:

1. Women headship at work is not acceptable,
2. Men are better political leaders than women,
3. University education is more important for men than for women,
4. Women should not be employed if her husband supports her,
5. Woman’s duty is housekeeping and child care,
6. The man must be the main decision-maker in the family, and
7. Husband should earn a larger salary compared with his wife.

Each item had a score of 0 (not at all) to 5 (too much) and so the range of this variable could be from 0 to 35. Cronbach's alpha in gender attitudes variable was 0.890. This variable can be divided into three parts: the values between 0-11.66, 11.67-to 23.33, and 23.34-35 show egalitarian, intermediate, and traditional gender attitudes, respectively.
Control variables: Regression allows us to estimate the effect of gender attitude while controlling for other factors, such as income, age, or education level. This allows us to make a better estimate of the effect of gender attitude devoid of the other independent variables in the model. Hence, in multivariable analysis we controlled for other factors associated with childbearing intention, such as, age, income, and education level.

Age was measured according to the item "How old are you?" and then divided into 4 groups including 34 old years and younger, 35-39, 40-44, and 45 old years and above. Education included illiterate, elementary, secondary, high school, diploma, associate degree, B.A., M.A., PhD, and the degree in theology. The education variable was classified into three levels: primary and secondary, diploma and university. Income was measured at 5 levels and according to the cost and income survey of the Center of Statistics, which declared the average household income of 37,500,000 Iranian Rials (IRR) in Tehran (2), it was divided to three levels of low income (up to 22,500,000 IRR), average income (from 22,500,000 IRR to 37,500,000 IRR), and high income (more than 37,500,000 IRR).

Given the two-dimensional nature of the dependent variable, we used multivariable binary logistic regression in IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 22.0.

Results

As for educational status, 157 (25.4 %) had primary and secondary education, 220 (35.6%) had high school or diploma degree, and 241 (39%) had university educational level. Regarding job, 589 (95.3%) were employed and 29 (4.7%) were unemployed. The income level for 363 (59%) participants was below 22,500,000 IRR, income of 157 (25.5%) was between 22,500,000 IRR to 37,500,000 IRR, and income of 95 (15.4%) was above 37,500,000 IRR. Table 1 shows the descriptive indices of the research.

As given in Table 1, the mean number of intended children was about 2 children and the mean of gender attitudes among men in Tehran was 14.66. This mean showed that a significant percentage of men have egalitarian or intermediate gender attitudes. Table 2 shows the distribution of men’s gender attitudes.

As shown in Table 2, based on the mean and range of gender attitudes, 249 (40.3%) of men in Tehran had egalitarian gender attitudes. 228 (36.9%) of the gendered attitudes were intermediate, and 141 (22.8%) had traditional gender attitudes. As the items show, there were also more egalitarian attitudes in the public sphere compared with the private sphere. In other words, men had accepted the equality of women in society more than the private sphere.

According to the results, a low percent of men intended to be childless (3.6%). The predominant pattern in the number of intended children is two children, and about 17% of parents wanted three or four children. About 70% of men intended to have two children and above. (Table 3).

Table 4 shows the intention to have a(nother) child and intended number of children by gender role attitudes in each parity. On the basis of these descriptive statistics, traditional gender attitudes increased childbearing intentions. Egalitarian childless men had lower fertility intentions than do intermediate and traditional men.
### Table 2. Distribution of men’s gender attitudes in Tehran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender attitudes items</th>
<th>Not at all N (%)</th>
<th>Very little N (%)</th>
<th>little N (%)</th>
<th>Somewhat N (%)</th>
<th>A lot N (%)</th>
<th>Too much N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headship at work for women is acceptable (reverse)</td>
<td>20 (3.3)</td>
<td>159 (25.9)</td>
<td>204 (33.2)</td>
<td>44 (7.1)</td>
<td>50 (8.1)</td>
<td>138 (22.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general men are better political leaders than women</td>
<td>217 (35.4)</td>
<td>11 (1.8)</td>
<td>28 (4.6)</td>
<td>84 (13.7)</td>
<td>211 (34.4)</td>
<td>62 (10.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A university education is more important for men than for women</td>
<td>316 (51.4)</td>
<td>38 (6.2)</td>
<td>67 (10.9)</td>
<td>98 (15.9)</td>
<td>75 (12.2)</td>
<td>21 (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A women should not be employed if her husband support her</td>
<td>275 (45)</td>
<td>46 (7.5)</td>
<td>51 (8.3)</td>
<td>104 (17)</td>
<td>93 (15.3)</td>
<td>42 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman's duty is housekeeping and caring for children</td>
<td>303 (49.3)</td>
<td>43 (7)</td>
<td>63 (10.3)</td>
<td>95 (15.5)</td>
<td>85 (13.8)</td>
<td>25 (4.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The man must be the main decision maker in the family</td>
<td>208 (33.9)</td>
<td>20 (3.3)</td>
<td>30 (4.9)</td>
<td>143 (23.2)</td>
<td>161 (26.2)</td>
<td>52 (8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A husband should earn a larger salary than his wife</td>
<td>120 (19.5)</td>
<td>27 (4.4)</td>
<td>33 (5.4)</td>
<td>204 (33.1)</td>
<td>161 (26.2)</td>
<td>70 (11.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender attitudes variable

Mean=14.66, Range=0-35  
Egalitarian gender attitudes=249α  
Intermediate gender attitudes=228β  
Traditional gender attitudes=141γ

α Frequency, β Percent

### Table 3. Percentage distribution of respondents by number of Intended Children in Tehran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Intended Children</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>22 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>151 (25.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>307 (52.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80 (13.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Men with traditional gender attitudes planned most strongly to have a(nother) child. They wanted one child more than egalitarian men. The mean of their intended number of children was two children compared with one child in egalitarian men. The results of three logistic regression models are shown in Table 5. Given that more than 80% of the sample was intended to have two children and less, multivariate models were thrown to two children and less.

In multivariable analysis, three multivariable binary logistic regression models were run (Enter method) to explain the impact of gender attitudes on the intention to have a(nother) child. The first model included men who did not have children and who wanted to have a child. The second model included those who had one child and wanted to have another child. The third model included those who had two children and wanted to have another child.

The first model (people who do not have children) showed the effects of the variables on the intention to have a(nother) child among childless respondents. The second model showed the effects of the variables on the intention to have a(nother) child among one-child men. The third model (people who have two children) showed the effects of the variables on the intention to have three or more children among men with two children.

Gender role attitudes were not significantly associated with the intention to have a(nother) child among childless respondents, once we controlled for other factors. In this group of men, only the age at the significant level was acceptable among the variables. In other words, almost everyone tended to become parents. As individuals grow older, parental tendency increases.

In the second model, traditional gender role attitudes were positively associated with the intention to have a second or more children. The significance of gender attitudes in model 2 showed its impact on the presence of age and income variables. As traditional gender attitudes increase, the inclination to have another child increases, too. In this model, the effects of income and age were more than that of gender attitudes.
Among respondents with two children, the intention to have more children is only affected by age. Also, neither gender attitudes nor income and education were observed to have a significant effect on fertility intention. Education level appeared to have no effect when we examined intention to have more children.

**Discussion**

Given the changes in value during the recent years and the coincidence with low fertility, the basic assumption was that men with more egalitarian gender attitudes do not intend to have a(nother) child. About 53.07% of men in Tehran had egalitarian gender attitudes and less than 29% of them had traditional gender attitudes. We found a negative association between men’s egalitarian attitudes and fertility intention. The average number of intended children in traditional men was 2.14 compared to 1.59 among egalitarian men. According to the study, we did not find a significant effect of income, education, and age on fertility intention. This result is consistent with previous studies in Iran [1, 2].

As the results of the logistic regression analysis show, the number of children and gender role attitudes are significant predictors of fertility intention. The highest frequency of the number of children was one child in both models for men with traditional and egalitarian gender role attitudes. However, men with egalitarian gender attitudes were more likely to have one child. The difference between these two groups was more pronounced in the age group of 25-34 years old. The next highest frequency of the number of children was two children in men with traditional gender role attitudes. The difference between these two groups was more pronounced in the age group of 35-44 years old. In general, it can be concluded that men with egalitarian gender role attitudes are more likely to have fewer children. This finding is consistent with previous studies in Iran [1, 2].

The bivariate analysis of the correlation of men’s intention to have a(nother) child, intended number of children, and gender role attitudes is shown in Table 5. The highest frequency of intention to have a(nother) child was for men with intermediate gender role attitudes and the least frequency was for men with traditional gender role attitudes. The difference between these two groups was more pronounced in the age group of 25-34 years old. The next highest frequency of intention to have a(nother) child was for men with egalitarian gender role attitudes and the least frequency was for men with traditional gender role attitudes. The difference between these two groups was more pronounced in the age group of 35-44 years old. This finding is consistent with previous studies in Iran [1, 2].

The results of the logistic regression analysis show that the main predictor of the intention to have a(nother) child is age. Other predictors include income and education. However, the gender role attitudes of men were not significant predictors of the intention to have a(nother) child. This finding is consistent with previous studies in Iran [1, 2].

**Table 4. Correlation of men’s intention to have a(nother) child, intended number of children by gender role attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Intends to have a(nother) child, (%)</th>
<th>No intention to have a(nother) child, (%)</th>
<th>Intended number of children Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Bivariate analysis of desire another child and gender attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>1.00 (0.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.81 (0.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.00 (0.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>1.23 (0.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>1.74 (0.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>1.76 (0.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>2.06 (0.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>2.17 (0.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2.14 (0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three and more</td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.21 (0.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>3.18 (0.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>3.16 (0.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>1.59 (0.86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.08 (0.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>traditional</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>2.14 (0.77)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5. Binary logistic regression models of intention to have a(nother) child, in Men with 0 child (model 1), 1 child (model 2), and 2 children (model 3) in Tehran, (Enter method)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1 (No child)</th>
<th>Model 2 (One child)</th>
<th>Model 3 (Two children)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (ref: university)</td>
<td>1.087</td>
<td>0.059-20.154</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.965</td>
<td>0.475-8.069</td>
<td>0.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income (ref: higher than 37,500,000)</td>
<td>7.287</td>
<td>0.931-5.704</td>
<td>0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.045</td>
<td>0.337-3.244</td>
<td>0.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (ref: 45≤)</td>
<td>≤34</td>
<td>37.313</td>
<td>1.649-844.359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>18.848</td>
<td>0.850-418.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>13.559</td>
<td>0.504-364.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender attitudes (ref: traditional)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Egalitarian</td>
<td>1.241</td>
<td>0.074-20.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borderline</td>
<td>2.681</td>
<td>0.168-42.704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traditional gender attitudes, but not egalitarian attitudes, raise men’s fertility intentions. In fact, our findings do not indicate a U-shaped or inverse association between gender attitudes and fertility intention. Similar results have been reported by Golmakani et al. and Spéder et al. studies (21, 22).

Golmakani et al. investigated the effect of women's gender attitudes on fertility behaviors in Mashhad, a city in the East of Iran. The results of this study showed that women with more traditional gender attitudes had higher fertility (21). Spéder et al. showed that traditional gender roles in both men and women were significantly related to having the second and the third child in Hungary (22).

But some studies have reported that both traditional and egalitarian gender attitudes can contribute to higher fertility (6, 11-13, 23). Based on these studies, there is a U-shaped association between gender attitudes and men’s fertility intention. Miettinen et al. (11) tested the relationship between gender attitudes and fertility in 25-39-year-old couples without children or just one child. The results of the study showed a U-shaped relationship between men’s gender attitudes and fertility intention. This way, both traditional and egalitarian attitudes increase men’s fertility intentions, in contrast to intermediate attitudes.

Torr et al. found a U-shaped curve in predicting the probability of the second child in terms of the attitude toward the division of domestic labor. In this study, both the traditional couples who considered most of the housework as a woman's task, as well as modern couples, who agreed with the equal division of labor, were more likely to have a second child compared to the intermediate group, who agreed with a partial division of labor (24).

Studies in 14 European countries from 2000 to 2003 showed that men with egalitarian gender attitudes had higher fertility intentions (11). After analyzing the relationship between men’s gender attitudes and fertility in eight European countries, Puur et al. showed that after controlling socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, egalitarian attitudes were associated with higher fertility intentions as well as higher fertility (25).

According to Goldscheider et al., one of the reasons behind the contradictory findings seems to be the difference in the operationalization of this variable (26). Puur et al. only emphasized on the roles inside the house (25). But some researchers like Miettinen et al. consider attitudes both at the public level and at the private level of housework (11). Goldscheider et al. highlighted the importance of gender attitude index, especially at the public and private spheres (26). They indicated that there is currently a need for further research on the relationship between men’s gender attitudes and fertility. From Goldsheider's point of view, questions about roles inside the house are more important than questions about women's status in society. However, it is better to consider both aspects in measuring egalitarian gender attitudes.

In addition, we examined the impact of men’s gender attitudes on the intention of having a(nother) child in multivariate analysis. The result of multivariate regression showed that in individuals with one child, gender attitudes have a significant effect on the desire to have another child, but in childless men, this was not significant. In Iran, childbearing is important and valuable and the intention to have the first child is even more important (27, 28, 29, 30). Therefore, this was not significant in childless men since they are more eager to be a father. In addition, gender attitudes do not have a significant effect on the desire to have another child in men with two children.

In fact, under the influence of the norm of two children, despite differences in socioeconomic and attitudinal characteristics, most of childless men and men with two children and more had
similar fertility goals, and the differences in fertility intention were not significant. In our study, about 70% of men intended to have two children. These results imply a convergence in fertility intention for men in Tehran. Abbasi Shavazi et al. had shown the convergence of fertility behaviors and ideals towards two children in Iran (31). Similar results have been also reported by similar studies (32-34).

We found that traditional gender role attitudes were positively associated with the intention to have a second or more children once we control for other factors. It means that egalitarian gender attitudes decrease fertility intentions. This result is consistent with the findings of other studies (35-37). In our society, the main responsibility of managing house affairs and children is on women. If egalitarian men get involved in housework and thus the cost of opportunities for housework and childcare reduce for women, we can expect egalitarian gender attitudes increase fertility.

Findings show that education has no effect on the intention to have more children. This finding is expected since childbearing is important and valuable for all families and the intention to have the first and second children is less dependent on education level. On the other hand, most of people at all levels of education are reluctant to have more than two children. These results imply a convergence in fertility intention for men in Tehran. Despite the differences in social, economic, and demographic characteristics, it seems that most people have the same ideal.

Men’s gender attitudes on their fertility intention vary across parities. In one-child men, egalitarian gender attitudes are related to low fertility intention. To better understand the role of gender attitudes on fertility intention, we propose a national study. This way, we can provide more evidence of this relationship in different parts of the country. We also propose the study of the role of gender attitudes along with the gender division of labor at home on fertility.

Conflict of interest
Authors declare no conflict of interests.

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