

Original Article

The major matters and events in creating and overcoming transition crises in the family life cycle

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Abstract

Background: This study aimed to investigate the major matters and events in overcoming transition crises in the family life cycle.

Methods: This study is a qualitative approach and a grounded method. The statistical population included couples living in Karaj in 2020 that 80 of them were selected by purposeful sampling method. They were assigned to 20 people in each period. In the qualitative part, data analysis was performed based on grounded theory by performing three coding steps (open, axial and selective). To describe the data, the usual methods in descriptive and inferential statistics such as preparing frequency tables, calculating statistical indicators were used in SPSS software. Sequential strategy was used to combine quantitative and qualitative data.

Results: 20 indicators and 5 components were identified. Economic and social areas such as the difficulty in dividing family responsibilities between spouses, economic and financial issues were some of the influential factors. Factors affecting family experiences such as social, religious and family factors had a great impact on the challenges of Iranian families.

Conclusion: In the study population, lived experiences of identity in families located at different stages of the family life cycle can be considered as the concerns of families. It seems that the lived experience of individuals in families is affected by economic and social problems that have overshadowed their needs, such as coronary heart disease, family well-being, housing purchase, high cost of living, children's future and start-ups. Business.

Keywords: Family; Family Conflict; Life Cycle Stages.

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Introduction

Family is a dynamic and fluid concept. When a person is born in a family, he or she grows up and forms another family, and in a new family, children are born and grow up. This process leads to the formation of the family life cycle, which continues until old age and in each period,

it depends on some factors. The family life cycle describes changes in the size, composition, and function of the family (1). The characteristics of the modern Iranian family emphasis more on changes in the process of choosing a spouse, changing the role of women in the family and society, education and working of women along

with men outside the home, and disruption of family relationships, as well as demographic changes and functional changes of family such as change in a set of family functions and responsibilities that has diminished and lost its importance during the individualization of the family, such as caring for children and the elderly (2). Families go through different stages of transition over time, which leads to new relationships between members. In other words, as families move forward in family life, their internal relationships change (3). McGoldrick & Carter, define the family life cycle as "the process of growth and evolution of family life that takes shape over time" (4). Theorists have provided different divisions of the growth and evolution of family. Duwall (1967) first suggested that the family goes through eight stages, and each stage has its own key tasks. These stages include the period of engagement and marriage, families without children, families with preschool children, families with school children, families with adolescent children, the stage of leaving home by children, the stage of empty nest, elderly families (from retirement to death). In another study, the two main dimensions (cohesion and flexibility), family relationships and family satisfaction indicated family functioning (5).

The importance of this issue made us conduct this study to gain a deeper understanding of the life cycle and its stages. Also, Karaj, as a city that has grown rapidly socially and economically in recent decades and has mainly attracted immigrants from other provinces, has special social characteristics that have also affected families. Therefore, the lived experience of people in the area of their life cycle can be very different. Thus, the present study was conducted to investigate major events in creating and overcoming transition crises in the family life cycle.

Methods

In this research, the qualitative approach and the method of grounded theory method

were used. The statistical population of the study included the families living in Karaj in 2020, which were selected by purposeful sampling method. According to purposeful sampling, the inclusion criteria were:

1- Married and passing at least one year of shared life 2- Resident of Karaj 3- Willingness to participate in research 4- Being in one of the four stages of the life cycle. It should be noted that the fifth cycle (empty nest) was not studied.

Finally, the subjects were invited for interview by reviewing the files in the cultural center. The research tool was a semi-structured interview. The clients referred to the cultural centers were invited for an interview for three months. Interview questions were designed using previous studies conducted in this area in the country as well as research objectives, and the interview lasted from 25 to 45 minutes, depending on the willingness of the subjects to answer.

Data saturation is the main factor in completing the sampling in the interview. In this study, the saturation point was obtained when the analysis of the interview did not create a new code and the concepts of the text were included in the existing codes. To reduce intervening factors such as the entry of other people, cultural center facilities such as a separate room were used and the objectives of the research were expressed, and the necessary information was provided to the participants. In this study, a total of number of 80 in-depth interviews was conducted and 20 indicators and 5 components were identified. After data collection, coding was performed in three stages of open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

In the selective coding stage, by selecting several categories from the categories obtained in axial coding, the main variables, components and classes were determined and the main categories were obtained. Finally, these categories became the core of the research model. In this

study, the researcher tried to observe ethical standards and issues. All participants participated in the study consciously and with their consent. Individuals were also reassured that their information would remain confidential and allowed to leave the study at any stage of the study. The research objectives and responsibilities of the participants were also clearly stated. To

analyze the data in the qualitative section, based on the grounded theory, three coding steps (open, axial and selective) were performed. In SPSS the quantitative section, to describe the data, common methods in descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency tables and frequency percentage, calculation of statistical indices were used Table 1.

Table 1. Types of coding

Row	Coding types	Method	Feature
1	Open	Conceptualization	At first, the number of codes was very large, then due to the duplication of information, these codes decreased
2	Axial	Relating concepts to each other	Categories and subcategories are shown in a new form
3	Selective	Selecting a number of categories from the obtained categories	By selecting several categories from the obtained categories, the main variables, components and classes were determined, and the main categories were obtained.

Results

Participants of the present study included 20 men (25%) and 60 (75%) women. Also, the highest degree, including 43% of the respondents, had a bachelor's degree. Regarding the education of the spouse, according to the obtained data, the highest degree, including 47%, had a bachelor's degree. The highest percentage of respondents included 61%, the respondents were employees and the lowest 27% were housewives. Respondents have an age difference between 1 and 5 years and 45% have an age difference between their spouse of 6 to 10 years. In terms of income, 71% of respondents have a monthly income of 30 to 60 million rials and 25% have no income. The data in the table show that 75% of the respondents stated that their spouse's income was 30 to 60 million Rials and 15% stated that their spouse's income was higher than 100 million Rials. More than 48% of respondents have 1 child and 30% have 2 children, 19% of children are between 1 and 5 years old, 21% are between 6 and 10 years

old and 21% are between 11 and 15 years old. Respondents were asked if anyone else lives in your home. Approximately 94% answered negatively to the question. According to the data in Table 82, 82% of the respondents were family relatives and 12.5% were distant or close relatives of Table 2.

Duplicates were removed from the initial codes obtained from all interviews with the subjects. In this regard, five categories were obtained, which finally led to the extraction of the following components Table 3.

As Table 2 shows, at several stages of the life cycle, there are concerns related to the same stage. The first stage was the engagement period and the early years of marriage, when the family is childless. The second stage was pregnancy. The third stage was from childhood to primary school stage. In the next stage, the children have grown up and the parents are middle-aged. The fifth stage was the stage of old age when the children leave the family and the parents become lonely.

Table 2. Demographic information of research participants

Variable	Subgroups	Frequency	percentage
Gender	male	20	25
	female	60	75
	20-29	17	21.2
age	30-39	16	20
	40-49	15	18.7
	50-59	17	21.2
	60-69	15	18.7
	29-20	16	20
Respondent spouse age	30-39	16	20
	40-49	17	21.2
	50-59	16	20
	60-69	15	18.7
education	Secondary education	0	0
	Diploma	26	32.5
	Associate	5	6.25
	Bachelor	35	43.75
	Master	10	12.5
	PhD	4	5
	Secondary education	6	7.5
	Diploma	24	30
Respondent spouse education	Associate	2	2.5
	Bachelor	38	47.5
	Master	10	12.5
	PhD	0	0
	employee	49	61.25
job	Self-employed	3	3.75
	Housewives	22	27.5
	Lawyer	2	2.5
	University lecturer	2	2.5
	Laboratory expert	2	2.5
	employee	48	60
	Self-employed	21	26.25
Respondent spouse age	Housewives	5	6.25
	Barber	2	2.5
	Lawyer	2	2.5
	Construction contractor	2	2.5
	Same age	3	3.75
	Less than 1 year	3	3.75
	1-5	36	45
	6-10	36	45
Age difference of respondent with his or her spouse	11 years and more	2	2.5
	30-60 million Rials	57	71.25
	7-9 million Rials	3	3.75
	10 million Rials	6	7.5
	No income	20	25
Respondent income	30-60 million Rials	60	75
	7-9 million Rials	2	2.5
	10 million Rials	12	15
Respondent spouse age	No income	6	7.5
	1	39	48.75
	2	24	30
Number of respondent children	3	14	17.5
	No child	3	3.75
	Children	3	2.4
	1-5	24	19.2
	6-10	27	21.6
	11-15	27	21.6
	16-20	21	16.8
Age of respondent children	20-25	15	12.5
	25-30	4	3.2
	30 and higher	4	3.2
	yes	5	7.25
	no	75	93.75
Living with someone other than his or her spouse and children	Family friend	4	5
	No relative	66	82.5
Family relativity with spouse	Distant family relative	6	7.5
	Close relative	4	5

Table 3. Investigating the components of factors affecting the life cycle of research participants

Factors	Components
Concerns in the life cycle	Concerns about the engagement period and the early years of marriage
	Pregnancy concerns
	Childhood to elementary concerns
	Middle-aged concerns
	Aging Concerns
Factors affecting family experiences	The most important current concern
	The role of social factors in family experiences
	The role of religious factors in family experiences
	The role of economic factors in family experiences
	The most important economic, social issues of life
Socio-economic issues	Difficulty in dividing family responsibilities between spouses
	Impact of economic or political events
	Financial and economic issues are among the factors involved in family disputes
The role of others in the life cycle	The effect of spouse employment
	The role of parents
	The role of children in marital satisfaction
Changes in the life cycle	The role of children in family relationships
	Patterns for leisure or entertainment
	Motivation to change the course of life
	Change in relationship with spouse
	The effect of spouse employment
	Conflict with spouse

In the second category, the factors affecting family experiences were investigated. These components included social factors, religious factors and economic factors that affect family experiences. In the category of socio-economic issues, several components were mentioned. The first component was the most important socio-economic issue of life in the life cycle that families face. The second component was the difficulty in dividing family responsibilities between spouses. The third component was the effect of economic or political events on families. In the fourth component, financial and economic issues that led to family disputes were discussed, and in the fifth component, the effect of the spouse employment on the life cycle was investigated.

The first component was the role of parents, which affects the life cycle of families. The second component was the role of children in marital satisfaction and the third component deals with the role of children in family relationships. The fifth category was changes in the life cycle. The first component was patterns for leisure or entertainment changing at every stage of

life. The second component was motivation to change the course of life, which leads to changes in the life cycle. The third component was the change in the relationship with the spouse, which was affected by social factors on the relationship between the couples. The fourth component was the effect of spouse employment, which was one of the most important factors in the life cycle. The fifth component was the conflict with the spouse that occurs in each stage of family life. The main category of study was the section of concerns in the life cycle displaying the path of the life cycle from beginning to end. Factors affecting family experiences were a set of factors that affect the life cycle. Socio-economic issues were another aspect of the life cycle that shapes families' identities. The role of others in the life cycle was another component, and changes in the life cycle form the view of the life cycle. Based on the influential factors and variables mentioned in the qualitative analysis process, the research model was designed in this way:

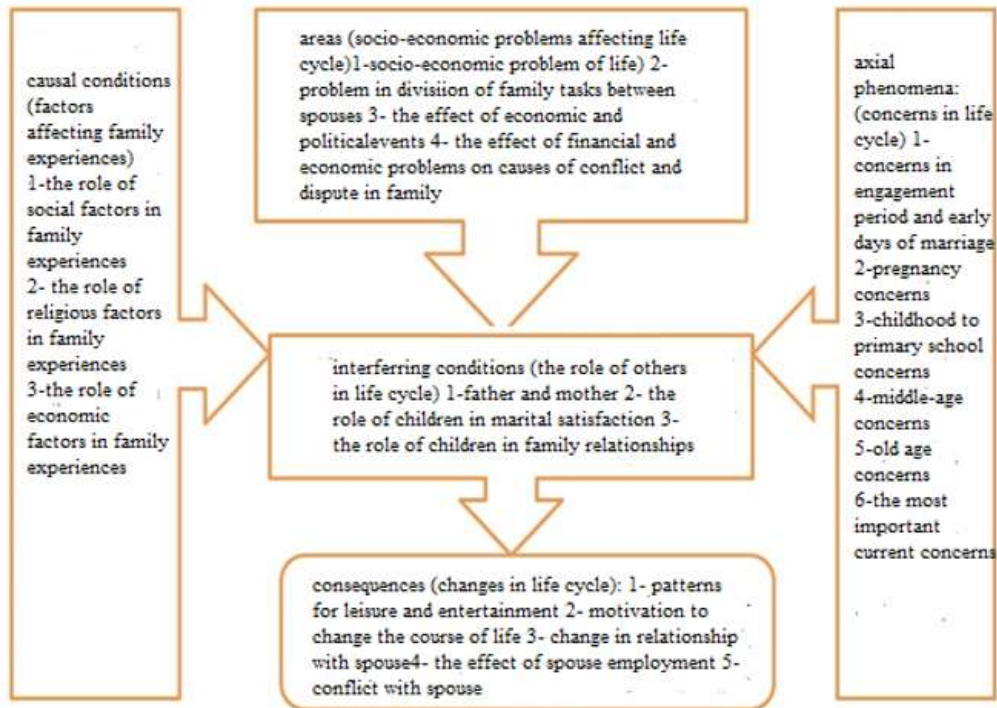


Figure 1. Model of coded research results affecting the family cycle

According to Figure 1, a set of factors and components affect the family cycle. First, the axial phenomena that are the same as the main concerns in different stages of life (1- Concerns of engagement and early years of marriage 2- Concerns of pregnancy 3- Concerns from childhood to primary school 4- Concerns of middle age) are the main theme in life cycles.

1- The most important economic, social issues of life 2- Problems in dividing family responsibilities between spouses 3- The effect of economic or political events -4- Financial and economic issues among the factors involved in disputes in the family are components that have a great effect on the life cycle.

Intervening conditions (role of others in the life cycle) 1- The role of parents 2- The role of children in marital satisfaction 3- The role of children in family relationships also affect different stages of life. Causal conditions (factors affecting family experiences) 1- The role of social factors in family experiences 2- The role of religious factors in family experiences 3- The role of economic factors in family experiences are conditions that are effective in different life

cycles. Consequences (changes in the life cycle) include: 1- Patterns for leisure or entertainment 2- Motivation to change the course of life 3- Changes in the relationship with the spouse 4- The effect of spouse's employment 5- Conflict with the spouse that changes during the stages of life in families.

Discussion

As a result of the study, it was found that in the study population, lived experiences of identity in families located at different stages of the family life cycle can be considered as the concerns of family families. It seems that the lived experience of individuals in families is affected by economic and social problems that have overshadowed their needs, such as coronary heart disease, family well-being, housing purchase, high cost of living, children's future and start-ups. Business .It seems that the lived experience of individuals in families is affected by economic and social problems that have overshadowed their needs.

Results of a study conducted by Nemati et al., on parenting stress and the interactive

effect of family life cycle stages of employed and non-employed women in Tehran showed that parenting stress was higher in employed women compared to housewives and higher in both young and adolescent stages than the middle stage in two groups (6). The results of a study conducted by Aslani et al., also showed that there is a significant difference between the four stages of life in marital happiness. The scores of couples with young children and couples with adolescent children are significantly different. Thus, employment and parenting or multiplicity of roles in mothers can impose more psychological pressure and stress on them. there is a significant difference among the four stages of life in terms of marital happiness, and the scores of couples with young children and couples with adolescent children were significantly different. Also, there was no significant difference between married men and women in terms of psychological well-being and four life cycles (7).

In a study conducted by Ghanbaripana et al., four main dimensions (cohesion, flexibility, family relationship and family satisfaction) of dynamic family structures at each stage of the family life cycle among Iranian families were examined. The results showed new concept of dynamic family models (5). The important issue in this regard is the optimal form of the life cycle in society and what is the best form of the family life cycle considering the present situation and new attitudes about the family and the beliefs of society. Since family systems are dynamic, the permanent dynamic system will help to symptomatic behaviours. In most cases, couples or families face many crises and stresses in their life cycle that may lead to an imbalance in their relationship with others. Based on some dynamic family models, changes in family types can occur over time. Hence, it is essential that some changes in family interaction patterns appear before symptoms occur. As a result, couples begin to evaluate each other more accurately at this stage of life. During this

period, behavioral systems of attachment, care and sexual satisfaction in relation to the spouse are being formed. Love and affection between couples are higher, so the mentioned behavioral systems are expected to be properly active (8).

This result is consistent with the results of the research conducted by Faulkner, as results of his research showed that the tendency to empathy is too common for families who are seeking their first child and is associated with less coordinated structures of joint regulation of behavior (9). Creating a new identity as a parent and reducing the identity of being a spouse is associated with changes in the nature and quality of the division of work in the family and changing the quality of the spouses' relationships. Children have demands on parents, including time and money, which increases stress in parents and can seriously affect the quality of marital relationships (10). Studies have shown that in recent years, insufficient support for women and families and lack of sufficient time due to employment or continuing education are challenges to childbearing. In the face of these challenges, in a society where there are financial and housing problems and have an unpleasant experience with a large number of family members and risky social environment intervention and high childbearing costs, women choose a one-child strategy (11). The results of another research revealed that although factors such as religiosity have a significant relationship with the real number of children, but there is a significant agreement among married women on the ideal number of children. Attitudes toward gender roles have a significant relationship with the ideal number of children and the results revealed that education level alone explains 40% of the variance of childbearing and reduction in population growth rate has been influenced by cultural factors such as the process of globalization and the shift from collectivist to individualistic values and economic factors such as high housing costs and basic necessities of life (12,13).

Based on the results of research conducted by Esmaeili et al., middle-aged people fill many of their gaps through communication with the family system by connecting themselves to the next generation and providing services to them and considering their successes as a continuation of their successes and accordingly they achieve a sense of satisfaction, which is consistent with Erickson's view of middle age (14). Thus, in middle age, the parents' lives are tied to their children's lives, and they bear the children's financial and spiritual problems. The next stage of the life cycle is the stage of aging. From the respondents' point of view, the most important concern in this period is the physical and mental health of the spouses and the success of the children. In this period, as in the first period of life, people needs are prioritized, and as the couple's ability decreases, physical and mental concerns increase (15).

In an answer to the question of what are the lived experiences of identity in the families of Karaj, the results of this study showed that the changes that have occurred in the relationship between spouses in the life cycle have been in line with strengthening and improving the relationship between them. In explaining this result, it can be stated that man is recognized as a motivated creature, so that all his activities and works need the necessary motivation and proportionate to that activity and work. In this regard, self-determination theory assumes that human beings are inherently motivated to be attracted to the social and physical worlds to combine their intrinsic rules with the extrinsic rules. For this purpose, they integrate with a larger social world (16).

There are different motivations for changing the course of life. In the studied families, the motivations that caused the change of life path can be divided into extrinsic and intrinsic categories, but what is important is that the motivations make qualitative changes in life cycle. The most important motivations are: Earning more

money, physical and mental factors, the birth of children, socio-economic factors that cause the marital life cycle to be in a different direction, and factors such as immigration and buying a home can affect the course of life (17).

Another lived experience of identity in married life is a change in the relationship between spouses during married life. In domestic studies conducted on marital satisfaction, some have concluded that the employment status of women, the level of education of working women and housewives in married life, the similarity of education of couples, the duration of marriage, having premarital familiarity, capital and economic facilities, parental consent and consanguineous marriage have a significant relationship with marital satisfaction. Another group of domestic studies have indicated that the level of love and affection between spouses, the level of respect between spouses, social capital of the family, understanding of religious beliefs and the level of communication inside and outside the family have a significant relationship with the level of marital satisfaction (17,18).

According to many experts, in line with extensive social and cultural changes in recent decades, identities have changed at the border of tradition and modernity and have created fundamental changes in relationships, beliefs and expectations of people about marriage. Accordingly, family and marriage has faced many challenges and conflicts. As dimensions of female identity become more dynamic and the traditional identity changes to a modern identity, marital conflicts also increase (19). There are important changes that affect the stability and satisfaction of married life, the rate of incompatibility and even the divorce rate during each of these stages. Many researchers have examined the challenges in the life cycle and attributed many problems to the transition from the life cycle (4). It is clear that with increasing cultural and social differences

between spouses, the conflict between them will increase. The results of the obtained data show that the respondents mentioned several factors for conflict between spouses: Lack of maintaining the status of spouses, economic-emotional deficiencies, interaction with the spouse's family, health issues and coronation were among these factors. From the respondents' point of view, families faced many economic and social problems during the life cycle, which influenced their life process. With the intensification of economic problems and high inflation, most of the concerns of families turned to economic problems and cultural and social problems became the second priority. The most important of these problems are business problems, buying housing, living costs and financial problems, raising children, having a job and a fixed salary (20).

The results of the present study showed that the most important problem (economic, social) that we have had so far in life is not having a job and a fixed salary." "The most important economic and social issue we have had so far in life has been the bankruptcy and unemployment of my spouse at the beginning of arrival in Karaj. Since people choose a job based on necessity, there is a possibility of dissatisfaction with the job and its income. In this regard, one of the respondents stated that the most important issue (economic, social) that I have in my life is my job, which does not provide me both economically and socially. "I am generally dissatisfied with my job." Under normal conditions, people become tired (physically and mentally) of performing daily work tasks, but this tiredness is not so much that they cannot recover and get ready for another working day. In other words, under normal conditions, the person will be able to meet the requirements of the job. With increasing the job requirements, the more time and energy will be needed to prepare a person for another day of work. Lack of proper recovery of the person, due to low energy and time, will cause disruption in

the person's health and finally the person's performance will affect the relationships between family members. In general, the most important factor mentioned by families in the life cycle is economic factors and their consequences. In this regard, responsible institutions, especially the government, should take steps to reduce and eliminate the financial problems of families and consequently their social crisis.

Conclusion

The level of interests of each person causes a specific kind of conflict in the family. Family conflicts usually arise from one stage to another, which all families go through all of these stages. However, the ability of families to resolve or overcome these critical stages is very different, as the results of studies have shown that a set of economic and social factors are influential in the life cycle process. At the beginning of life, social factors such as unfamiliarity with the spouse and his or her family as a challenging factor affect the couple's life, but after this period, the most important factors are economic factors such as buying housing and family income and children. In fact, in today's situation where sanctions and inflation prevail in our society, economic factors are considered as an important influential variable during married life. Moreover, the prevalence of Covid-19 as a threatening factor in the current situation has overshadowed the peace of mind of families.

Recommendations

It is recommended for cultural institutions to teach the educational skills to families. Awareness of how people are likely to experience the reality of family life and learning the skills to perform the assigned tasks at each stage of the family life cycle may affect their satisfaction with marriage and marital life. Also, this issue moderates the desires and expectations of people and on the other hand and increases the probability of meeting the expectations.

Thus, to prevent a problematic reduction in the level of marital satisfaction, it is better to provide appropriate training for couples at every stage of the life cycle, especially when the conflict between ideals and realities will cause dissatisfaction with marriage and marital life.

Author's contribution

Fatemeh Zamani Alavijeh and Omid Ali Ahmadi developed the study concept and design. Majid Kashani acquired the data. Fariba Shayegan and Ali Roshanai analyzed and interpreted the data, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the intellectual content, manuscript editing and read and approved the final manuscript.

Informed consent

Questionnaires were filled with the participants' satisfaction and written consent was obtained from the participants in this study.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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