

VOLUME IV

FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHANGE IN FERTILITY PREFERENCES WOMEN IN TÜRKİYE OVER TIME; A SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

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1. Introduction

The decrease in the fertility rate is a current problem that is experienced in almost all countries and is widely discussed in terms of its political, social, economic and demographic consequences. After the Second World War, especially in the 1950s, the “baby boom” was experienced with the increase in the fertility rate in most European countries and America, and the average number of births increased to four or more. This generation, which is much larger than its predecessors, begins to have fewer children when it comes to adulthood. The global fertility rate, which has started to decline since the 1960s, has dropped from a peak of 2.1% per annum in 1968 to less than 1.1% today. Low fertility rates have become the norm in many parts of the world. The number of live births per woman, which was 5.5 in 1970-1975, decreased to 2.3 in 2010-2015 (UN, 2017). Today, 80% of the world’s population lives in countries with a fertility rate

of less than 3 children per woman. In other words, 46% of the world population exhibits a fertility behavior below the population replaced by replacement level of 2.1. In 2020, the fertility rate for the world was 2.4 births per woman (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2021: 5).

According to Eurostat Fertility statistics (2021), the fertility rate in 27 EU countries decreased from 1.64 in 2008 to 1.53 in 2019. Türkiye, with a 1.76 percent birth rate, is higher than the average of 27 EU member countries. The result of Roser (2014) study shows that by 2100, 21 out of 27 EU countries will have a decrease in population. According to the report of the French National Institute for the Study of Demographics (2017), around a quarter of women currently in their 40s are not having children in many Southern European countries, especially in Greece, Spain and Italy. The “childlessness rate” is 18 percent in Western Europe, while it is around 15 percent in Northern Europe. Increasing age at marriage, uncertain job market and family-friendly employment conditions are cited as the main reasons for the decline in fertility (UN, 2017). In modern fertility theory, the demand for children; It has been shown to depend on family income, the value of parents’ time (especially the mother), child quality, and other family variables (Becker, 2009: 2).

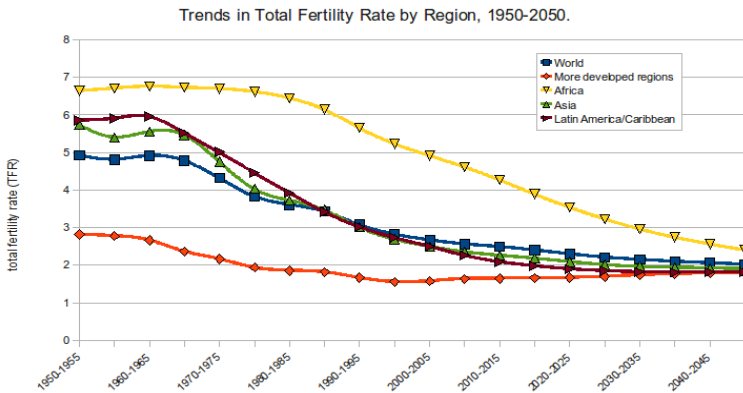
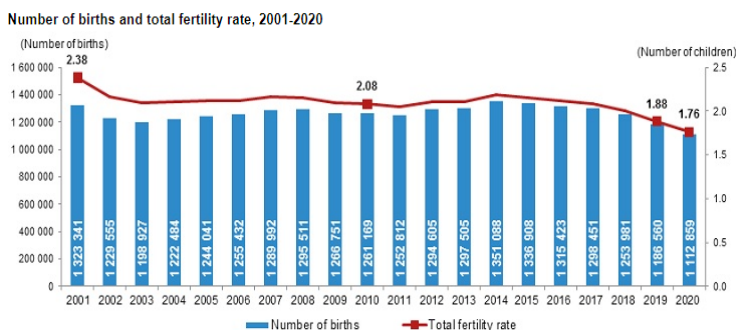


Figure 1. “Country Comparison :: Population size”.
The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency.

The birth rate in Türkiye has not been able to exceed the replacement level fertility of 2.10 in the last 10 years. In fact, the fertility rate in the Western regions of Türkiye lags behind European countries with 1.7. According to the results of the Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS), the population of Türkiye is 84 million 680 thousand 273 people as of 31 December 2021, and the Syrians under temporary protection are not included. In this state, it ranks 19th among 235 countries in terms of population size; constitutes 1.1% of the total world population. According to TUIK (2021) data, Türkiye's total fertility rate in 2020 is 1.76, and it ranks 114th among 186 countries.

Figure 3: Number of Births and Total Fertility Rate in Türkiye



Source: TurkStat, Birth Statistics, 2001-2020

2. Currents of thought that affect fertility

2.1. Malthus' population theory

Malthus (1798) argued that despite the geometrical increase in the population, the food items increased arithmetically, and after a while the foodstuffs would become insufficient. According to Malthus, keeping the growth rate of the human population at the same level as the increase in the food supply is only possible by controlling the population of natural conditions. Population growth can be prevented by positive controls such as birth control, late

marriage, and celibacy or by negative rules such as war, epidemic, and famine. Neo-Malthusians, on the other hand, advocated implementing policies restricting population growth, especially in developing countries, because fertility rates tend to exceed the population's carrying capacity. While Malthus's suggestions led to debates on the one hand, it was understood that it was influential on the population policies of the countries and the fertility behaviors of the societies on the other hand.

2.2. *Feminism*

Feminist theorists criticized marriage, family, motherhood, and fertility in the 1960s and 70s; analyzed that women were oppressed by these means. While claiming that motherhood is not sacred, they always brought up the negative aspects of motherhood as an experience and role. They argued that women should abandon institutionalized roles and that fertility-induced motherhood is a social and cultural myth (Oakley, 1974). Firestone (1997) saw female fertility as the reason for the gendered labor division based on patriarchal ideology. According to Friedman, one of the reasons why women are imprisoned at home is because they are mothers (Friedan, 1983). While Firestone (1997) attributes women's oppression to childbearing and child-rearing; Beauvoir also defines motherhood as a kind of slavery (Beauvoir, 1997). According to Firestone, pregnancy is barbarism, and the pregnant woman's body is a corrupted body (Firestone, 1997). With the introduction of birth control methods, the idea that motherhood is a choice rather than an absolute destiny for women has also started to be discussed. Feminist women in Turkiye demanded that the concepts of sexuality and fertility should be separated, the right to abortion should be recognized, birth control should become widespread, and their bodies should be freed from male control. Feminist slogans that became popular in the late 1980's can be an example of "abortion is a right, women's decision, my body, my decision." It can be said that

birth control methods and the demand for abortion are effective and determinant in the liberation of premarital sexuality for women, in family planning according to the wishes of women and men within marriage, and in the freedom of women's sexuality.

3. Factors affecting women's fertility preferences

There are many factors that affect women's fertility preferences. Studies in the literature show that women do not want or delay having children for reasons such as gaining independence through education and being active in the labor market. The rise of birth control, more women's participation in education and labor market, value changes, gender equality, marriage/relationship changes, housing conditions, economic uncertainty and lack of supportive family policies are among the reasons for the delay and decrease in fertility. (Kozáková, 2015; Daniluk ve Koert, 2017).

Engelhardt and Prskawetz (2002) in their study with the data of 23 OECD countries for the period 1960-2000, while the rate of women's participation in the labor market increased; They found that the total fertility rate decreased. According to Our World In Data (2014), in fertility decline; increased women's access to education and labor market participation; reduced child mortality; the increased cost of raising children; Factors such as higher education level and access to birth control are effective. Akın et al. (2014), they found a negative relationship between income level, labor force participation, urbanization and fertility in Sub-Saharan African countries. Ehsan (2015: 47) it shows that the most important determinant affecting women's fertility in Pakistan is labor force participation. 1% decrease in fertility rate increases women's labor force participation by 2.86%. It is seen that studies on the decrease in the fertility rate in Türkiye are few and generally focus on a single factor affecting fertility. Changes in fertility (Başkaya & Özkılıç, 2017; Gemicioğlu, Şahin & Er, 2019). Education and fertility relationship (Akça & Ela, 2012; Selim & Üçdoğruk, 2005; Şengül

& Kıral, 2006), marriage age and fertility (Eralp & Gökmen, 2020; Coşan, 2021), income and fertility (Çalışkan, 2014; Akın et al. 2014). Women's work and fertility (Akça & Ela, 2012; Kutlar et al. 2012; Üçler & Kızılkaya, 2014; Koç et al.2010). Immigration and fertility (Bilgin, 2020; Kaya, 2019), Religion and fertility (Selim & Bilgin, 2020; Karaođlan & Duman, 2017), culture and fertility (Topdemir Koçyiđit, 2012; Önder-Erol, 2018), fertility in cities (Deliktaş et al. 2008).

While the studies in Türkiye analyze the factors that determine fertility from various aspects, it is seen that they ignore the sociological factors that are effective in the decrease of women's fertility. According to the researchers, the decline in fertility can be temporary or permanent, but the common view is that once fertility begins to decline, it is rare for it to rise again. For this reason, it is important to examine the rapidly decreasing fertility rates in Türkiye from a sociological perspective, to determine the situation and analysis and to determine the solutions. The aim of this study is to examine the sociological factors that affect the change over time in the marriage and fertility preferences of women in Türkiye. For this purpose, priorities, currents of thought that are effective on fertility, and the view of culture and religion on fertility are discussed. Then, factors such as education, marriage age, labor force participation, individualization, urbanization-migration, increase in marriage age/postponing fertility, value of the child, widespread use of family planning methods, motherhood status and family structure were examined. The consequences of reduced fertility and what has been done to increase the fertility rate are discussed.

3.1. Fertility and Cultural Factors

Cultural factors include meanings and lifestyles that define a society, manifested in beliefs, values, norms, traditions and symbols. In many countries around the world, considering the cultural and social point of view, giving birth to a large number of children,

especially male children, comes to the fore and this situation significantly affects the fertility of women. Pregnancy, which has been welcomed as a natural source of joy by families for ages, has had an important cultural meaning in terms of social status. While fertility gives women the feeling of being a mother, fatherhood has shown the man as a respected and strong individual in the eyes of the society, who maintains his lineage and is proud of having proven himself. For this reason, women consider having children important both for themselves and for their spouses.

In Turkish culture, fertility is considered valuable as a whole with its economic, psychological and social dimensions. Marriage is associated with having children, while marriage and fertility are promoted. Therefore, newly married couples are expected to have children immediately, and it is thought that childless marriage cannot be possible. Having children helps those who get married gain status in social life, while fertility and motherhood determine the value and status of women. Women who are not fertile are called “fruitless tree”, “drying tree”, “bare soil”, “blind hearth”. According to Turkish custom, a man’s dignity is related to his wife’s giving him a child. Because reproduction and birth; It is also accepted as a symbol of abundance, abundance, beauty and goodness (Baysal, 2020: 282).

It is believed that the child, which is considered necessary for the continuation of life and lineage, will also strengthen the marriage and strengthen the bonds of love within the family. In addition to these, the child is seen as the heir of the nation and a source of dignity for families, especially fathers. The meanings of having a son, continuing the work inherited from the father, continuing the father’s name and keeping his name alive are loaded. While the child was considered very valuable in the old Turks; The status of the woman who becomes a mother in the family and society is also increasing. In addition, in Turkish culture, “child is the pillar of the house”, “a house without children is like a grave”, the child is the

joy of the house; The value of having a child has been emphasized with discourses such as “child is the ornament of the house, the one who does not have a child does not have a state” (Karadağ, 2013: 120). Those who are married but do not have children are not seen as a family and are belittled and excluded by the society. This situation is also reflected as a loss of prestige in the society for men. The expression “family is the state in its own way” in the society reveals the function of the family and each new individual to be added to the family.

3.2. Fertility and Religion

It is the desire of almost every society or religious belief to spread and increase in numbers throughout the world. Religions perceived birth as a blessing and saving of God and ordered their members to act in this direction. When we look at the determinant of religion on the fertility behavior of individuals with Muslim, Christian and Jewish beliefs, we see that marriage and motherhood are given a sacred value and fertility is encouraged. The role that religions impose on women; brings the fertility feature to the fore and includes rules for it. Religions clearly state reproductive rules and norms such as abortion, sterilization, and birth control (Mc Quillan (2004).

Islam attached great importance to marriage and family life and encouraged marriage (Holy Quran, Nûr 24/32; Nahl 16/72; Rûm 30/21). However, he defined the relationship between a man and a woman who did not have a marriage contract as adultery and explicitly prohibited it. ‘Do not approach adultery. For it is an immorality and a very bad way (Holy Quran, İsra: 17/32). Adultery is prohibited not only in the Qur’an, but also in other holy books such as the Torah and the Bible (Torah, Exit 20/14). The religion of Islam encourages marriage by emphasizing the protection of chastity, avoiding prohibited sexuality, ensuring the continuation of the generation, human nature and psychology

needing a romantic relationship (Holy Quran, Araf 7/189; Nûr, 24/33; Rum 30/21).

Studies show that there is a relationship between religion and fertility. In the study of Adsera (2006), which investigated individuals in thirteen developed cities to shape fertility and family structure according to religious belief, he concluded that the ideal number of children of conservative Protestants and Catholics is higher than that of non-conservative Protestants and those who have no religious beliefs. They observed that especially religious individuals prioritize family life and having children in their lives. Selim ve Bilgin (2020) in their research, those who give importance to religious belief in Muslim individuals have 0.003 times more children than those who do not, while this rate is 0.057 times higher in Christians. It is seen that this variable is not significant for Jews. In addition, according to all three religious' beliefs, the number of children they have decreases as the frequency of prayers decreases.

According to *The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections (2010-2050)*; the fertility rate, which is 1.6 in general in Europe, is at a low level. The fertility rate is 1.8 for Jews, 1.6 for Christians, 1.5 for Hindus, and 1.4 for non-believers. The total fertility rate of Muslims is higher with 2.1 children per woman in the 2010-2015 period compared to other religious groups (PEW, 2015: 147- 149). The weakening of religious beliefs/secularization leads to a decrease in fertility promoted by religions. In his research, Jones (2006) concluded that fertility started to decrease in places where Muslims are concentrated, and the reason behind this was socio-economic developments and family planning programs, as well as Muslims' birth control methods and their attitudes towards abortion. In the *Research on Gender and Women's Perception in Türkiye (2020)*, abortion should be banned because it is a sin 62% and it is against our tradition 60%. Results show that women are against abortion due to religion and culture. In the studies of Çavlin & Tezcan-Ergöçmen (2012: 56), it has been revealed that the most

important source that prevents abortion is religion. The women interviewed stated that this practice is a sin, that it will go to the power of God, and that it is not right to interfere with this even if there are unwanted pregnancies. Avison & Furnha, (2015) also determined that voluntarily childless couples had lower levels of religiosity.

3.3. Fertility and Education

There are studies showing that higher female education level is associated with lower fertility (Bongaarts, 2003; Schultz 2005; Engelhardt ve Prskawetz 2002; Chani vd., 2012). Schultz (2005: 5) the negative relationship between education and fertility explains a large part of the fertility gap within a country. The study of Gore (2010) shows that there is a relationship between the education level of women and fertility in Türkiye. The study of Carmichael (2011) also shows that the most important variable that increases the age at marriage of women is education level.

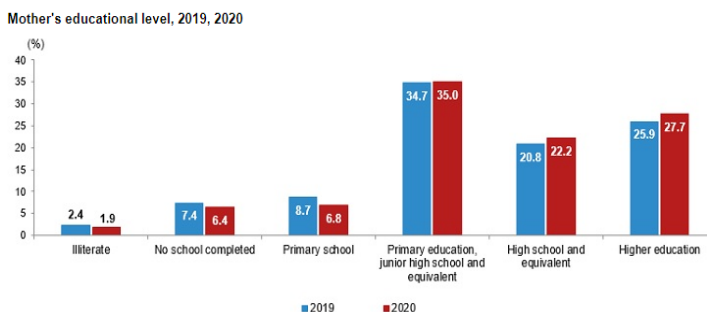
Among the effects of education on fertility, increase in the employment rate, increase in the age of marriage, use of contraceptive methods and awareness of being good parents. Because the woman who has a child stays away from business life for at least a certain period of time and suffers a financial loss and her career is interrupted. In this way, the desire to gain economic gain and make a career overtakes women's desire to have children, leading to a limitation on fertility. One of the factors affecting the decrease in fertility is that the rising education level affects the status of women and their attitudes such as having a voice in the family. This situation is more experienced in underdeveloped or developing countries rather than developed countries (Akın et al., 2014: 113). The Research on Gender and Women's Perception in Türkiye (2020) shows that 6% of women do not have a diploma, 43% have primary and secondary education, 33% have high school, 5% have college degrees, and 14% have university degrees.

Table 1: Changes in Fertility Related to Education in Türkiye (1980-2018).

	1998 TDHS	2003 TDHS	2008 TDHS	2013 TDHS	2018 TDHS
No education	3.8	3.6	2.6	3.7	4.2
Primary Education 1st stage	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.7	3.6
Elementary 2nd stage	1.6	1.7	1.3	2.4	2.8
High school and above	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.8.

Source: 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, 2018 TDHS

There are studies showing that education is the most important factor that increases the age at marriage and affects fertility decline in Türkiye, and that there is a negative relationship between education level and fertility (Deliktaş et al. 2008; Eralp & Gökmen, 2020; Karadon et al. 2021). In Türkiye, the rate of mothers who graduated from primary, secondary or equivalent school increased to 35.0%, the rate of mothers who graduated from high school or equivalent school increased to 22.2%, and the rate of mothers who graduated from higher education to 27.7%. It is seen that 1.9% of mothers who gave birth in 2020 are illiterate, 6.4% are literate but have not completed a school, and 6.8% are primary school graduates (TÜİK, World Population Day, 2021).

Figure 4: Mother's Education 2019-2020

Source: TurkStat, Birth Statistics, 2019, 2020

Education level also differs in the average number of children of women. Women with no education have, on average, one more child than educated women (Akça & Ela, 2012: 233). TAYA (2018) research shows that women who are not primary school graduates are 34% more likely to have one more child. As the level of education increases, the desired number of children decreases. Women who have not completed any school want four children on average, and women with university degrees want 2.8 children (TAYA, 2018). Employment opportunities and wages of educated women are higher than those of uneducated women who cannot participate in the workforce. In this context, increasing employment opportunities increase the number of women participating in the workforce. Therefore, the fertility-suppressing effect of education is greater in women participating (Selim, 2006).

3.4. Fertility Work and Income Level

Becker (1960) stated that there is a negative relationship between fertility and household income. Because as the income of the household increases, investment expenditures such as education and health for the child increase accordingly the cost of the child. The increase in child costs causes a decrease in the number of children. According to Bernhardt (1993), the reason for the negative relationship between fertility and labor force participation is not giving birth to children, but the care process from the birth of the child to adulthood. The two concepts are causally related, as the economic emancipation of women and the increase in female employment coincide with the decline in the fertility rate (Kreyenfeld, 2005: 5). Postponing the birth decisions of women who want to work causes the birth age to advance and the number of children born to the world decreases. The study by Mammen and Paxson (2000: 162) found a negative relationship between per capita income and fertility. In the study, it was concluded that fertility rates are high in economies where the income of women is very low. With

the increase in income, women's participation in the labor force increases and low birth rates are observed (Chani et al. 2012: 1).

TÜİK (2022) Data on Women with Statistics In 2021, the rate of employed women aged 15 and over in Türkiye is 26.3%. The employment rate of women aged 25-49 who have children under the age of 3 is 25.2%. The Research on Gender and Women's Perception in Türkiye (2020) shows that the rate of women who have never worked in their life is 46%. While 14% of working women say they quit their job due to lack of childcare support, 23% of women cite lack of childcare support as the reason for not working at the moment. When the rates of women who prefer to continue their motherhood and working life together are examined, the OECD average is 66.2% and the European Union (EU) average is 68.2%. According to these indicators, it is seen that the country with the lowest rate of working mothers is Türkiye.

Studies conducted in Türkiye show that women's participation in working life has a reducing effect on the number of children they have (Akça & Ela, 2012; Kutlar et al. 2012; Yıldırım & Doğrul, 2008; Emeç, 2013). Er (2013: 36) states in his study that married women with children have more responsibilities at work and at home, and their responsibilities increase especially with the increase in the number of children. The same study showed that married women with many children have a very small place in working life. While the studies of Bilgin (2020) showed that the study in 2008 was not a significant variable affecting the number of children of women; It shows that working women had 0.09 times fewer children than non-working women in 2013. It is observed that the tendency of women working in a job with social security to have more children is 9% less.

3.5. Fertility, Urbanization and Migration

It is known that urbanization has a limiting effect on women's fertility choices by offering a new lifestyle, increasing their opportunities to participate in education and labor force, and reducing

the pressure of family and relatives on them (Koç vd., 2010: 6). In the nuclear family structure in the city, women also prioritize working and delay having children in order to contribute to the income of the family. The cost of raising children better equipped is also rising in the city. Accordingly, families want to have children after they reach better economic conditions. All these factors show the inverse relationship of declining fertility with urbanization. Yucesahin and Ozgur (2008) highlighted that in developing countries, the increase in the education level of women made it easier for them to obtain equal rights with men. While modern women are trying to increase their family income, their inability to spare enough time for childcare is the reason for limiting their fertility.

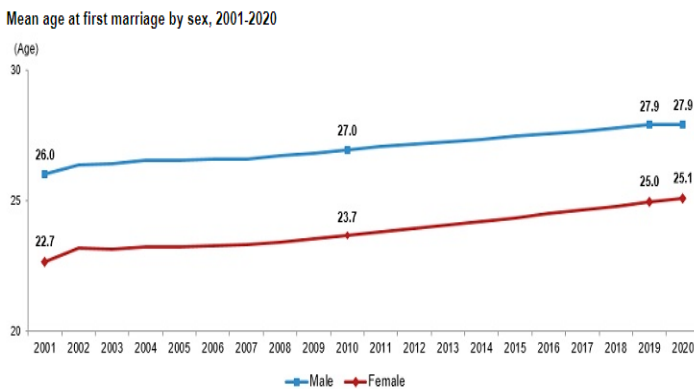
Cultural factors such as urbanization or westernization have also affected women's fertility decisions in Türkiye. Extended family structure in rural areas in Eastern Türkiye; The nuclear family structure is common in the west and in urban areas. Early marriage of girls deprived of educational opportunities in rural areas of Türkiye causes an increase in the fertility rate. While the average number of children per woman and the ideal desired number of children are higher in traditional rural areas; declining in urban areas. While women who grow up in villages want 3.4 children, women who grow up in provincial centers want 3.2 children. Easy access to birth control methods in cities has a reducing effect on fertility (Akçe & Ela, 2012: 228).

It is seen that the number of desired children decreases as you go from east to west of Türkiye. While the number of children desired in the West Marmara Region is 2.6; It rises to 4.4 in the Southeastern Anatolia Region (TAYA, 2018). Similarly, there are serious differences between rural and urban in terms of fertility rates in Türkiye. While the fertility rate is 1.5 in the West, it rises to 3 in the Eastern provinces. According to TUIK (2020) data, it is seen that the number of children from the east of Türkiye, which is 3.71, decreases to 1.29 as one goes to the west.

accepted as a prerequisite for fertility. Therefore, the postponement of marriage negatively affects the continuity of the lineage, which is one of the main functions of the family institution, and causes a decrease in fertility rates. Marriage in Türkiye is still the only legitimate form of union for men and women to live together. Women are making their first marriages at an increasingly older age. For example, while the age at first marriage for women was 16 in the 1950s; While it was 22.7 in 2001, it is 23.7 in 2010 and 25.1 in 2020 (TÜİK, 2021). In Türkiye, there is a 5-year difference in the age at first marriage between 25-49 years old women with no education and at least high school graduates. Even women who have only completed primary school are 2.5 times more likely to delay marriage than women who have never been to school.

Postponement of marriage increases approximately 6.6 times between a woman with a graduate education and a woman who has never been to school (Eralp ve Gökmen, 2020). As the socio-economic level increases, it is observed that the age at first marriage increases significantly in both sexes, especially in women. Late marriages also affect the process of having children; few children or childless nuclear families.

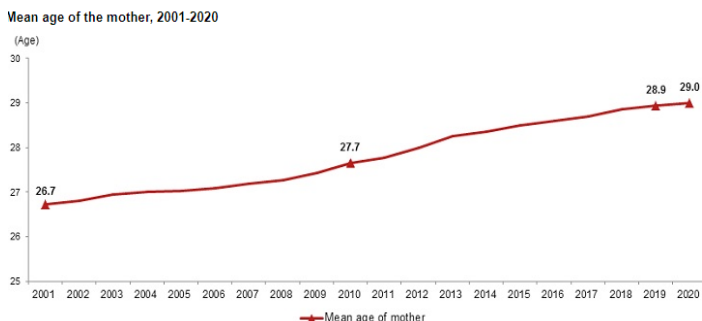
Figure 6: Age at First Marriage by Gender 2001-2020



Source: TURKSTAT, Marriage and Divorce Statistics 2020

One of the factors affecting the fertility of women in the modern era is staying single, that is, not getting married. In Türkiye, 66% of women of reproductive age 15-49 are married, while 30% of them are never married (TDHS, 2018: 45). In Türkiye, women's expectations from the man they will marry are seen as factors that increase the risk of delaying marriage. It is noteworthy that the biggest factor among these factors is "love". According to this result, the probability of delaying the first marriage decision of individuals who care about love for marriage increases by 0.60 compared to individuals who do not (Eralp & Gökmen, 2020). In addition to financial worries such as busy work life and economic inadequacy, the sense of independence also keeps people away from marriage. The destruction of the boundaries of sexuality that took place within the family within the framework of social legitimacy, that is, the fact that people can now meet these needs through illegitimate means poses a threat to the institution of the family.

Figure 7: Average Age of Mother 2001-2020



Source: TURKSTAT, Birth Statistics, 2001-2020

The average age of mothers also differed by years. The average age of mothers who gave birth at the age of 26.7 in 2001 increased to 29.0 in 2020 (TÜİK, Birth Statistics, 2001-2020). Women who marry early have, on average, the potential to have more children, which can often lead to more births during their

lifetime. As the age at first marriage increases, the number of children decreases; Women who marry before the age of 18 have an average of 3.5 children, while women who marry after the age of 30 have 1.2 children. Women married after age 30 are 50% less likely to have one more child than those married before age 18 (TAYA, 2018).

The decrease in fertility due to the increase in the average age of marriage affects not only the demographic structure of the family or society, but also the economy of the country. According to the World Bank's 2019 income-based classification, the loss of population dynamism in Türkiye, which is in the upper-middle income group, poses a risk for Türkiye to be in the upper income group. While the decision to postpone having children 100 years ago was due to poverty, today it is primarily due to women's search for independence. In other words, the tendency of women participating in the labor force to delay their motherhood period is increasing in order to achieve their individual and economic independence. Many women now attend university, join the workforce after the age of 22-23, and try to take part in working life for a few years, perhaps before getting married or even having children in order to consolidate their position in the workplace.

3.7. Spread of Family Planning Methods and Fertility

It is reported that approximately 230 million births are prevented each year with the use of family planning methods González et al. (2010). Of the approximately 190 million women who become pregnant each year, 50 million have abortions to end unwanted pregnancies. Complications due to abortion constitute approximately 13% of maternal deaths (Ahmet et al. 2012). Birth control methods are the most important factor determining the level of fertility in many countries. Couples who want to consciously

control their fertility behavior may choose to use a contraceptive method or for women to have an abortion or miscarriage. Today, the invention, development and spread of modern birth control methods, as well as the use of traditional birth control methods to prevent pregnancy, is considered a turning point in the decline of fertility. It is generally expected or assumed that women do birth control. The vast majority of modern methods of contraception; for example, oral pills, intrauterine device, diaphragm are intended for women.

Women's preference for modern methods is affected by sociodemographic and socioeconomic factors such as the economic status of the family, education level, religious beliefs, number of living children, service intake and content. Since women took their fertility under control; fertility is declining, the average maternal age is rising, the number of women in the business world is increasing, and women's lifestyles are diversifying. Research shows that decisions in family planning are made by women. According to the 2019 Türkiye Demographic and Health Surveys (TDHS) 70% of married women use any family planning method. Compared to women using modern birth control methods in 2013, women who do not use any birth control method have 0.662 times fewer children, while women who use traditional or folk birth control methods have 0.232 times less children (Bilgin, 2020).

3.8. Change in family structure

Modernization and demographic transition change family structures by adding new species to the family. After the 1980s, some changes began to be observed in the family institution and the understanding of marriage throughout the world. In addition, trends such as the increase in the age at first marriage, the decrease in marriage rates, the increase in divorce rates, and the decrease in

fertility have begun to be accepted as an indicator of the disintegration of the traditional family structure. In addition, with the increase in women's labor force participation rates and the gaining of economic independence, new lifestyle alternatives to the family have become more visible (Irwin, 2000). Changes in fertility behavior are more affected by some transition seen in the "family", which is called the building block of modern society. Today, the increase in the number of single-parent and step-family due to the increase in divorce rates, the preference of more individuals not to marry, the married people who prefer voluntary childlessness indicate that the nuclear family has come to an end (Toffler, 2008).

In Türkiye, there is a process of change in terms of family structure. It is stated that three important factors play a role in this change from a sociological point of view, and accordingly family structures and fertility rates are affected. The first of these is urbanization, paid work of women, developments in economic life, etc. socio-economic changes. The second is the increase in the age of motherhood for various reasons, the limitation of the number of children to two, and the narrowing of the gap between the ideal number of children and the number of children they have. The last and the most important factor is the change in the family structure, along with the "change of mindset" or "intellectual change". From this point of view, it is reported that the socioeconomic, demographic and intellectual transformation process in Türkiye affects the individual's thought of having a child (Arslan et al, 2019). We can say that factors such as modernization and demographic transition are also effective on family structure in Türkiye. This process creates an effect that reduces the importance of traditional family values and life by spreading individual lifestyles and new values built around rights and freedom (BASAGM, 2010: 32). It is seen that all these factors affect the family structure. The forms created by single-person households and unmarried couples are more common today.

Table 2: Proportion of Households by Type, 2014-2020

Type of households	Proportion in total households						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
One-person households	13.9	14.4	14.9	15.4	16.1	16.9	17.9
One-family households	67.4	66.9	66.4	66.1	65.3	65.1	65.2
Couple without resident children	14.1	14.3	14.2	14.2	14.1	13.9	13.5
Couple with at least one resident child	45.7	44.8	44.0	43.5	42.3	42.0	42.0
Lone parents with at least one resident child	7.6	7.8	8.2	8.5	8.9	9.2	9.7
Lone fathers with at least one resident child	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.2
Lone mothers with at least one resident child	6.1	6.2	6.5	6.7	7.0	7.2	7.5
Extended-family households	16.7	16.5	16.3	16.0	15.8	15.0	14.0
Multi-person no-family households	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.8	3.0	2.8

Source: TurkStat, Address Based Population Registration System, 2014-2020

When the table is examined, it is seen that 9.7% of the total household in Türkiye in 2020 consists of single parents and children, while 2.2% consists of fathers and children, 7.5% consists of mothers and children. (TURKSTAT, Statistics on Family 2020). According to the results obtained from the Family Structure Researches in Türkiye, it is stated that as a result of socioeconomic change, especially the extended family structure has been dissolved and the dispersed family structure has become widespread. One of the sub-family forms that make up the nuclear family structure of families in Türkiye, the nuclear family without children is increasing faster than the nuclear family with children. Due to the decrease in fertility, the rate of nuclear families with one and two children is increasing. There is a serious decrease in families with three or more children. It is understood that with the acceleration of the dissolution in the patriarchal family and the increase in divorce rates in recent years, the temporary extended family, which has emerged in the form of articulation with the nuclear family, has also tended to increase.

3.9. Fertility and Individualization

Individuality is a thought that empowers the person as a subject and centers her freedom. Thus, the individual, who sees herself as the center in all matters, demands unlimited freedom in

her preferences and is reluctant to share her freedom with others (Touraine, 2012: 257-296). This situation makes itself visible in terms of marriage and fertility. In particular, the increase in the share of women in working life, the decrease in the influence of social and religious teachings on individuals and effects such as globalization; increased individualization in societies and started to cause erosion in the traditional family structure. The emancipation of women, their participation in the workforce, the change in the gender roles of men and women, the ongoing liberalization and individualization of lifestyles are among the indicators of this process. In today's globalization of modernism, sexual happiness has been placed at the center of life, and the satisfaction of pleasures has become the purpose of living. At the same time, the meanings attributed to sexuality have changed and the idea of sexual freedom has come to the fore. Sexuality is no longer accepted in connection with the notion of continuation of the lineage (Giddens & Pearson, 2001).

Depending on the developments in contraception methods and birth technology, pleasure and pleasure have come to the fore in sexuality, which has been separated from the necessity of reproduction. The rise of individualism, specific to the fertility issue, dynamics such as individuals' choosing not to marry at all, marrying later and/or having children later, choosing voluntary childlessness or having children at a level that satisfies them indirectly contribute to the result of low fertility behavior. Individual life in Turkey gradually increased the age of marriage, decreased marriages and increased divorce rates. The family, which is perceived as making another person and child suffer, has begun to be approached with a distance. This thought has led to a decrease in fertility. Social relations redefined by neoliberalism, 'self-sufficiency' and 'individualism' have come to the fore as rising values. Women associated "stand-on", which defines themselves with market dynamics, with having a paid job.

Eralp & Gökmen (2020) determined in their study that women are more prone to individualization and this has negative effects on postponing marriage. The individual, who created herself independently of the family, now perceives the establishment and maintenance of families as a narrowing of her own freedom. As a result, individual lifestyles and extra-marital relationships become more widespread, while intolerance between spouses increases in marriage (ASAGEM, 2010).

3.10. Value of the Child and Fertility

The child has economic, psychological and sociological / traditional value in her research, which pioneered studies on parents' perceptions of having a child and the values they attribute to children (Kağıtçıbaşı & Ataca (2005). The economic value/benefit of the child primarily means that it brings income and contributes to the home, does housework and provides care to parents in old age. The psychological value of the child is accepted as bringing joy to the home, providing emotional satisfaction and bringing parents closer together. The social value of the child is; It tells about factors such as ensuring the continuity of the family, giving parents a perception of social success and reputation (Kağıtçıbaşı ve Ataca, 2005: 78). According to Becker (1960), for many mothers and fathers, children are a source of physical income or satisfaction. In this direction, children are considered as durable consumer goods from an economic point of view, while they are considered as production goods in cases where they provide financial income. The main finding of the studies on this subject is that the economic and psychological value given to the child shows different relationship patterns with the macro system variables (equality between women and men in the family, women's participation in working life, women's social status, etc.). In the family model where the child contributes economically to the family, that is, the economic value of the child is high, the tendency to have many children increases,

the preference for sons with a higher probability of income increases and the burden of child care becomes heavier. For all these reasons, women who do not want to have children in line with their own preferences deviate from the norms of the society and may be accepted as less responsible and more selfish by the society. The decrease in the economic value of the child may be a factor that suppresses discrimination in the parents' preferences for girls and boys. The norms of the number of children tend to decrease, since even one child is sufficient to meet emotional needs such as love and commitment. The woman, who is still responsible for childcare due to traditional gender roles, gains a limited freedom in the social sphere, albeit relatively, with the decreasing number of children. Although the fertility rate has decreased over time, the view of the child still maintains its positive quality when compared to Western societies. Topçuoğlu et al. (2010) in their research, 56.5% of the participants reported that two children, 25.5% three, 8.7% four and 7.2% one child were ideal. Family Values Survey in Turkey (TADA) data and SEKAM (2011) findings also support this result.

3.11. The Value of Motherhood and Fertility

It is accepted that capitalism reverses the relationship between fertility and women's status, which means that as the status of women increases, fertility decreases (Caldwell, 1978). Men and women are being equalized in all areas such as education, work, social and political participation, and the traditional boundaries between gender roles are becoming increasingly blurred. The woman is not defined only by the domestic sphere and the status of being a mother. At the same time, she gains the identity of an independent individual who can work, have a profession, earn money with her individual efforts, and therefore has equal rights and responsibilities with men in the maintenance of the house and in making decisions. Discourses that belittle and devalue being a housewife or a mother, and encourage women to gain economic independence based on

the thesis that the family oppresses women, devalues motherhood. The discourses that push the woman to be selfish in her individual pleasures and preferences instead of seeking a life balance with her husband, and that seek her “rights” with a confrontational language, are at least as problematic as the attitudes that prevent the woman from getting an education or making herself available in the society.

Women’s access to economic and professional positions that can manage their own lives and the development of birth control methods have revealed women who never thought of giving birth to children. Kaplan (2011:167) in his study, “good mother”, “good wife”, “good cook”, “good cleaner” and many other skills are accepted as a measure of the success of women, but a social status value has not been defined. According to Kalaycıoğlu & Tılıç (2001:153-154), the work done at home does not bring an income to the woman, nor does it gain a social status. Defining housework as a woman’s duty contributes to the invisibility of this labor and not to be perceived as a job. The worthlessness of housework also affects the way women perceive themselves. In her study, Fidan (2016:135-136) states that when women are asked to evaluate themselves, they evaluate themselves through the eyes of men. According to Kaplan (2011:168), integrating the obligation of housework with women reinforces the secondary position of women in society. Housework and childcare for women have been defined as a cultural value in Turkish society. Thus, women continue their lives with much more responsibilities than men in housework and home care services. This area of responsibility and the material value of the labor produced cannot be formed (Kalaycıoğlu and Tılıç, 2001).

Berber (2013: 246), in his study with executive women working in the private sector, determined that motherhood is not seen as a status and they do not define themselves only through motherhood. While some added that they were disgusted with the care to be given to the child, others stated that the thought of spending all their time with a baby tired them: “motherhood is like living

alone, from morning to night, with a mentally handicapped person who cannot hold her tongue” (Badinter, 2017: 147). Apart from these women, there are also those who are afraid of the monotony of their mother’s duties or worry about the loss of their identity. According to Badinter, “if this trend is accepted, will we one day see that motherhood is dominated or monopolized by women who are culturally, socially and professionally less equipped?” (Badinter, 2017: 154). Today, for independent and individualized mothers, the concept of “non-working woman” shakes the status of the modern woman as it matches the concept of “traditional mother”. For this reason, the “modern mother”, worried about being seen only as a housewife and mother, considers working motherhood with a diploma more acceptable. In Turkey, housewife and motherhood are desired to be shown among ordinary, simple and useless jobs. Men prefer to marry working women instead of housewives due to the imposition of economic conditions. This situation, on the other hand, makes women hostile to housewifery and motherhood, and encourages them to be working women.

4. Conclusion

This research was carried out in order to explore sociologically the factors that prevent women from preference to have children, as the decrease in fertility causes important consequences for individuals and society. It is expected that this research will contribute to the researches in this field, while discussions continue in Türkiye as well as in many countries of the world. The decrease in fertility rates in the world in general and in Türkiye in particular draws attention. This situation shows the connection between the development/development of the country and fertility. The basic message underlying population planning programs is the idea that having fewer children and socio-economic development are necessarily linked. It is clear that this fact is effective in the falling birth rates in Türkiye, where population planning programs have

been a policy that governments have given importance to for many years and Westernization is the official agenda of the country. Therefore, it has become a necessity to investigate the effect of cultural norms, which change under the influence of world culture, on the strikingly declining fertility rates in Türkiye. When we look at the literature in Türkiye, two important factors draw attention. The first of these is that studies on fertility are not enough to create a literature. Although the decline in fertility rates is an issue that occupies the agenda of the country, it does not attract much attention in the academic world. Another factor is the way fertility is handled in current studies. There are many variables that affect women's fertility decisions. All these variables need to be examined in depth, both in relation to each other and individually. However, studies generally focus on a single factor. Considering the sociological factors affecting fertility in Türkiye, multidimensional studies should be conducted.

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