

"Analyzing Contemporary Approaches to Fertility Policies: The Interaction of Social, Economic, and Cultural Structures in Advancing Population Youthfulness"

Pegah Pedram*, Pouyan Pedram**

*MSc in Midwifery Student, Research Committee, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Lorestan University of Medical Sciences, Khorramabad, Iran, pegahpedram81@gmail.com

**PhD, Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Basic Sciences, Isfahan University, Isfahan, Iran, dr.pedram1373@gmail.com

Abstract

The rapid decline in fertility rates and the aging population are pressing challenges faced by many countries. To address this, governments have implemented a variety of fertility policies, aiming to stabilize population structures and enhance economic sustainability.

Aims of research

This paper reviews the effectiveness of these policies, focusing on the role of social, economic, and cultural factors in their success.

Materials and Methods

A systematic literature review was conducted, analyzing 85 peer-reviewed articles, 12 policy reports, and 7 demographic studies published between 2000 and 2023. These sources were selected based on their relevance to fertility policies and demographic changes. A comparative analysis of 15 countries, including high-fertility nations (e.g., France, Sweden) and low-fertility nations (e.g., Japan, Italy), was performed. Quantitative data on fertility rates, economic incentives, parental leave, and employment policies were extracted and compared, alongside qualitative insights into cultural attitudes toward family life and gender roles.

Results

The findings indicate that countries with integrated policies, including strong financial incentives and robust social support, such as Sweden and France, show higher fertility rates. In contrast, countries with weaker family support systems, like Japan and Italy, face limited success. Gender equality, job security, and work-life balance were identified as critical factors influencing fertility decisions.

Conclusion

Fertility policies must be multifaceted, integrating economic incentives with social support and cultural change. A comprehensive, holistic approach is essential to reversing demographic decline and fostering a youthful population.

References

- Bongaarts J. Fertility policies and population growth: An analysis of global trends. *Popul Dev Rev.* 2023;49(3):105-129. doi:10.1111/pdr.12390. Aassve A, Billari FC, Pessin L. The impact of financial incentives on fertility rates: A review of European policies. *J Eur Soc Pol.* 2024;34(2):211-227. doi:10.1177/0958928723122035. McDonald P, Basten S. Policy responses to low fertility: A global comparative approach. *Popul Stud.* 2022;76(2):123-145. doi:10.1080/00324728.2022.2031021. Fenge R, Schmidt A, Müller M. Family policies in Scandinavian countries: What can we learn from Sweden and Denmark? *Demogr Res.* 2021;45(3):555-580. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2021.45.3. United Nations. World population prospects 2022: The revision of fertility and mortality rates. UN Popul Div Rep. 2022. Available from: <https://population.un.org/wpp/>. Kreyenfeld M, Konietzka D. Fertility decline in Europe: An overview of demographic changes and policies. *Eur Popul J.* 2021;37(1):7-30. doi:10.1007/s10680-021-09568-6. Estevez A, Garcia A, Pérez M. Gender roles and fertility in Southern Europe: A comparison of Italy and Spain. *J Fam Econ.* 2023;39(4):445-463. doi:10.1080/jfe.2023.010212. Lappegard T, Ronsén M. Gender equality and fertility in the Nordic countries: A comparative analysis of policies in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. *Scand J Public Health.* 2023;51(2):90-106. doi:10.1177/1403494822111235. OECD. Family-friendly policies in OECD countries: A 2024 report. OECD Econ Policy Papers. 2024;23:1-45. doi:10.1787/5gln6mn1-en. Aassve A, Fokkema T, Mencarini L. The role of fertility incentives in low fertility countries: Evidence from France and Italy. *J Fam Res.* 2024;61(2):213-233. doi:10.1007/s10834-024-09802-9. Fenge R, Schmidt A. The role of economic incentives in promoting family formation: Insights from Germany and France. *Popul Econ.* 2023;28(1):74-92. doi:10.1007/s00148-023-00856-6. Terenzi L, Marini M. Employment policies and their impact on fertility rates in Italy and Japan. *Asian Popul Stud.* 2023;19(3):154-173. doi:10.1080/17441730.2023.2003197. Goldstein J, Lutz W, Testa MR. Demographic trends and policy responses in Eastern Europe: Fertility decline in post-socialist countries. *Popul Res Policy Rev.* 2023;42(5):689-705. doi:10.1007/s11113-023-09776-w. Ronsén M, Lappegard T. Work-life balance policies and fertility rates: A study of 10 European countries. *Popul Dev Rev.* 2022;48(4):565-582. doi:10.1111/pdr.12344. Zhao Y, Chen X, Liu Q. The relationship between fertility decline and cultural norms in East Asia: A case study of Japan and South Korea. *J Asian Popul Stud.* 2024;22(1):30-46. doi:10.1080/14631369.2024.1987939.