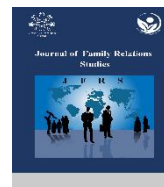




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Research Paper

Qualitative exploration of the attitudes towards childbearing in Childless working women



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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study was to explore the attitudes towards childbearing among working women without children in Golpayegan city.

Methods: This study used a qualitative approach and the grounded theory method. The study population was childless working women in Golpayegan city with public and private jobs in 2022 -23. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview and analyzed using Strauss & Corbin's three-stage method.

Results: Findings revealed that 87 primary codes were obtained based on the analysis of the interviews through open coding. After axial coding, 24 themes were extracted, which were summarized in the following 11 central categories after selective coding: reluctance to childbearing, marital problems, economic problems, lack of public and social facilities, organizational and occupational problems, personal problems, cultural and environmental barriers, nuclear family system, replacement, suppression, and being used to a childless life.

Conclusion: According to the current research findings, women's attitude towards childbearing is influenced by many intrapersonal and interpersonal factors. Therefore, to strengthen the attitude towards childbearing among working women, paying attention to all these factors in educational and support programs is necessary.

1. Introduction

At the macro and national level, one of the indicators of sustainable and constructive development that every country seeks to achieve is the consolidation and realization of the concept of family. In most cases, the family supports people and prevents them from physical, psychological, and social harm (Moshfegh et al., 2017; Ayadi et al., 2022). Family provides the best context for the security and mental peace of the members, raising the new generation, socializing the children, and fulfilling their needs (Aleyaran et al., 2022). Despite the

importance of the family in childbearing, the concept of a childless family is becoming an accepted concept in some countries, and childless families will probably face major challenges. Having a child is one of the strongest predictors of reducing the likelihood of divorce and addiction and increasing the ability to cope with psychological and social tensions. Actually, most people gain greater strength after becoming parents, and they increase their efforts to maintain the health of their children and family and keep them safe and secure.

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From an individual perspective, not having a child has personal consequences but will create challenges for society when it becomes commonplace. Fertility is the basis of cohabitation and one of the principles of marital life. In fact, the most important issue after being and staying alive is generational survival. This issue has been under consideration since the beginning of human creation (Zarei, 2012).

Having a child is a natural desire, but one may lose this desire under the influence of personal, interpersonal, or social factors. Iran has experienced the greatest decrease in fertility rate in the last few years. With the recent decrease in the birth rate in this country and its fall to 0.6 in 2022, it is approaching negative population growth (Dousti et al., 2021).

The industrialization of the modern world has caused women to show a greater desire to work and to refuse to do their traditional duties, including the responsibility to take care of their children before and after birth. Consequently, they show no desire to have children due to some restrictions created during pregnancy and after the birth of a child. Some recent studies have shown that working women have less positive attitudes towards having children (Moshfegh et al., 2017). Studies have shown that women's employment, despite the fact that it helps to improve the level of family well-being, but in their life, there are various types of work-family conflicts, such as job stress, high work pressure, conflict of roles, problems related to child care and personal needs (Dargahi et al., 2021). Studies have shown that mothers' employment affects the family, especially the children, and this particularly affects their children's early years of life, since the mother has a more prominent role due to having the most emotional interactions with the child since birth (Barati Moghadam et al., 2023). In other words, more work and work holism in women than in men can lead to job-family conflicts. This is even though, according to the conducted studies, it has been determined that job-family conflicts may lead to a wide range of negative consequences, thereby decreasing marital satisfaction and enjoyment of life moments (Dargahi et al., 2021).

Some large-scale surveys have been conducted in Iran on the general attitudes of the society towards the childbearing category, all having emphasized the reduced desire and increased negative attitude of the society towards it under the influence of various factors (Asadi, 1974; Mohseni, 1996; Javadi Yeganeh, 2015). Considering the data obtained from the attitude surveys and changes in people's attitudes in recent years, we can say that having a child is still a valuable norm in Iranian society, as 50% of the people in the society have been in favor of childbearing in all the surveys. Nonetheless, a

positive attitude towards something does not always lead to the corresponding behavior (Simionescu et al., 2021). Perhaps, the couple's attitudes are positive in some studies, but their parenting behaviors, such as taking actions for fertility, are limited under the influence of environmental and economic constraints. In general, a positive attitude towards childbearing is one of the important factors in making efforts and taking action to have children, as well as the number of children (Soderberg et al., 2013). In contrast, the negative attitude towards childbearing is among the factors affecting childbearing and reducing the birth rate (Mobasheri et al., 2013).

The attitude towards childbearing, like other attitudes, can be manipulated and changed, as it has been changed during certain periods under the influence of certain social conditions. Although having a child has personal and interpersonal problems, it can be considered a growing and satisfying achievement in life in many ways (Rezvani & Rezaeyan, 2022). Negative attitudes are usually created simply because they depend on the survival and security system of the brain; however, positive attitudes require a voluntary effort to be trained and created (Gilbert, 2014). Therefore, it is possible to create more positive attitudes towards childbearing among working women by providing an effective approach over time.

Iran is a country where there has been a severe drop in the fertility rate in the last two decades, and the population has started aging. The rapid population growth, especially in developing countries, in the past decades, has created changes in childbearing. Moreover, while the population growth rate in Iran has reached a very low level in the last few years, reluctance to have children can become a threat to population aging and pose very fundamental challenges in the social and economic dimensions. According to the existing research literature, one of the things that should be noted is that along with the decrease in the fertility rate in Iran in recent years, the participation of women in various jobs has also increased. Therefore, a comprehensive investigation of the reasons for the decrease in the desire to have children among working women can play an important role in identifying the childbearing obstacles faced by Iran's society. Thus, the main question of this study was, "What are the factors affecting working women's attitudes towards childbearing"?

2. Materials and Methods

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach and the grounded theory method. The study population consisted of the childless working women in Golpayegan city with public and private jobs in 2022-23, using

purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews with 15 women. There is no rule for determining sample size in qualitative research. Instead, the sample size actually depends on what the researcher wishes to know, the purpose of the study, what will be useful, what will be believable, and what can be performed considering the time and resources. In qualitative research, the sample size is not determined in advance; instead, it is determined based on the saturation of the findings (when the researcher is sure that no more new information will be obtained if the interviews are continued) during the work process. The data started to be repeatable from the 13th interview sample, and the researcher continued the interviews and data collection up to the 15th sample to become more certain about the results.

Procedure: Before conducting the interview with the women, the content of the interview was compiled based on the results of the preliminary study and the indicators identified in the theoretical foundations and objectives of the research, and they were provided to the researchers, professors, and experts in the field of psychology and counseling. Among the interview questions were: What do you think about childbearing? In your opinion, what factors can prevent childbearing? The interviews were conducted after they were modified and confirmed, and the necessary coordination was made. Each interview lasted 45 to 60 minutes, considering the conditions, participants' tolerance level, and interest rate. The participants were briefed about the purpose of the study, its procedures, risks, and benefits, the voluntary nature of participation, and their confidentiality at the beginning of the interview. The participant's right to withdraw from the study at any time and the ways their information was to be protected were considered. They filled out the informed consent form at the beginning of the interview. The interviews were recorded and then

transcribed. To keep the participants' information confidential, the researchers changed all their names to codes while implementing the recorded content. These codes were used during the data analysis and statement of the results. After the interviews were conducted and the files were implemented, the quotes were coded using Strauss and Corbin's three-stage paradigm model in three open, axial, and selective stages. Finally, the researchers began theorizing about the phenomenon in question based on the Grounded Theory.

Four common criteria, including credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, were used to ascertain the significance and accuracy of the collected data (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In order to reach credibility, the following items were used: recurrent contact with participants, continuous observation, inspection from diverse angles, and reference to every interview with participants after its analysis, just to affirm it and have supervisors check the process. To determine the dependability of data, administrations of some colleagues, such as supervisors and other experts, were utilized, and contexts were given to them to check codes more meticulously. To maintain confirmability, best practices were implemented so that researchers would not be influenced by their prejudice and bias. Recording all procedures, collecting data, and maintaining documents were greatly helpful in confirming the data. Ultimately, just to check transferability, an accurate depiction of the process, such as the attentive description of data collection, coding, and data analysis, was taken into account.

3. Results

Table 1 shows the participants' demographic characteristics, including age, work experience, and cohabitation experience.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the qualitative part

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Work experience	Frequency	Percentage	Cohabitation experience	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	3	20	1-5	2	13.33	1-5	8	53.33
26-30	6	40	6-10	8	53.33	6-10	4	26.67
31-35	5	33.33	11-15	3	20	11-15	2	13.33
36-40	1	6.67	15-20	1	6.67	15-20	1	6.67

The information given in Table 2 showed that 87 open codes were extracted from the important quotes of the interviewees, and the axial categories and codes were reduced to 24 key categories after they were summarized and renamed. For the sake of brevity, the quotations have been avoided. Only some important quotations are mentioned below, such as "I have no desire to have children due to the lack of social and educational facilities," "I really feel that my God-written fate is that I should have no children", I am not interested in having

children due to the rising cost of life and the high cost of children", "I have fear to have a child due to the instability and conflict in my relationship with my wife", "Despite my desire to have a child and my feeling of loneliness from this situation, I believe that having it will worsen my condition, so I have to accept this situation", and "It is better not to have a child than to give birth to a child with a miserable life. I think children have a bad fate in the current age".

Table 2. Open coding of important quotes and categorization in axial codes

Axial coding	Open coding	References (interviews)
Lack of economic security	Economic problem of living with a child Concern about financial issues after having a child lack of privileges and government support for born children High medical and general treatment costs Lack of sufficient financial assistance from the government Reduction of financial security for couples Existence of economic and livelihood problems for couples	1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 3
Lack of support from nuclear families	Reduction of the financial support of families Lack of spiritual support from parents due to their distance and personal problems Reduction of emotional support and care for families Lack of empathy and companionship of families with couples who have children Incompatibility of families with couples The problem of family distance and lack of parental support	3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 15
Lack of organizational facilities	Lack of care centers and kindergartens affiliated with organizations Lack of job support for working women Lack of logical organizational support for working women with children	3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10
Psychological and mental problems	Having a bad feeling about life and oneself Lacking enough time and fatigue Increased perceived stress in everyday life Feeling of failure in life Fear of losing fitness after pregnancy and childbirth	1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 8, 7
Marital problems and conflicts	Numerous conflicts with a spouse in marital life Current conflict tensions between couples Betrayal and a lack of sufficient commitment by the spouse Disappointment about the improvement of leisure time in marital life Feeling of failure in the couple's marital life Lack of a warm relationship between couples Lack of passion in marital life	1, 5, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 12
Fear of separation, divorce, and child responsibility	Difficulty of child responsibility in case of divorce Fear of divorce and separation, and fear of custody and dependence	1, 6, 3, 8, 7, 1, 3, 14, 15
Alternative entertainments	Having entertainment with friends Having entertainment with clubs and doing sports Having a pet instead of a child Having entertainment in life with academic and occupational achievements	4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14
Suppression of desires and thoughts	Creating intentional entertainment for them to forget about having children Staying away from people who remind them of childbearing Trying to suppress and forget the desire towards childbearing	2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15
Feeling of social insecurity	Fear of damage to the child in the current risky era Vagueness of the child's future in Iran Social insecurity and the increasing social damage Fear of social damage and avoiding the acceptance of this challenge	1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15
Fear of medical and health-related problems	The increased possibility of diseases for mother and child in recent decades Having negative and annoying thoughts about rare drugs for children's diseases Fear of experiencing pregnancy and physical and mental risks for the mother The possibility and fear of the child's death in the future	2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 15
Feelings of parental inefficiency	I find myself unable to become a mother Lack of parental spirit Inability to create a balance between relationships with friends in case of having children Feeling of parental inefficiency Fear of an increase in family responsibilities Fear of taking care of the child	1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13
Lack of belief in the sanctity of childbearing	Lack of belief in the usefulness of childbearing Belief in an inability to become parents for some people Lack of sanctity of raising a child Lack of sanctity of having a child Meaninglessness of having a child	1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Fear of the responsibility of having a child	Difficulty of keeping and raising a child Developing anxiety when having a child	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

Axial coding	Open coding	References (interviews)
Role conflict and lack of energy	Lacking enough time to take care of the child Difficulty of work and job, and lack of energy Feeling of time pressure to handle all affairs of work and family life Conflict of occupational and parental roles Great pressure to succeed in professional life	4, 12, 13, 14, 15
Acceptance of one's fate and destiny	Belief in one's God-written destiny of not having children Lack of parental nature	6, 5, 8, 9, 11
Feeling of guilt and fear of giving birth to a defective baby.	Fear of the possibility of giving birth to a baby with abnormalities Shame and guilt of giving birth to babies with physical and mental disabilities	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 15
Fear of child-rearing issues	Seeing the child-rearing problems of the people around Fear of loneliness in the child in the presence of limited peers Fear of child-rearing due to the problems and psychological pressure caused by strict personal standards	1, 2, 3, 5, 4, 8, 15, 8
Anxiety-creating culture	Prejudice of families regarding the child's gender and their fear of rejection of the child Fear of the negative judgment of the family and people around when one gives birth to a child Reduction of the childbearing culture among relatives and friends	2, 3, 4, 7, 5, 6, 11, 12
Lack of parental desire	Lack of interest in babies Lack of desire and feeling to have children Lack of interest in becoming a parent	2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12
Lack of job security	The possibility of losing one's job due to pregnancy and childbirth Risk of losing job position and benefits	4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 12, 14
Low quality of education	Lack of desire to have children due to the low-quality and facility-free education Little desire to have children due to low and non-public educational facilities	1, 3, 4, 8, 15
Popularization of the culture of having only one child or no child	The popularization of childless life among the people around Fear of the child's loneliness and its problems	7, 9, 8, 5, 11
Being used to a childless life	Fear of disruption of the routine affairs of life and accepting a childless life Having to endure the childless living conditions Being used to the childless life despite loneliness and the desire to have a child	2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 7
Lack of familiarity with the world of children and lack of interaction with them	Lack of familiarity with the world of children Negative attitude towards children's destructive behavior	5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12

In the following, 24 key categories and their Explanation have been provided:

1-Lack of economic security (This theme consists of the challenge of economic problems and the fear that the income will not cover the expenses. There is a concern here about an increase in living expenses after the child's birth. 2-Lack of support from nuclear families (This challenge consists of the reduced support and assistance of nuclear families to women in raising and keeping children). 3-Lack of organizational facilities (In this theme, women mentioned the lack of organizational facilities for having children). 4-Psychological and mental problems (In this theme, the women mentioned psychological problems that prevent them from having a positive attitude towards childbearing). 5-Marital problems and conflicts (In this theme, the women described problems and conflicts with their husbands as well as the uncertain future of their marital relationship, the possibility of divorce, etc., as disturbing and preventing them from developing a positive attitude

towards childbearing). 6-Fear of separation and divorce and child responsibility (In this theme, the women mentioned the possibility of divorce and separation, and their fear of child custody). 7-Alternative entertainments (In this theme, the women mentioned some entertainments as alternatives to having children). 8-Suppression of desires and thoughts (This theme relates to the way the working women's desire to have children is suppressed). 9-Feeling of social insecurity (In this theme, they mentioned the damaging social conditions and fear of its consequences for the family as challenging). 10-Fear of medical and health-related problems (In this theme, they expressed concern about diseases and problems related to the lack of basic medicines). 11-Feelings of parental inefficiency (In this theme, the women mentioned their low self-confidence to see themselves as efficient parents). 12-Lack of belief in the sanctity of childbearing (In this theme, they mentioned religious beliefs about the significance and sanctity of child raising). 13-Fear of the responsibility of

having a child (In this theme, they mentioned the fear of the responsibilities of having a child). 14-Role conflict and lack of energy (In this theme, the conflict of occupational and organizational responsibilities with parental responsibilities was discussed). 15-Acceptance of one's fate and destiny (In this theme, the acceptance and interpretation of childless life was described as the fate and destiny). 16-Feeling of guilt and fear of giving birth to a defective baby (In this theme, the women described their feeling of fear and guilt of giving birth to a defective baby). 17-Fear of child-rearing issues (Fear of improper rearing of a child and of having a rebellious child was described as a basic concern). 18-Anxiety-creating culture (In this theme, the women mentioned the anxiety caused by cultural beliefs as a major emotional challenge during childbearing). 19-Lack of parental desire (In this theme, the women described their reluctance to have children as one of the basic challenges experienced by them). 20-

Lack of job security (In this theme, the women mentioned the lack of job security and stability with pregnancy and childbearing as a real and fundamental challenge). 21-Low quality of education (In this theme, an increase in children's educational problems and the low quality of education in Iran were described as a challenging and annoying factor). 22-Popularization of the culture of having only one child or no child (In this theme, the issue of having a single child and childlessness was mentioned as a general problem and norm). 23- Being used to a childless life (In this theme, it was stated that women have gotten accustomed to a childless life and accepted it as their lifestyle). 24-Lack of familiarity with the world of children and lack of interaction with them (In this theme, unfamiliarity with the world of children and the lack of interaction with them in the public environment were mentioned as a mental barrier for developing a positive attitude towards childbearing).

Table 3. New categorizations based on selective coding

Categorization based on the Grounded Theory	Selective coding	Axial codes
Axial category	1) Reluctance to childbearing	Lack of parental desire
Causal conditions	2) Personal problems	Psychological and mental problems Fear of children's rearing issues Accepting one's fate and destiny Lack of belief in the sanctity of childbearing Fear of the responsibility of having a child Feeling of parental inefficiency
Intervening conditions	3) Lack of public and social facilities	Low quality of education Fear of medical and health-related problems Feeling of social insecurity
	4) Organizational and occupational problems	Role conflict and lack of energy Lack of organizational facilities
	5) Marital problems	Marital problems and conflicts Fear of separation and divorce, and responsibility towards children Feeling of guilt for the birth of a defective baby
Contextual conditions	6) Cultural and environmental barriers	Anxiety-creating culture Popularization of having no child or having only one child Lack of familiarity with the world of children and lack of interaction with them
	7) Economic problems	Lack of economic security Lack of job security
	8) Nuclear family system	Lack of support from the nuclear family
Strategies	9) Replacement	22) Alternative entertainments
	10) Suppression	23) Suppression of desires and thoughts
Consequence	11) Childless life	Being used to a childless life

In the paradigm model, the axial category is the main event resulting from the interaction between different conditions. Causal conditions are a set of events and conditions that affect the axial category. These conditions are events that precede the main phenomenon. Contextual conditions are the set of conditions that provide the context for the phenomenon and influence the behaviors and actions. These conditions affect the axial category and the results. Intervening conditions are structural conditions that belong to the phenomenon under question

and affect the strategies. These conditions limit or facilitate strategies within a certain context. Strategies in the Grounded Theory approach are purposeful actions that provide solutions for the phenomenon under question and lead to the creation of consequences and results. Finally, consequences are the results of the strategies and actions related to the phenomenon under question. They arise whenever an action/reaction is chosen by an individual or individuals in response to a problem or to manage and maintain a situation.

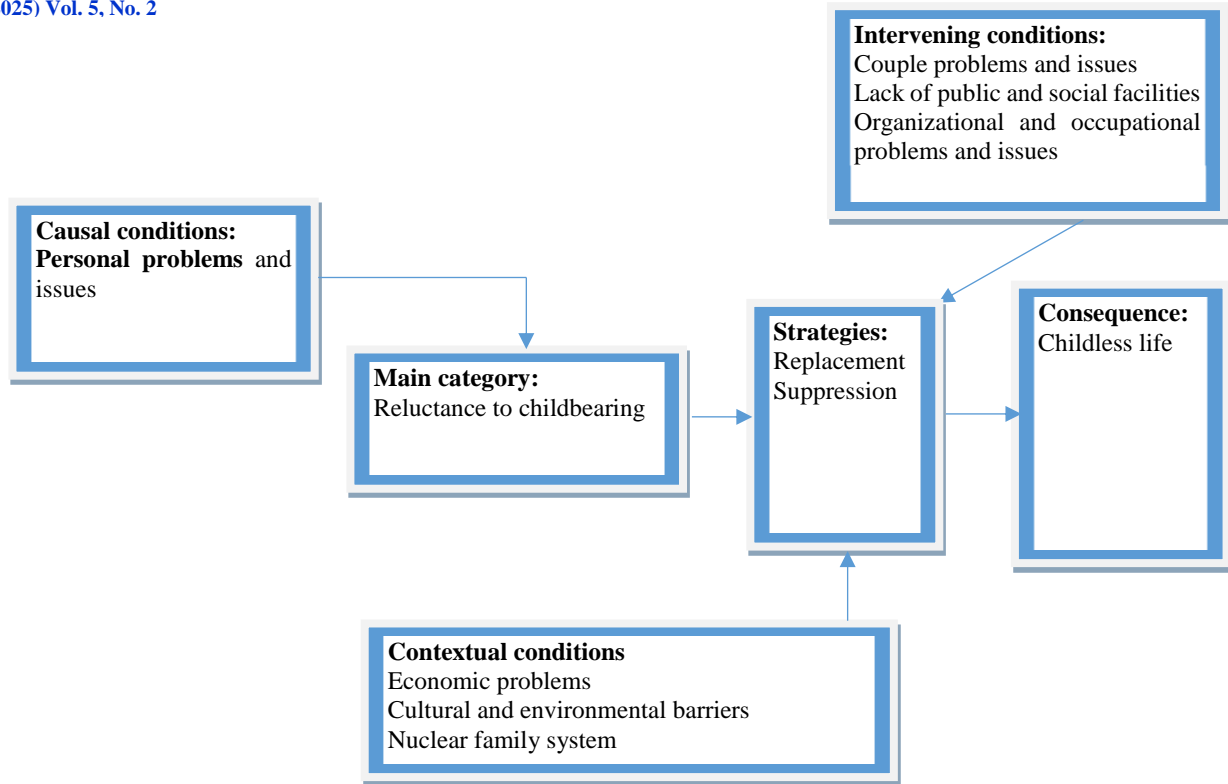


Figure 1. Selective coding based on the paradigm model

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the factors affecting the childless working women's attitudes towards childbearing. Results showed that the childbearing phenomenon and the attitude towards it, like other social phenomena, are multi-dimensional matters and should not be interpreted simplistically and considered to be related to only one factor, such as the economic factor. Based on the grounded theory, the study examined and explained the various dimensions of the problem based on the central, causal, contextual, and intervening factors, as well as the strategies and consequences of the phenomenon.

Axial category: As an axial category, reluctance to childbearing was discovered as the lack of desire to become a parent. In general, a factor that creates and facilitates the desire to perform a specific action in humans is the existence of a favorable and positive attitude towards that action (Simionescu et al., 2021). On the contrary, a negative attitude can be associated with negative valuation and invoke negative emotions and decrease the likelihood of behavior. Therefore, it can be said that one of the main reasons for the lack of children in the sample group is the lack of desire and a weak positive attitude towards having children and playing the role of parents. This can result from a variety of factors.

Causal conditions: In the paradigm model of this study, the women's personal problems were discovered as causal conditions. Stress and depression are among the major causes of negative feelings towards having a child,

especially in women. Keeping and raising children require healthy psychological conditions, without which women's desire to have children decreases, especially if they have a higher education (Lechner, Bolman & Van Dalen, 2017). Issues such as rearing concerns about children, the increasing mental and psychological issues and lack of psychological skills to improve self-management and daily stress, feelings of parental inefficiency, fear of the responsibility of having children, and lack of belief in the sanctity of child rearing and belief in the childless destiny in life were the personal problems mentioned by the participants. It seems that the sample group suffers from an internal psychological and personal pressure to escape the responsibility of parenthood, i.e. the pressure that probably arises from some real problems of parents in the society and the negative advertisements of some media and people, as well as the lack of psychological skills to regulate negative emotions and manage the mind and thoughts.

Contextual conditions: In this study, economic problems, cultural-environmental barriers, and the nuclear family system were discovered as contextual conditions for childless working women's reluctance to childbearing. The first important contextual factor identified in the study was economic problems. It seems that with an increase in economic pressures, the complexity of jobs and income, the complexities of modern urban life, and the impact of these factors on creating and intensifying daily stress have caused the sample members to lose the peace required to

discover and experience the positive feelings of having kids. Experience of stress is associated with mental activity to reduce tension, during which the person normally makes defensive responses according to their personality, and the opportunity for calming responses such as growth, movement, building, and entertainment is limited according to the capabilities of individuals. Having a child is not a defensive response or behavior, but a response based on the desire to grow. Growth needs are marginalized under tension conditions, and the main need to provide security and survival is prioritized (Gilbert, 2014). Therefore, it can be said that the increased economic problems and financial stress in recent decades limit the desire and positive attitude towards childbearing for two reasons: one due to the increase in living expenses following the birth of a child, and the other due to the increase in working time and trying to meet living expenses, which limits the opportunity to deal with parenting affairs. Therefore, it can be said that having a child requires a level of economic peace to handle and cover the costs of children's nutrition, growth, education, etc., and working women consider that an increase in economic pressures is an important factor in adopting strategies to avoid childbearing.

Cultural and environmental barriers were also among the underlying factors that created a neutral or negative attitude towards childbearing. Obviously, the living environment and the behavior of the people around help create desire and, conversely, inhibit behavior in some areas. In general, a large part of people behave according to their culture. The behavior that goes against the environmental culture is somehow stressful and leads to the fear of ridicule and bad judgment (Eichenberg et al., 2022).

Therefore, in a culture and environment, if all families and the people around accept having children and their number as a norm and behave according to it, other families also tend to this behavior based on the principle of conformity. In the present study, due to the popularization of the culture of marital life without children or with only one child, the participants had a negative attitude towards having children and their number. Therefore, while planning to maintain the population and its positive growth rate, we must consider culture building and popularizing the childbearing culture in the society. Also, the nuclear family system in the last few decades has caused couples to lose the support of the family, friends, grandparents and mothers due to the change of cultural preferences of marital life to an independent life and away from the extended family in contrast to the previous decades of Iranian life (Javadi Yeganeh, 2015). With the increasing responsibilities towards children in the modern world, they feel that they cannot cope with it and therefore

do not show a willingness to do it. Therefore, it can be expected that the more limited relationships couples have with their nuclear family and the extended family, the less their desire and attitude to have children. Thus, encouraging people towards better relationships, reducing expectations, and living a simple and communal life can help create and increase the desire for childbearing.

Intervening conditions: In this study, marital problems, lack of public and social facilities, and organizational and occupational problems were identified as intervening conditions. One of the reasons for the participants' childless lives and low attitudes towards childbearing is the insecurity of the couple's relationship, the possibility of divorce, and the fear of being left as a single parent. Couples who do not have the necessary communication security will naturally have no desire to have children. This shows that a positive attitude towards childbearing requires greater and better-quality couple relationships, which were not achieved in the research sample of the present study. An increase in marital problems among couples is associated with the fear of leaving the relationship by the spouse, the worry of failing to keep and take care of the children, as one of the factors of creating a negative feeling and low desire to have a child or children (Dyer et al., 2019).

On the other hand, some intervening conditions, such as lack of public and social facilities, low quality of education, fear of medical and health-related problems, and feeling of social insecurity, have also had a negative impact on the participants' desire and attitude towards childbearing. Even in the case of low-level organisms and in natural ecosystems, the animals reproduce more when there are facilities, water, food, and security in the environment (Endale et al., 2022), and this can have evolutionary roots. Another obstacle to a positive attitude towards childbearing was an increase in job tensions and organizational responsibilities of the working women. According to the participants, the basic structures necessary to support working mothers are not sufficiently available in organizations. Role conflict, the lack of organizational support facilities to reduce responsibilities, and educational concerns of working mothers, such as the lack of developmentally appropriate kindergartens, were among the problems. Therefore, it can be expected that working parents will develop a more positive attitude towards childbearing if they feel confident about their children's physical and psychological security and a healthy environment.

Strategies: Among the important strategies of the women in this study for childbearing were replacement and suppression. Replacement has become a tool to justify negative preferences for childbearing in the modern generation. The idea that having children is just

entertainment can help foster the belief that this entertainment can be replaced with less troublesome entertainment. Suppression of the desire to have children was another strategy reported by the participants. Working women suppress their own desire to have children due to their limited free time, busy work, and fear of the responsibilities of raising a child, maintaining its health, and providing all the conditions for it. Playing the modern roles and marginalizing the traditional maternal roles are important reasons for changes in women's desire to have children in the new age (Eichenberg et al., 2022).

Consequence and result: In this study, childless life and being used to this life were mentioned as a consequence and result of a set of conditions influencing the working women to develop a negative attitude towards having children. The least impact of this problem on women is loneliness and psychological complications. For example, a study showed that two out of five women who do not have children experience an episode of major depressive disorder (MDD) during their lifetime (Bromet et al., 2011).

One of the limitations of the present study was that the participants were only working women, which could require caution in generalizing the findings to men and non-working women.

According to the current research findings, many intrapersonal and interpersonal factors influence women's attitudes towards childbearing. Therefore, to strengthen the attitude towards childbearing among working women, paying attention to all these factors in educational and support programs is necessary. Therefore, to increase the positive attitude towards childbearing and create desire among young couples, we need not only to reform and provide the social, cultural, and economic structures but also to benefit from public health and psychological education about the importance of children in life.

5. Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

All ethical principles are considered in this article. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and its implementation stages. They were also assured about the confidentiality of their information and were free to leave the study whenever they wished, and if desired, the research results would be available to them.

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Authors' contributions

All authors have participated in the design, implementation, and writing of all sections of the present study.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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