

العدد المثالي للأسرة الكويتية: مقارنة بين الإناث والذكور

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ملخص: الكويت دولة تشجع على زيادة النسل؛ لأن المواطنين هم الأقلية في بلدهم، وهناك سياسات حكومية عديدة تشجع الإنجاب، ولكن في العقود الأخيرة انخفض المعدل الكلي للخصوبة من 6 لكل امرأة إلى أقل من 4 لكل امرأة، وهذه الدراسة تهتم بالعدد المثالي للأطفال كمؤشر لاتجاه الخصوبة في المستقبل.

عينة هذه الدراسة كانت عشوائية طبقية تشمل 600 من الكويتيين بين ذكور وإناث، 100 لكل محافظة من المحافظات الكويتية الست، ووجدت الدراسة أن الأصول القبلية، السكن في أسرة ممتدة، وزواج الأقارب، كان لها تأثير إيجابي للرجعة في إنجاب عدد أكثر من الأطفال. وباستخدام نوع الحياة كمقياس وجدت الدراسة علاقة عكسية بين النوع وحجم الأسرة الأمثل برأيهم، وقد لعب العامل الاقتصادي الدور الأكبر في قرار الإنجاب. كما كان العامل الاجتماعي مهماً عند الأسر ذات الأصول القبلية، وهذا يدل على أن الأطفال لهذه الفئة يعتبرون رأس مال اجتماعياً.

المصطلحات الأساسية: الخصوبة، حجم الأسرة، كويتي، أصول قبلية، الجنس.

The Desired Family Size for Kuwaitis: A Comparison between Males and Females*

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Abstract: Kuwait is a pronatalist country where the nationals are a minority. The government has given many incentives for its citizens to increase the birth rates, yet birthrate has been declining over the past few decades. from Total Fertility - Rate of 6 in the seventies to less than 4 at present. This study is interested in finding out the desired family size or fertility intentions as a predictor of future fertility trend. The study took a stratified random sample of 600 Kuwaitis, males and females, comprising hundred from each of the six governorates. We found that tribal origins (Bedouin / non-Bedouin), inhabitation in extended family, and consanguineous marriages are significant in having a positive impact on fertility. Also, using the lifestyle scale we found an inverse relationship between gender and family size. Furthermore, the most important factor influencing fertility was economic. The social factor was also significant for families of tribal descendants as children for them are considered a social capital.

Keywords: Fertility, Family size, Kuwaiti, Ethnic Group, Gender.

Over the last three decades, fertility has declined in most of the developing countries. Asia was the continent that experienced the greatest decline of (-52) percent (Bongaarts, 2001). The MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) had not yet entered the fertility transition in the eighties with their total fertility rate (TFR) being 7.1,

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which was slightly higher than the rest of Asia. But by the beginning of the 21st century, the fertility in Arab regions had started to decline. At present, the fertility rate in Jordan is 3.4, Egypt is 3.3, Morocco is 2.5 and Yemen is 4.2 [Demographic Health surveys by country and World Bank data, 2014].

As for the Arab Gulf region, in spite of their pronatalist policies, the decline was even faster. “Kuwait, Oman and Iran effected fertility declines of over two-thirds in just over 20 years, which exceeded the tempo of fertility decline in almost all of the Pacific Rim societies & the BRIC economies” (Eberstadt, 2012). World Bank data show fertility rate declines to be between 2.1 in Bahrain and Qatar and 2.8 in Oman and Saudi Arabia (World Bank Data Site, 2014). In Kuwait, the number of children per household has been steadily decreasing since the eighties. In 1970s the total fertility was about 7.0, but by 1985, it had dropped to 4.4 (Kohli & AlOmair, 1993) and was 3.58 by 2005 (Alkandari, 2007).

According to the World Bank and various academic studies, when adult literacy improves and life expectancy at birth is higher and GDP is high in a country, their attitudes to family size also changed (Easterlin, 1983; Ryder, 2010). Various explanations have been given for attitudinal change towards fertility. While Bulatao & Lee (1983) supported Easterlin’s economic model that the demand for children is influenced by economic reasons such as the direct costs and benefits of having children, Ryder (2010) saw a link between modernization and the fertility transition, and Susan Cochrane outlined various channels through which education and urban residence, usually lead to lower fertility (Cochrane, 1983).

Caldwell (2001) called the demographic change sweeping the World, “the globalization of fertility behavior”. It is obvious that demographers agreed that family size is affected by a number of socio-psychological and economic variables besides the biological capacity of reproduction (Bankole & Westoff, 1998; Hayford, 2009; Islamuddin et al., 2011; McClelland, 1983; Shah & Nathanson, 2004;). However, we also have to remember that considerable variations may exist within a country in their attitudes on family size or the benefits of having large families (Yeatman et al., 2014; Shah et al., 1998). Kuwait is a country with a mix of urban modern communities and urban tribal communities, where modern

infrastructures exist but attitudes and values on family size may differ from one residential community to another.

In this study we examine the fertility expectations or desired number of children among Kuwaitis as a source of projection of future family size. Kuwait had a population of 3.8 million (2015) and a GDP of \$52,197. It has witnessed a decline in total fertility over the last four decades from 6.5 in 1985 to 4.2 in 2000 and 3.4 in 2014. Rapid modernization has played a vital role and marriage patterns have evolved in the process. About 70% of Kuwaiti families now live in nuclear families, and the remaining 30% of families are couples with their married children co-residing (Shah et al., 2001). Women are getting married at a latter age; the mean age of marriage is 26 years for women, and single men and women now constitute 38% and 31% of the population respectively (Essential Features of the Population, 2014). Furthermore, with increasing numbers of women entering the workforce (47% of those 15 yrs. and above in 2014) and significant improvement in women's education, attitudes on family size have been changing.

It is realistic to state that fertility intentions or desired family size plays a central role in predicting future fertility trends as they influence fertility behavior. Thomson defines desired fertility as "the number of children wanted in one's lifetime" (Thomson, 2001), while McClelland states that desired family size is "the number of children, parents would have if there were no subjective or economic problems involved in regulating fertility" (McClelland, 1983).

Study Objectives:

This study is concerned with the attitude or desire of Kuwaitis towards having children. Whether ethnic background (*Bedouin*) will have a cultural influence on fertility; whether belonging to a large family will affect the respondents' decision on the ideal number of children, and whether male respondents tend to want more children than females are questions that the study tries to answer. In earlier studies (Hamadeh et al., 2008; Shah et al., 1998) the samples were married women. This study will include both married and never married men and women to compare their intended family size. Al-Kandari (2007) studied the actual fertility of the Kuwaiti society. Abdal (2003) conducted a survey in 1995, on Kuwait University students which included variables like ethnic back-

ground, religiosity and gender on desired fertility. It was a few years after liberation when psychological factors may have started to influence fertility decisions. This survey which is over 20 years later shares some variables like ethnic background, gender, and education level to see if trends and expectations have changed. It also aims to find out if life style plays a role in influencing desired family size. Furthermore, the questionnaire included questions on whether the reason to have more or less children is influenced by social, economic or psychological factors. These factors could vary by ethnic background. It will also investigate whether the desired or fertility trend is higher or lower than that of the past decade.

Some hypotheses are:

- 1 - Females want fewer children than males.
- 2 - Tribal population want to have more children as it gives them more social clout in their group.
- 3 - Those with more siblings want to have more children.
- 4 - Younger men want fewer children than older men.
- 5 - Younger women want fewer children.
- 6 - Economic reasons influence men's fertility decisions.
- 7 - Independence and quality of life influence women's fertility decisions.
- 8 - Those who live in joint or extended families want more children.
- 9 - Those from higher lifestyle want lower fertility (i.e. inverse relations with fertility).
- 10 - Family planning is a joint decision taken by the husband and wife.
- 11 - Consanguineous married couples want more children than those married from outside of the family.

Research Methodology:

A stratified random sample of 600 respondents, 100 from each of the six governorates were taken, fifty males and fifty females. They were married and unmarried respondents between the ages of 18 and 43 as the study examines the expectations of Kuwaitis on desired fertility. The set questionnaire gathered data on variables like age, sex, educational level, marital status, number of siblings (to explore whether consanguineal family is large), Ethnic group - Shia, Sunni, Sunni Bedouin, residence with family or independent home, and a lifestyle scale. In the scale for

high or low fertility (where low is 0 to 2; medium is 3 to 4 and high is 5+ children) the respondents were asked to tell which factors have a greater influence on desired fertility (i.e. psychological, social or economic). The quantitative tools utilized were: correlation, and cross-tabulation. The desired fertility was the independent variable. The lifestyle scale was compared with demographic variables, i.e. age, sex, etc. SPSS was used for data analysis. T-Test and Pearson correlation were used as major statistical procedures. Quality of lifescale was also applied.

Demographic Description

- **Gender:** Out of 600 participants, 320 (53.3%) were female and 280 (46.7%) were male.
- **Age:** Out of 600 participants, 242 (40.3%) belonged to the age category of 18-22 years old; 138 (23.0%) belonged to the age category of 23-27 years old; 89 (14.8%) belonged to the age category of 28-32 years old; 49 (8.2%) belonged to the age category of 33-37 years old; and 80 (13.3%) belonged to the age category of 38-43 years old.
- **Occupational Status:** 338 (56.3%) participants were students; 219 (36.5%) participants were employed; 16 (2.7%) participants had a business; and 23 (3.8%) participants were housewives.
- **Area:** 100 (16.7%) participants lived in each of the six governorates of Kuwait (the capital governorate, Hawally governorate, Farwaniya governorate, Al-Ahmadi governorate, Al-Jahra governorate, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate).
- **Marital Status:** 328 (54.7%) participants were single, 247 (41.2%) participants were married; 8 (1.3%) participants were widows; and 15 (2.5%) participants were divorced.
- **Ethnic roots:** 429 (71.5%) were Bedouin and 167 (27.8%) were urban.
- **Religious sect:** 497 (82.8%) were Sunni and 98 (16.3%) were Shia.
- **Educational Qualifications:** 13 (2.2%) had below high school certificates; 59 (9.8%) had high school certificates; 32 (5.3%) had secondary certificates; 51 (8.5%) had college diplomas; 308 (51.3%) were undergraduates at the university; 112 (18.7%) had bachelor's degrees; and 23 (3.8%) had a Ph.D. degree.
- **Husband/wife from extended family:** In the case of 182 (30.3%) of the participants, either the husband or the wife came from an extended family, while for 113 (18.8%) participants, this was not the case.
- **Husband and wife were relatives:** 132 (22.0%) participants said the

husband and wife were relatives, while this was not true for 164 (27.3%) participants.

- **Have siblings:** 532 (88.7%) participants had siblings and 12 (2.0%) participants did not have siblings.

Results:

1-Desired Family Size for Respondents Living in an Extended Family before Marriage.

- 1) A statistical significance was found between participants who lived in an extended family before marriage and their desired family size ($\chi^2 = 13.305$, $p = 0.004$). The desired family size for participants who lived in an extended family before marriage is described as follows: 57.4% preferred to have 1-2 children, 61.3 preferred to have 3-4 children, and 81.5% desired to have 7 and more children (see Table 1 below). Therefore, the relationship between living in an extended family and desiring to have a large family is a positive relationship.

Table 1
Desired Family Size for Respondents Living in an Extended Family before Marriage

Desired family size	Living in an extended family before marriage			χ^2	Sig.
	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-2	27 (57.4)	20 (42.6)	47 (100)	13.305	.004
3-4	176 (61.3)	111 (38.7)	287 (100)		
5-6	97 (76.3)	30 (23.7)	127 (100)		
7+	22 (81.5)	5 (18.5)	27 (100)		

2-Desired Family Size for Respondents of Tribal (Kabila) Roots

A statistical significance was found between participants who had tribal (*Kabila*) roots and their desired family size ($X^2 = 60.175$, $p = 0.000$). The desired family size for participants who had tribal roots is described as follows: 47.5% of Bedouin (tribal) respondents wanted to have 1-2 children, 66.1% desired to have 3-4 children, 92.4% preferred to have 5-6 children, and 93.3% preferred 7 or more children (see Table 2).

Table 2
Desired Family Size for Respondents of Tribal (*Kabila*) Roots

Desired family size	Kabila (tribal root)			X^2	Sig.
	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-2	28 (47.5)	31 (52.5)	59 (100)	60.175	.000
3-4	226 (66.1)	116 (33.9)	342 (100)		
5-6	133 (92.4)	11 (7.6)	144 (100)		
7+	28 (93.3)	2 (6.7)	30 (100)		

3- Desired Family Size and Gender

A statistical significance was found between the participants' gender and their desired family size ($X^2 = 15.305$, $p = 0.002$). The desired family size for the participants based on their gender is described as follows: 49.2% of the male participants preferred to have 1-2 children compared to 50.8% of the female participants, 43.4% of the males preferred to have from 3 to 4 children compared to 56.6% of the females, 44.4% of the males preferred to have 5-6 children compared to 55.6% of the females, and finally 80.0% of the males preferred to have 7 or more children compared to only 20.0% of the females (See Table 3 below).

Table 3
Desired Family Size and Gender

Desired family size	Gender			X ²	Sig.
	Male N (%)	Female N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-2	29 (49.2)	30 (50.8)	59 (100)	15.305	.002
3-4	150 (43.4)	196 (56.6)	346 (100)		
5-6	64 (44.4)	80 (55.6)	144 (100)		
7+	24 (80.0)	6 (20.0)	30 (100)		

4- Desired Family Size and Actual Family Size

A statistical significance was found between participants' consanguineal (own) familysize and their desired family size ($X^2 = 68.713$, $p = 0.000$). The desired family size for participants whose consanguineous (actual) family size is above 6 children is as follows: 18.9% choose to have 1-2 children, 77% preferred to have 5-6 children, and 82.6% of the sample who chose 7+ children were from large families.

Also, the desired family size for participants whose actual family size is between 3 and 5 children is described as follows: 66.0% of the participants preferred to have from 1 to 2 children, 43.0% preferred to have from 3 to 4 children, 15.9% of the participants preferred to have from 5 to 6 children, and 13.0% of the participants preferred to have more than 7 children.

Table 4
Desired Family Size and Actual Family Size

Desired family size	Actual Family size				X ²	Sig.
	Small family (0-2) N (%)	Medium family (3-5) N (%)	Large family (6+) N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-2	8 (15.1)	35 (66.0)	10 (18.9)	53 (100)	68.713	.000
3-4	12 (4.1)	125 (43.0)	154 (52.9)	291 (100)		
5-6	9 (7.1)	20 (15.9)	97 (77.0)	126 (100)		
7+	1 (4.3)	3 (13.0)	19 (82.6)	23 (100)		

5-The Parent's Gender and Preference for the Child's Gender

A statistical significance was found between the participants' gender and their gender preference for their children ($X^2 = 52.296$, $p = 0.000$). 65.7% of male participants preferred to have a son compared to 34.3% of female participants; 37.3% of male participants had equal preferences for having either a son or a daughter compared to 62.7% of female participants; and one-fourth of male respondents (25.4%) preferred to have daughters compared to 74.6% of female participants.

Table 5
The Parent's Gender and Preference for the Child's Gender

Child preference	Gender			X ²	Sig.
	Male N (%)	Female N (%)	Total N (%)		
Male preference	134 (65.7)	70 (34.3)	204 (100)	52.296	.000
Male -female preference	110 (37.3)	185 (62.7)	295 (100)		
Female preference	17 (25.4)	50 (74.6)	67 (100)		

6- Desired Family Size and Place of Residence

A statistical significance was found between the desired family size and the participants' place of residence ($X^2 = 59.109$, $p = 0.000$). The percentages of participants living in the following areas who wanted a family size of between 1 to 4 children are as follows: 21.0% of participants lived in the Capital; 19.3% of them lived in Hawally, 14.6% lived in Farwaniya, 14.1% lived in Al-Ahmadhi, 11.1% lived in Al-Jahra, and 20.0% lived in Mubarak Al-Kabeer.

The percentages of participants living in the following areas who wanted a family size of 5 or more children are as follows: 6.9% lived in the Capital, 10.3% lived in Hawally, 22.4% lived in Farwaniya, 22.4% lived in Al-Ahmadhi, 28.2% lived in Al-Jahra, and 9.8% lived in Mubarak Al-Kabeer.

Table 6
Desired Family Size and Place of Residence

Desired family size	Place of Residence							X^2	Sig.
	Capital N (%)	Hawally N (%)	Farwaniya N (%)	Ahmadi N (%)	Jahra N (%)	Mubarak Al-Kabeer N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-4	85 (21.0)	78 (19.2)	59 (14.6)	57 (14.1)	45 (11.1)	81 (20.0)	405 (100)	59.109	.000
5+	12 (6.9)	18 (10.3)	39 (22.4)	39 (22.4)	49 (28.2)	17 (9.8)	174 (100)		

7- Desired Family Size and Inner/Outer Place of Residence

A statistical significance was found between the desired family size and the inner (urban) or outer (rural) place of residence ($X^2 = 11.189$, $p = 0.001$). 54.8% of participants living in inner areas desired a family size of 1 to 4 children compared to 45.2% of those who lived in outer areas. In addition, 39.7% of participants living in an inner area desired a family size of 5 or more children compared to 60.3% of those who lived in an outer area.

Farwaniya, Al-Jahra and Al-Ahmadi have a majority of residents from tribal roots, whose community lifestyle is group oriented. These three governorates are called the outer areas. People living in these areas

tend to segregate with their own tribal members. Accordingly, fertility decisions are influenced by the community lifestyle. Hawally, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and the Capital governorate are called the inner areas which comprise a mix of Kuwaitis i.e. Sunnis and Shiite who are mainly urban, with nuclear families. Table 7 shows the fertility or child preferences for participants living in inner and outer areas.

Table 7
Desired Family Size and Inner/Outer Place of Residence

Desired family size	Desired family size and inner/outer place of residence			X ²	Sig.
	Inner Area N (%)	Outer Area N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-4	244 (60.3)	161 (39.7)	405 (100)	11.189	.001
5 and above	47 (27.0)	127 (73.0)	174 (100)		

8- Desired family size for Consanguineous/Endogamous Marriages

A statistical significance was found between participants whose spouse is a relative and their desired family size ($X^2 = 19.022$, $p = 0.000$).

The percentage of respondents who are married to a relative (consanguineous/endogamous marriage) and wanted a small family (1-2 children) was only 38.55 of that group, while it was 63.1% for those who wanted 5-6 children, and 56.3% for those who wanted 7+ children.

Table 8
Desired family size for EndogamousMarriages

Desired family size	Consanguineous /Endogamous Marriages			X ²	Sig.
	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total N (%)		
1-2	10 (38.5)	16 (61.5)	26 (100)	19.022	.000
3-4	55 (34.8)	103 (56.2)	158 (100)		
5-6	53 (63.1)	31 (36.9)	84 (100)		
7+	9 (56.3)	7 (43.7)	16 (100)		

9- Desired Family Size and Education

A statistical significance was found between the participants' educational level and their desired family size ($X^2 = 46.576$, $p = 0.000$). The desired family size for participants whose educational level is below high school is described as follows: 9.1% preferred to have 1-2 children; 36.4% preferred to have 3-4 children; 18.2% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 36.4% preferred to have 7 or more children.

Also, the desired family size for participants who are in high school is described as follows: 8.8% preferred to have 1-2 children; 63.2% preferred to have 3-4 children; 17.5% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 10.5% preferred to have 7 or more children. Furthermore, the desired family size for participants whose educational level is secondary or high school diploma is described as follows: 71.9% preferred to have 3-4 children; 21.9% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 6.3% preferred to have 7 or more children. In addition, the desired family size for participants whose educational level is diploma is described as follows: 18.0% preferred to have 1-2 children; 42.0% preferred to have 3-4 children; 38.0% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 2.0% preferred to have 7 or more children (see Table 9).

Moreover, the desired family size for participants whose educational

level is undergraduate student at a university is described as follows: 10.9% preferred to have 1-2 children; 62.5% preferred to have 3-4 children; 22.4% participant preferred to have 5-6 children; and 4.3% preferred to have 7 or more children. The desired family size for participants whose educational level is a bachelor's degree is described as follows: 7.4% preferred to have 1-2 children; 57.4% preferred to have 3-4 children; 31.5% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 3.7% preferred to have 7 or more children. Finally, the desired family size for participants whose educational level is a Ph.D. degree is described as follows: 17.4% preferred to have 1-2 children; 52.2% preferred to have 3-4 children; 26.1% preferred to have 5-6 children; and 4.3% preferred to have 7 or more children (see Table 9).

Table 9
Desired Family Size and Education

Respondents Education	Desired Family Size					χ^2	Sig.
	1-2 N (%)	3-4 N (%)	5-6 N (%)	7+ N (%)	Total N (%)		
Below high school	1 (9.1)	4 (36.4)	2 (18.2)	4 (36.4)	11 (100)	30.814	.002
High school	5 (8.8)	36 (63.2)	10 (17.5)	6 (10.5)	57 (100)		
Diploma	9 (11.0)	44 (53.6)	26 (31.7)	3 (3.7)	82 (100)		
University	41 (10.0)	252 (61.2)	102 (24.7)	17 (4.1)	412 (100)		
Ph.D.	4 (17.4)	12 (52.2)	6 (26.1)	1 (4.3)	23 (100)		

10 - Desired Family Size and Their Score on Fantastic Lifestyle Scale:

One-way ANOVA was conducted to find differences in the desired family size and their score on the Fantastic Lifestyle Scale. Test results showed a significant difference between the desired family size and their score on the Fantastic Lifestyle Scale $p > 0.05$. On the Fantastic Lifestyle Scale, there was a significant difference between scores 0-34 with desired family size (Mean = 5.30, SD = 2.48), and score between 70-84

and desired family size (Mean = 4.19, SD = 2.33); furthermore, lower desired family size between scores 35-54 (M = 4.93, SD = 2.07) and scores 55-69 (M = 4.76, SD = 2.23) were observed (see Table 10).

Table 10
One-Way Measure ANOVA in Terms of Desired Family Size and Their Score on Fantastic Lifestyle Scale:

Lifestyle Scale Score	Desired Family Size					F	P
	M	SD	Source	Mean square	df		
0-34	5.30	2.48	Between groups	42.702	3	2.916	.034
35-54	4.93	2.07	Within groups	2811.546	576		
55-69	4.76	2.23					
70-84	4.19	2.33	Total	2854.248	579		
Total	4.75	2.22					

It was observed that the higher the lifestyle score, the smaller the desired family size (Inverse relationship).

Table 11
Validation of the Fantastic Lifestyle Score with the Quality of Life Score.

Quality of Life	Fantastic Lifestyle Scale Score					F	P
	M	SD	Source	Mean square	df		
Very Poor	43.52	14.37	Between groups	8283.421	4	15.812	.000
Poor	32.50	15.26	Within groups	75829.796	579		
Medium	56.19	10.52					
Good	57.46	11.50	Total	84113.217	583		
Very Good	60.54	11.48					
Total	57.56	12.01					

By validating the Fantastic Lifestyle Score with the way you rate your quality of Lifemeasure, the study found that the two coincided,

where poor quality of life coincided with low life style score (See Table 11). The mean score on how you would rate your quality of life with the Fantastic Lifestyle scale was as follows: 'Very Poor health' ($M = 43.52$, $SD = 14.37$), 'very good health' ($M = 60.54$, $SD = 11.48$), Medium Health ($M = 56.19$, $SD = 10.52$), and Good Health ($M = 57.46$, $SD = 11.50$).

In your opinion, what is the main reason that affects your decision regarding your desired family size?

The numbers and percentages of participants and the reasons they gave as affecting their decision about family size were as follows: 253 (42.2%) participants said it was their economic status that influenced their decision; 144 (24.0%) participants gave social reasons; 93 (15.5%) participants gave psychological reasons; 55 (9.2%) participants gave religious reasons; 29 (4.8%) participants gave cultural reasons; and 4 (0.7%) participants gave political reasons (Table 12).

Table 12

In your opinion, what is the main reason that affects your decision regarding your desired family size?

Main reason	Desired family size	
	N	(%)
Economical	253	43.0
Social	144	24.4
Psychological	93	15.8
Religious	55	9.3
Political	4	0.7
Cultural	29	4.9
Other Reasons	11	1.9

Decision maker on desired family size: Out of 589 participants, 10 (1.7%) said that the desired family size decision was made by the wife only; 33 (5.6%) said the decision was made by the husband; 531 (90.2%) said the decision was made by the husband and wife together; and 8 (1.4%) said the decision was made by the husband's family.

Discussion:

As Ryder (2010) had stated, this study proved that: modernization through its changes in education, occupation and economic development has led to attitudinal changes in fertility decisions as lifestyle itself has changed. There are many variables in Kuwaiti society that have changed over time like urbanization; while tribal residential areas (haven't changed), women's education, women's role in the family, especially their participation in fertility decisions, later age of marriage etc. have changed. Thus, various arguments could be valid in explaining fertility behavior. Bankole and Westoff (1998), Hayford (2009) and Islamuddin et al., (2011) said that a number of socio-demographic variables have an impact on the decisions made on family size. In this study, respondents from extended families [i.e. cohabitation of three generations] preferred larger families more than those who came from nuclear families. They saw larger families as adding a positive value such as more bread winners, more social strength and shared responsibility, etc. Shah and Nathanson (2004) also found that those living in large families desired more children. Those who lived in nuclear families before marriage perceived child bearing as an economic responsibility that needs planning, saving, and, therefore, it is a cost/benefit decision (Bulatao & Lee, 1983; Easterlin, 1993;). Furthermore, many descendants from tribal roots lived in extended families, where children were seen as future assets or social capital. They believed that large families enjoyed more social clout in daily life and especially in pre-election times, when they had more voters in the family and, therefore, were more influential with candidates. This approach is one that looks at the benefits from childbearing not monetarily, but influentially. They refer to children as being social capital and as a means of facilitating other ends in the community (Schoen et al., 1999; Shah and Nathanson, 2004). Bedouins in Kuwait view children as social capital. Our study found that those descendants from tribal roots desired larger families. Portes (1998) had described how the dynamics of social capital works in extra familial networks and extends into the community. The cultural norms in tribal residential areas are still family-oriented, where the elders influence decisions and tribal membership has impacts on their day to day life. Therefore, those descendants from tribal roots also responded that they desired larger families and wanted more children.

When, we examined family size preferences by gender in our sample, we found that male respondents wanted more children and especially sons. This desire for more children, preferably sons, is a familiar trend in Arab societies as well as most developing societies who are patriarchal and sons carry the family name and head the next generation. In their study of 2004, Shah and Nathanson found that 90% of respondents wanted a son to carry on the family name. In gender stratified societies as in the Middle East and South Asia, son preference is a common feature (Akman, 2002).

Also, a person's own family size (consanguineal family) influences his/her perception of a large or a small family, especially if he/she originally lived in a large family since they consider having more children as a preferred or natural choice. Our study found such a relationship where those from large families also desired more children than those from small families.

In Kuwait, residential mobility seems to be influenced by ethnic groups, where those from one tribe will move within the same area to establish a new home (Al-Kazi, 2005). The study found those in areas with residents who were predominantly from tribal roots wanted more children. The governorates that have majorities of tribal origins are Al-Jahra, Al-Ahmadi and Farwaniya. They are also often referred to as outer areas, as Al-Jahra & Al-Ahmadi are further away from Kuwait city and nearer to the northern border and southern border. The residents of these outer or rural areas desired higher fertility than those living in the inner or urban areas.

In cases where the husband and wife were related (i.e. consanguineous marriages), the study showed that the couple desired more children; in these cases, the fact that the parents came from the same family may have had an influence. Such unions are more traditional and the new couple may be influenced by their elders in child bearing decisions. They are also more likely to be married at a younger age. Radovanovic, et al. (1999) found such a relationship in their study of Kuwait in 1999, and also Bener et al (1996); Al-Awad and Chartouni (2010) found it in the United Arab Emirates. Consanguineous couple had more children in Al-Jahra governorate (42%) compared to nonconsanguineous couples in the Capital governorate (22.6%) (Radovanoic et al., 1999).

Family Planning decisions were made by both partners, and even male respondents answered that it should be a joint decision. These responses indicate that fertility choices are no longer made by males only. In modern Kuwait, couples see such decisions as a joint plan for future family size. When respondents were asked what factor had the greater influence on family planning, the economic reason was the major factor in their decision-making! As Easterlin (1983) and later Bulatao & Lee (1983), Shah et al., (1998) amongst other demographers had purported, the couples see the demand for children as an economic decision that is influenced by the costs and benefits of having children. In our study we found an inverse relation between women's education and fertility intentions. Studies in Europe (Testa, 2013) and Martin (1995) also found data to support this finding that as women's education increased desired fertility is declined. Martin (1995) saw results from 26 demographic and health surveys that supported this view. AlKandari (2007) and Abdal (1999) found that educated women married later.

While socio-psychological and economic factors may change overtime, we can realistically state that Kuwait has entered the fertility transition. Fertility has declined steadily, while age at marriage has risen for women who found age at marriage to be the most significant factor affecting marriages in Kuwait. Al-Kandari and Poirer (2001) found that as women avail of education longer, marriage is delayed and, therefore, years of child bearing will be shorter leading to small families. Better educated women are more likely to have fewer children than they originally intended (Esping-Anderson, G. (2009); (Heaton, Jacobson & Holland, 1999; Schoen et al., 1999). In this study, although the mean desired fertility is 4.75, the mean desired age of marriage is 25.98 for men and 22.61 for women. Men and women are marrying later. All these indicators point to lower fertility in the future, inspite of the pronatalist policy of Kuwait. We can also predict continued decline in fertility as fertility intention is a good indicator of future fertility trends.

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