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Family life and developmental idealism in Yazd, Iran

By [Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi](#), [Abbas Askari Nodoushan](#), [Arland Thornton](#)

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Abstract

Background: This paper is motivated by the theory that developmental idealism has been disseminated globally and has become an international force for family and demographic change. Developmental idealism is a set of cultural beliefs and values about development and how development relates to family and demographic behavior. It holds that modern societies are causal forces producing modern families, that modern families help to produce modern societies, and that modern family change is to be expected.

Objective: We examine the extent to which developmental idealism has been disseminated in Iran. We also investigate predictors of the dissemination of developmental idealism.

Methods: We use survey data collected in 2007 from a sample of women in Yazd, a city in Iran. We examine the distribution of developmental idealism in the sample and the multivariate predictors of developmental idealism.

Results: We find considerable support for the expectation that many elements of developmental idealism have been widely disseminated. Statistically significant majorities associate development with particular family attributes, believe that development causes change in families, believe that fertility reductions and age-at-marriage increases help foster development, and perceive family trends in Iran headed toward modernity. As predicted, parental education, respondent education, and income affect adherence to developmental idealism.

Conclusions: Developmental idealism has been widely disseminated in Yazd, Iran and is related to social and demographic factors in predicted ways.

Comments: Although our data come from only one city, we expect that developmental idealism has been widely distributed in Iran, with important implications for family and demographic behavior.

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