

Developmental Idealism and the Proposal of a Theoretical Model for Family Change in Iran

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Abstract: This research examines dynamics and change in the Iranian family during the recent half-century especially subsequent to the Islamic revolution in 1979. Developmental positions and changes are discussed and consideration is given to the extent to which family dynamics and change have been influenced by structural changes or ideational forces. We will focus on ideational forces based on a new approach that explains how ideational forces have been raised from two sources comprising idealized family morality and the second, developmental idealism. The former has been emerged of sources of resistance like tradition, religion, and state as internal forces and the later of objective structural changes under the effect of modernization, globalization, communication, world economy conditions and universal culture. Change resources are structural aspects and in face of change, resistance sources are religion, tradition and state that their effects have been mirrored in beliefs, attitudes, tendencies, views near the individuals. Consistency or conflict these two dimensions including idealized family morality and developmental idealism, which are both ideational forces, through mediational factors such as internal transformations or external effects and conditions could explain family change in Iran. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent has the family changed over these years in Iran? And how have ideas affected change? Our goal is to document the extent to which ordinary people in Iran believe and accept the propositions of developmental idealism and related aspects of developmental thinking. On the other hand, idealized family morality reflects beliefs, attitudes, values, that are being originated of three sources including tradition, state, and religion as we hypothesize. Based on theoretical framework, some main questions for this research are: 1-Will family changes in Iran be more under effect of idealized family morality or developmental idealism?, 2-What's the role of state in this model, enhancing developmental idealism in favor of change or play a restraining role? When could the state variate its role? Why? And main hypotheses of the study are including: 1-It seems there is positive correlation between family change and developmental idealism, that is, the more family change results the more developmental aspects and reversely. 2-there is negative relation between family change and idealized morality so that the more power of tradition and religion decrease rate of change. The Methodology in this research will be the documentary study that is based on social scientists' observations, available statistics and documentaries. Eventually this research tries to propose family change in Iran in the form of comprehensive and systematic theoretical model.

Keywords: developmental idealism, family change, structural forces, ideational forces, idealized family morality.

Introduction

Throughout the history of Iran, social crises and societal changes such as invasions, wars, revolutions, westernization, and modernizations have put an extra burden on the institution of the family. Some aspects of Iranian families have changed in response to these societal pressures for adjustment. But, in principle, the family as an institution has remained intact and continues to play a major role in the day-to-day activity of the society and in the lives of individuals. Despite the strong endurance as an institution, there are signs that the family has been under some stress during the last decades, at least among some classes of the population. Among these stressors are: the increase in the number of dual earner families, ideological differences among family members based on generation and gender, eight years of war with Iraq, and most recently a harsh economy with high inflation. (Aghajanian, 2001). The institution of family in Iran has been influenced by values and perceptions from

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the pre- and post-Islamic eras and has changed in response to sociocultural, political, and economic changes over the last two centuries. The crucial periods for transformation of family attitudes and behaviors were the periods before and after the Islamic Revolution (Abbasi-Shavazi & McDonald, 2008). At the level of the family, several dimensions of family life have remained fairly constant, whereas others have changed dramatically. McDonald (2008) described that The most important individual changes in recent decades are the increased level of education across cohorts, stimulated by the egalitarian nature of the revolution, shifts toward higher ages, considerable change in fertility behavior and attitudes of women, and in relation to change within the family he noted tending to be stronger at the level of the individual couple including decisions about the number of children to have and attitudes about gender roles within the relationship and also that these shifts from the internal or intimate to the external or public aspects of family, change becomes more muted emphasizing on the role of the official regulation in enhancing or restraining of public role of women, that is, highlighting the role of political forces. As McDonald (1994) has argued that an idealized family morality and also family organization are fundamental components of the culture and identity of a society, change in family organization can be expected to be slow and measured. Nevertheless, the forces of change such as globalization and the increase of education levels and communication are ever-present. The extent to which societies will be open to change will vary according to the degree to which deviation from the idealized morality is tolerated. This research examines dynamics and change in the Iranian family during the past period, subsequent to the Islamic revolution in 1979 especially throughout recent decades and years and wants to answer questions such as: To what extent has the family changed over these years in Iran? And how have ideas affected change? But in different way relative to past studies. We will focus on ideational forces based on a new approach that explains how ideational forces have been raised from two sources comprising idealized family morality and the second, developmental idealism. the former has been emerged of sources of resistance like tradition, religion, state as internal forces and the later of objective structural changes under the effect of modernization ,globalization, communication, world economy conditions and universal culture.in the most past researches every element in structural and ideational forces separately has been discussed and examined without a comprehensive theoretical apparatus.in this study we will consider two sources of change and resistance to explain Iranian family change. Change resources are structural aspects and resistance sources in face of change are religion, tradition and state that have been transformed to beliefs, attitudes, tendencies, views near the individuals. Consistency or conflict these two dimensions including idealized family morality and developmental idealism which are both ideational forces in the light of meditational factors such as internal transformations or external effects and conditions could explain family change in Iran.

Most done researches described conditions and existing positions and in reporting way have stated conditions and changing elements in the society whereas there aren't any explanation especially in causal model for the explaining of Iranian family change, so it needs to survey family change in Iran based on scientific and experimental explanation as this study decide.Aghajanian (2001)identified stressors on Iranian family and in relation to ideational differences mentioned probably the least documented stress on the Iranian family is ideational differences based on generation and gender. General differences have emerged from the conflict between what older generation, parents and grandparents, consider western cultural invasion and young generations ,adolescents and young adults, and consider modernization and adoption of new values. These controversial cultural elements include such things as the style and fashion of dressing, music, films, and television shows. The availability of modern technology and expansion of mass media especially television programs through satellite technology has accelerated the diffusion of non - Iranian culture among young generations (Aghajanian, 2001). In the recent decades this trend of labor force participation of women has been probably one of the important sources of stress on Iranian family in a society which is in many ways traditional, especially in relation to men's and women's roles inside the household. From limited available data, it is also clear that employed married women with professional jobs report more conflict and quarrel with their husband, than other groups of women (Aghajanian, 1988).

It is obvious that the process of Islamic revitalization had a heavier demand on women than men. This differential demand on women for change or return to traditional ways has been the sources of stress for middle class, educated urban families. It has been argued, convincingly, that such families involving urban, well - educated, professional Iranian women were not the norm at the time of Islamic revolution (Higgins, 1985; Hegland, 1990). Another source of stress on families in Iran in the recent decades has been the side effects of eight years of war between Iraq and Iran. The process of uprooting from villages and communities and refuging to large cities put a large number of war- migrant families in a state of social disorganization and status inconsistency. Some of effect of stress is reflected in the increase in family break- ups and divorce, men death due to the war and to become widow women and consequently remarriage problems in Iranian culture. The economic pressure due to a high rate of inflation during both the 1990s and recent years is one of stress source on family in Iran. The decline in the family income in the face of a growing family size during that decade has led to a drastic reduction in the living standards of the average family (Hoogland, 1995). Causal observation by social scientists and statistics and census data, many

dimensions of family life have changed tremendously in the past several decades especially in recent years in Iran. Age at marriage has risen dramatically in many of regions, arranged marriage has declined intensely, children's involvement in mate selection has increased, parental authority has declined, premarital sex has increased, extended families have declined, relationships between women and men have changed, contraceptive usage has become widespread, and fertility has declined. And, although they have been less thoroughly documented empirically than behavioral changes, attitudes and values concerning family life have changed concomitantly. There are signs that the patterns of sexuality, the timing of marriage and mate selection in Iran are dramatically changing and many cases of cohabitation household was reported. In the light of these changes, family in Iran gradually is transforming to another thing so that in the views of social scientists family in its Iranian style is destroying at this time. Hence it is needed to survey family change in Iran over the recent years. There is not methodological studies that can explain dynamics and change in family in Iran and available cases are descriptive and scattered especially without comprehensive theoretical framework.

The Iranian Parliament Research Center has carried out a study, according to which more than 24,000 Iranian high school students have confessed they are homosexual. Previously, Iran's Parliament Research Center released results of a survey which was carried out in 2007 among 141,555 high school students. Some 17.5 percent of the students said they are homosexual and 74 percent said they had relationships with the opposite sex. Some 8.2 percent of the students said they used to masturbate (Islamic parliament research center, 2014). Iranian university professor and Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports Mahmoud Golzari has conducted a separate study, according to which 80 percent of girls in a number of high schools in Tehran had been in relationships with boys. Golzari earlier said that 40 percent of students have been in relationship with the opposite sex as early as 14 years of age. Relationship between girls and boys has tripled compared to 30 years ago, and they start a relationship while they are in guidance schools, according to the minister. Meanwhile, experts quoted reports of the Iranian Parliament Research Center as saying that prostitution among married women in Iran is higher compared to single girls. Eleven percent of men in Tehran are aware that their wives are prostitutes, the study said.

The study also highlighted a report published by the Neday-e Enghelab website saying that 2,000 street girls have been caught, 600 of them said prostitution is their job, and 1,400 women said they learned to be prostitutes via social networks. Some 280 cases of rape were reported between March 21 and July 22, 2009. Another study was carried out among women of 15-35 years of age. Some 12.5 percent of them said they are silent when parts of their bodies are touched. Also, 78.9 percent of girls who were caught over a one-month period due to non-observation of Islamic veil were below 15 years of age. The Iranian Parliament Research Center has suggested that temporary marriage should be promoted in the society. Apparently, based on available statistics, there have been 9 million boys and 8 million girls in marriage at age (between 20-29 years of age).the number of unmarried men has been reached to 13130970 people in 2012 and there have been near to 6 million divorced women and 1.5 million widowed women.(Iran statistical center,2012). It seems that intensely changes in currently Iranian family are changing structurally and ideationally and there are signs that may transform toward different formation of that was before. So, in this study, we investigated the changes during different periods and tried to institutional and structural elements involved in these changes are shown and then it will be provided in the form of theoretical model to explain some of the proposed changes and at last it will be answered to the research questions posed in the research introduction.

Background of Iranian Family

The institution of the family in Iran has influences from long-standing Islamic values and prescriptions, the 1960s and 1970s modernization efforts, the Islamic Revolution, 8 years of the Iran-Iraq war, and the recent efforts toward economic development. The principal characteristics of the Iranian family in the past were endogamy, preferred marriage between paternal cousins, equality of brothers under the laws of inheritance, residence of married sons with their parents, early marriage, and the possibility of polygamy (Behnam1985, p. 555). The family in Iran was an autonomous unit of production and consumption, and patrilineal and patriarchal in nature. The eldest male of the family (grandfather, father, eldest son, uncle) was the patriarch and family authority and power was vested in him. Apart from gender, hierarchy within the family was built on respect due to age and experience. Marriage concerned not only two individuals but also potentially two lineages. Because marriage played a pivotal role in the maintenance of the social system based on the kinship network, the community retained control over this important transaction. Endogamy especially cousin marriage, was the preferred form of marriage Endogamy provides a greater knowledge and assurance about the characters of the bride and groom, it ensures that lineage property is maintained within the lineage, it makes divorce difficult because of the implied threat to lineage solidarity, and it protects the patriarch from potentially dissident outsiders. Early marriage was common for girls and boys, and marriage was universal. Early marriage for girls was preferred because it ended a family's economic

responsibility for its girl children and because it reduced the potential for the shame of a pregnancy before marriage (Ezazi, 1995, p. 55). The relationship between husband and wife was patriarchal and the wife was required to demonstrate respect for her husband. The fact that polygamy was allowed meant that women were always insecure. Intimacy between the couple was somewhat restrained and all family members had ascribed duties in life according to conventional (and differentiated) roles for men and women. Men had a unilateral right to divorce, although the rate of divorce was low. Children belonged to the father after divorce, in both permanent and temporary marriages (Bahmani, 2000, pp. 29–36). Fertility was high due to the fear of infant mortality, the need for security in old age, fear of being alone, and the productive role of children. Boys were preferred to girls. The original Muslim family in Iran was patrilineal, endogamous, and male-dominated. Islam places strong emphasis on family and considers it the foundation of the society. According to Islam, girls and boys become mature at ages 9 and 14 years, respectively, and they should perform their religious duties from these ages. They also should establish their families at an early point. The woman has a right to property, wealth, and inheritance, but not equal to that of men. Both men and woman have equal rights for nurturing children. Monogamy is the main pattern of marriage in Islam. However, polygamy is allowed if the man can afford it (up to four wives) and can treat his wives with justice.

Temporary marriage is allowed, with the duration of marriage specified at the time of the contract, but there is no right of inheritance from temporary marriages (Bahmani, 2000, p. 28). Iranian women in the first quarter of the 1900s occupied an inferior position in society. Educational opportunities for women were extremely limited. Although little data exist on the education of women, one source states that by 1925 only 3% of all Iranian women were literate (Rahman, 1957, p. 27). Women could neither vote nor hold political positions. Most women seemed to have accepted their inferior status and believed this to be their fate (Sansarian, 1985, p. 88). The family mode of organization covered all aspects of its members' lives. The most important of these aspects were procreation, the socialization of children, food production, the building of homes, the use of leisure time, health and medical care and the protection and defense of the whole family, individually and collectively (Nassehi-Behnam, 1985, pp. 557–558).

The Beginning of the Change in Iranian Family Structure

The form of the family in Iran remained unchanged for many centuries. However, the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were marked by a great influx of ideas that were accompanied by significant transformations in the family, especially among elite families who had contacts with the West. During the period 1895–1925, Iran was opened to the West, the society moved toward industrialization, feudalism weakened, and a state apparatus was developed. The rural economy was largely replaced by a cash economy, and foreign as well as internal investments were encouraged. This industrial investment needed human resources, and thus rural people moved to cities. Migration from rural to urban areas followed by migration to the West brought about social changes that affected family life. With economic prosperity, urbanization, and exposure to other ways of life, the household production economy gradually disappeared and the importance of the lineage as an economic unit began to wane. Thus, in this period of history, change in family structure was accepted as the bonds in the extended family became less economic in orientation. Nevertheless, the patriarch retained most of his power over other family members, the position of women remained at a very inferior level, and the Islamic codes of family behavior were enforced.

During the 54 years of Pahlavi rule of Reza Shah (1925–1941) and Mohammad Reza Shah (1941–1979), Iran experienced major social and economic changes, not least in the area of family life. In the 1920s, Reza Shah enacted laws to increase the minimum legal age at marriage to years for girls, passed a compulsory education act, and attempted to force women to abandon the veil. Vatandoost (1985, pp. 107–114) singled out three major initiatives between 1935 and 1967 by these monarchs that affected the general status of Iranian women. The first was a 1935 decree by Reza Shah banning the public use by women of the chador (the veil). During his 16 years of absolute rule, Reza Shah took major steps to centralize power and to achieve a degree of Westernization and modernization. In his efforts to provide an impression of Iran as a modern nation, he tried to abolish all visible symbols of the past, such as the veil and the native attire for men, and to replace them with Western dress and headgear. However these initiatives were made with little attention to religious sensitivities; as a result, the veil ban policy, for example, was not rigidly enforced at the local level. The second major initiative was a decree by Mohammad Reza Shah granting Iranian women the right to vote as well as to run for and hold public office. In 1963, Mohammad (Md.) Reza Shah outlined a six-point reform program, known as the Shah's White Revolution referendum, that consisted of: (a) land reform, (b) nationalization of forests, (c) sale of shares of government-owned industries (to finance land reform), (d) profit-sharing with workers to prevent the exploitation of labor, (e) formation of the literacy corps, and (f) amendments to election laws granting voting rights to women. However, the ulama (religious teachers) believed that there were hidden motives behind the Shah's White Revolution. They

believed that any initiative by the Shah, who was regarded as pro-United States, could only be self-serving and, in the long run, this would mean a further loss of Iran's independence (Vatandoost, 1985 pp. 113–114). The third initiative of the Shah period was the 1967 legislation entitled the Family Protection Law, which granted certain rights to Iranian women by attempting to create legal obstacles to the exercise by men of a unilateral privilege to multiple marriages and to terminating a marriage at will (Vatandoost, 1985, p. 107).

The law did not replace the 1931 Civil Law or the 1938 Marriage Law, but adapted these laws according to the needs of the society as determined by Md. Reza Shah. The law reduced the unilateral right of men to divorce, and polygamy became subject to the consent of the first wife. Women were also given the right to divorce. The custody of the children after divorce was subject to the agreement of the couple, and in cases of dispute between the two, the court had the right to make the decision based on the best interests of the children. According to the law, men had to get the written permission of the first wife to marry a second wife. However, the ages at marriage for boys and girls were not changed in the 1967 Family Protection Law. Work opportunities for women were increased and as a result women's employment increased to around 14% by 1976 (Vatandoost, 1985, p. 114).

. The Society of Women Lawyers criticized the law for giving the right to men to marry a second wife even with the first wife's agreement. As a result, in 1974, the Majlis (the national Council) amended the 1967 Family Protection Law. One of the amendments was the increase in age at marriage for girls to 18 and for boys to 20. However, the court could give permission to marry if the girl was physically and mentally sound and she was not younger than 15. The law further limited the right of men to take a second wife by subjecting that right to eight other these conditions (Bahmani, 2000, pp. 39–43). Amendments were not implemented fully, but their symbolic value was important, indicating that some of women's marriage rights were officially recognized (Hoodfar, 1995, p. 107; Makhoul Obermeyer, 1994, p. 46). Some of these legal changes may have been successful to the extent that they were initiated in response to changing values—for example, increasing the age at marriage for girls and boys. However, some of the initiatives, including the banning of the veil, received criticism and resistance within the society, especially by religious leaders, as they were regarded as top-down Western-oriented reforms (Abbasi-shavazi & McDonald, 2008). Vatandoost (1985, p. 125) argued that the lack of success of Reza Shah's and Mohammad Reza Shah's efforts in changing the status of Iranian women was chiefly due to their equation of social reform with modernization, and modernization with Westernization. He noted that Reza Shah was convinced that even Western attire was necessary for social reform. However, in Iran, these laws were abolished following the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The fact that opposing laws prevailed successively in Iran indicates that what was important was not social attitudes but the power of the state.

Islamic Revolution as a Response to the Westernization

The 1979 Islamic Revolution was in some ways a response or a resistance to the initiatives by Reza Shah that were considered Western and/or non-Islamic. The revolution brought about major sociocultural political and legal changes that affected many areas of social life in Iran, including family life. Soon after the revolution, the Islamic government emphasized domesticity and motherhood as the main roles of women, and reversed some of the policies initiated during the Shah's regime. The main legal changes after the Islamic Revolution in the area of marriage were the reduction of age at marriage, eliminating the limitations on polygamy and the provision of financial support for new couples. Immediately after the Islamic Revolution, the 1967 and 1974 Family Protection Laws were annulled, and the judiciary system was ordered to use only laws aligned with Sharia law (the legal system inspired by the Koran, the Sunna, and older Arabic law systems). Later, in 1982, Imam Khomeini the leader of the revolution, decreed his dissatisfaction with the laws of the Shah period and ordered the courts to substitute laws according to fatwa (judgments issued by Islamic judges on specific contemporary issues). For example, according to the 1931 Law, the minimum ages at marriage for girls and boys were 15 and 18, respectively, but according to fatwa, the minimum ages at marriage for girls and boys were 13 and 15 respectively, and marriage for girls at an earlier age was left to judicial discretion based on an assessment of the girl's maturity. Courts could give permission for marriage for ages as early as 10 and 11 if the girl had started her menstruation (Bahmani, 2000, pp. 46–63).

The hijab (veil) became compulsory and women were required to wear chador (a full-length, loosing fitting black garment covering a woman's clothing) and a special form of dress in public areas and offices. Primary, secondary, and high schools were segregated for boys and girls. The presence of women in offices was discouraged and employment opportunities for women became more restricted. As a result, the female employment rate decreased from 14% in 1976 to 7% in 1986. However, contrary to Western expectations, an egalitarian spirit prevailed in the streets during this period of the Revolution. Both during and after the Revolution, males and females alike joined

in the demonstrations, marches, and strikes that culminated in the establishment of the new image of the female, and women themselves began recognizing their strength in numbers (Touba, 1985, p. 131).

Ideational and Structural Forces of Change in Iranian Family

Many dimensions of family life have changed tremendously over the past century, and especially in the past several decades. Age at marriage has risen dramatically in many of the world's populations, arranged marriage has declined, children's involvement in mate selection has increased, parental authority has declined, premarital sex has increased, extended families have declined, relationships between women and men have changed, contraceptive usage has become widespread, and fertility has declined. And, although they have been less thoroughly documented empirically than behavioral changes, attitudes and values concerning family life have changed concomitantly. In many ways these transformations have been ubiquitous enough to think in terms of global trends and their causes, whereas it remains important to recognize both regional distinctions and also significant continuities in family life. Most explanations of family change have focused primarily on structural influences, such as shifts from an agricultural to an industrial to a service economy, the movement of populations from rural to urban areas, the expansion of education, the increase in income changes in technology, increases in knowledge, and declines in disease and mortality. Although in many ways these explanations of family change have been hegemonic in the social sciences for decades—and in fact, they continue to dominate—a growing number of researchers recognize that structural forces alone are insufficient for explaining the family changes experienced around the globe. Ideational and normative forces, such as the increasing emphasis on freedom, equality, and individual prerogative, are related to new ideas about the place and role of individuals relative to the family and larger community, and to changing norms concerning marriage, the relationships between women and men, the connections across generations, and the place of children in families. Also, because historically the family has been the primary social means by which individuals influence and are influenced by virtually every other dimension of life, changing beliefs concerning institutional factors such as religion, education, and the economy have direct relevance for understanding family changes. (Jayakody, Thornton & Axinn, 2008).

The scientific community has accumulated extensive evidence that beliefs and values are important in influencing family behavior. Religious beliefs and commitments, ideas about freedom and equality and values and beliefs concerning family life have been shown to correlate with family change at the macro level, although establishing causal connections can be difficult (Cherlin, 1992; Lesthaeghe, 1983; Lesthaeghe & Neels, 2002; Thornton, 1985; Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001). Social scientists have offered a wide range of explanations for family changes in both Western and non-Western parts of the world. For the most part, these explanations have emphasized changes in the social economic and political structures of society, chiefly through the growth of industrialization, urbanization, education, income and consumption communications, transportation, and various forms of new technology. The first and perhaps foremost explanation of family change centered on the changing modes of economic production (Lehmann, 1960/1979; Meek, 1976; Thornton, 2005).

Socioeconomic changes have affected family models, particularly in urban areas. Nassehi-Behnam (1985, p. 560) referred to broken nuclear families as a new consequence of rural migration to cities in search of work. Men from rural areas left their wives and children in the village and went to the cities for work. With the movement of young migrants from rural areas, the national mode of production changed from farming to manufacturing. Agricultural production lost its importance and young people became less interested in farming, which consolidated the movement to cities. Also, mechanization of farms lowered the need for labor in rural areas, and thus the productive value of children declined for families. These changes contributed to the decline of the patriarchal and extended family in rural areas. Family changes in urban areas have been different from those in rural areas. Housing problems, along with other issues in urban areas, mitigate against co-residence of the extended family.

Ladier-Fouladi (2002), analyzing social welfare and the family in Iran, notes that, from the 1950s, economic modernization, urbanization, and growing school enrollment, particularly, in towns and cities, began very slowly to shift some of its long-held family responsibilities, although the relatively late involvement of the state in the field of social protection meant that the family retained its central support functions and power of control for many years (Ladier-Fouladi, 2002, pp. 362–365). She notes that, more recently, social and religious foundations have taken over some functions of the family and the local networks that would otherwise have continued to support their members. By their influence on the organization of the family, these foundations helped to undermine the principle of family interdependence and favored the emergence of the autonomous individual or couple. Nevertheless, state-funded social welfare has not developed to the extent that it will supplant the family mode of protection at the couple and individual levels. The family remains the paramount source of economic and emotional support.

Education is one of the main factors of social change, and operates to promote family change in many ways. One of the main social changes in the 20th century, and particularly over the past two decades, has been the expansion of mass education in Iran. Children of all social classes have access to education. The literacy rate has increased dramatically in both urban and rural areas. For example, the literacy rate for women aged 15–19 in urban areas increased from around 57% in 1966 to around 97% (almost universal) in 1996. The improvement in rural areas has been more dramatic, increasing from only 5% in 1966 to 86% in 1996. In 1998, around 52% of those admitted to government universities were girls. The figure increased to 57% in 1999 and then to 62% in 2001 (Abdollahyan, 2001). These increases in educational attainment for Iranian girls mean that marriage and childbearing are often delayed into the early twenties. Studies suggest that aspirations and expectations of women in post-revolutionary Iran have also risen considerably (Kian-Thiebaut, 2002; Mir-Hosseini, 2002; Shadi-Talab, 2001). This has led to the improvement of the status of women at least within the family, and women have increased their role in family decision making. Shadi-Talab (2001, p. 54) concluded that “the expansion of education throughout the country and to all families, has resulted in the presence of an educated girl beside a very illiterate mother; the former tried to encourage the older woman to express herself and participate in decision-making”. Increased literacy has contributed to women’s confidence, and has increased women’s perceptions that they have options in many aspects of their lives, particularly women in rural areas, who had been much constrained by past gender inequities (Hoodfar, 1996). Attitudes toward female employment outside the home have also changed (Mohseni, 2000). Of the 73% of women aged 15–49 surveyed in 2002 who said they would prefer their daughters to continue their education after high school rather than to marry early, 62.5% said that this was so that their daughters could find a job in the future. A vast majority of women surveyed believed that women should work outside the home to have financial autonomy and also to contribute to the family’s income (Abbasi-Shavazi, McDonald, & Hosseini-Chavoshi, 2003). Another recent action has been the provision of military training to females, and they have been permitted to join law enforcement agencies. These activities were restricted for women immediately after the revolution. However, despite dramatic changes in women’s education and reported preferences for work outside the home, women’s paid employment remains low in Iran.

Since the revolution, women have gained more freedom within the household and in specific forms of social activity, such as classes for reciting quran and prayer meetings. *Rozeh* and *Sofreh* are two examples of ceremonies organized and attended by women of all ages. In addition to recitation and prayer, broader social and political issues are discussed at these meetings. For example, the Ministry of Health has taken advantage of these meetings to promote family planning. The meetings have also been exploited for political purposes. Given the nature of these gatherings, most husbands and the government encourage women to attend. On the other side of change, women activists and feminists have also taken advantage of these meetings in the past (Touba, 1985, p. 132). This suggests that those in authority consider that women have a vote and an influence that is independent of their husbands’ position.

Other recent signs of change in this area include the publication of several weekly magazines and academic journals that publish articles on women’s affairs. There was also an improvement in the status of women after the 1997 presidential election of Mohammad Khatami. Women’s participation in this election was very significant and Khatami initiated various programs for women’s empowerment. He also appointed an advisor to the President for women’s affairs. There are several women activists in social as well as political fields. A number of women representatives have also been elected to the parliament and to rural-city councils. Several nongovernmental organizations are active in women’s affairs and work very closely with women and the government to improve the status of women in Iran. These women, as noted by Hoodfar (1995, p. 106), have questioned prescribed gender roles and the male interpretation of the proper “Islamic role” for women, and have encouraged the government to introduce reforms in the areas of marriage, divorce, and education. The 2005 election of a conservative government may see some of these more liberal directions reversed, again emphasizing the importance of politics in social change. To what extent have ideas contributed to family and family change in Iran? In relation to ideational effects, family modes of organization in any society are important in shaping people’s attitudes and behavior toward family formation and reproduction. For example, the family in the past was based on a household economy in which all family members contributed to household production. The process of socialization also took place within the family, in such circumstances; the family was responsible for the protection of its members. In his *Idea of Modernization in Iran*, Azadarmaki (2001) argued that the changes in contemporary Iran were more ideational than structural, political, or historical. In the introductory remarks in *Women and the Family in Iran*, Fathi (1985, p. 5) described the zeal of Westernization during the Pahlavi regime as Europeanization, which led to excesses and blind imitation among some segments of Iranian society. He also expressed the view that “modernization and westernization from above” adopted by the Pahlavi regime “had its staunch and popular opponents,” and thus, the uprising of 1979 and the creation of the Islamic Republic were responses to the reality that accommodation between Western and indigenous cultural elements had not been achieved.

Aghajanian (1997) argued that the accelerated adoption of communication and mass media and technology, including computers with access to the Internet and television programs through satellite antennae, has contributed to the acceptance of Western ideals among younger generations of Iranians. Saroukhani and Navaie (2002 ,pp. 132–138) found that around 95% of women in Tehran watched TV for 1 to 3 hours during normal days, and around 45% listened to radio. Expansion of transport has also been an important factor in convergence of behaviors, thus affecting family and fertility behaviors and attitudes. Therefore, it seems that ideas have contributed to the transformation of family values and culture in Iran in recent decades, and with the advancement of communication technology, undoubtedly, the contribution of ideas on changes in attitudes and behavior of couples toward the family will continue in the future.

Toward Constructing a Sociological Framework for Family Change in Iran

Distinction between structural and ideational forces, as mentioned above, is both simplistic and arbitrary, as structure and ideology are themselves interrelated in complex and multifaceted ways. The social and economic systems of any human population have an empirical reality that must be taken into account in any ideational models or frameworks that specify approaches for experiencing and living with that reality. Similarly, ideational models provide a framework for constructing and modifying social and economic systems. Also, social and economic systems—and changes in them—can be important in facilitating or limiting the spread of beliefs, values, and motivations across geographical and social boundaries. Furthermore, it is often the intersection of ideational and structural forces that combines to influence family change. Any comprehensive explanation of family change must consider both ideational and structural forces and the ways they interrelate to influence family change. (Jayakody, Thornton & Axinn, 2008). We emphasize the influence of mediational factors that transcend international boundaries as well as structural and ideational forces in various contexts. This research is about family change in Iran. It considers historical trends in family behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and relationships, with an emphasis on theoretical models for explaining this family change. Particularly central to this study are the ideational and motivational underpinnings of family life and the ways that attitudinal and value changes have influenced family behavior and relationships. In this research we consider three components comprising 1-structural change 2-ideational change 3-interrelation between these two elements. We explain this theoretical model by developmental idealism concept and other concept namely idealized family morality.

Thornton (2001, 2005) has described the elements of **developmental idealism** and the ways it has influenced a broad array of family and demographic behaviors across time and around the world. Here we only highlight the basic arguments concerning developmental idealism and its impact on family change. Developmental idealism grows out of the developmental paradigm—a model of natural, universal, necessary, and directional change that has dominated much of Western thinking from the Enlightenment of the 1600s and 1700s onward. This paradigm suggests that all societies progress through the same stages of development, but at different rates, so that at any single time point all societies can be viewed as occupying different stages along a single developmental continuum. Scholars using this paradigm believed that the most advanced societies were in northwestern Europe and among the northwestern European diaspora, whereas other societies were at less advanced positions on the pathway of development. They used this cross-sectional variation to infer the nature of developmental trajectories across time. That is, they read history sideways by assuming that the most developed nations had been like their less-developed contemporaries in the historical past, and that, with continued progress, the least developed nations would become more like their more advanced neighbors in the future. They noted that northwestern Europe was more industrial, urban, and educated than many other parts of the world; it also had higher levels of knowledge, consumption, geographic mobility, secularism, democracy, and religious pluralism. They also knew that many of these dimensions of northwestern European social and economic life had increased over the years.

Thornton, Binstock & Ghimire (2008) have described that Developmental idealism relies on four main propositions. The first is that modern society is good and attainable. The second proposition of developmental idealism is that the modern family is good and attainable. The third proposition is that a modern family is both a cause and an effect of a modern society. The fourth proposition of developmental idealism is that individuals have the right to be free and equal and have their social relationships based on consent. Their argument is that these four propositions comprise a system of beliefs that can influence a broad array of family and demographic behaviors and, in fact, have been especially powerful in changing family and demographic structures and relationships around the world. They claim that through these many mechanisms the ideas of the developmental paradigm, reading history sideways, the conclusions of social scientists, and the propositions of developmental idealism have been widely disseminated in both European populations and in many other parts of the world. Of course, the spread of developmental idealism has not been without substantial opposition in many parts of the world including Iran. Western forms pronounced as modern in developmental idealism are sometimes viewed as foreign and strange,

especially to those outside the West, and at times this resistance has been sufficiently strong that it could only be overcome with strong coercion or even physical force (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991; Hetherington, 2001). Thus, the ideas of developmental idealism have been ignored, resisted, modified, or hybridized as circumstances and conditions have permitted and required. In relation to family change, McDonald (1994) has argued that an **idealized family morality** is a fundamental component of the culture of all societies.

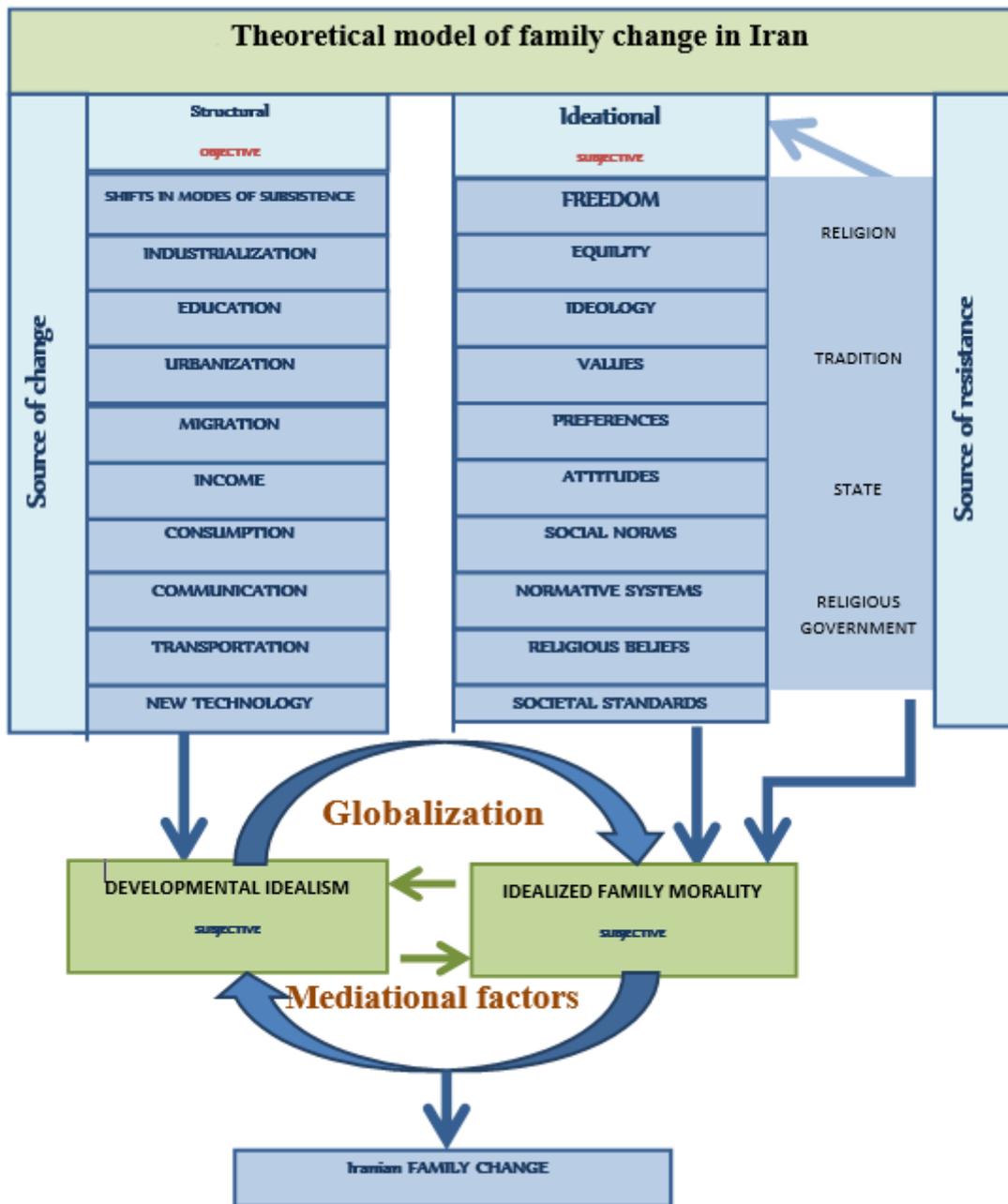
Change in family organization can be expected to be slow and measured. Nevertheless, as globalization proceeds and education levels increase and as communication brings the world and its ideas to everyone's doorstep, the forces of change are ever-present. The extent to which societies will be open to change will vary according to the degree to which deviation from the idealized morality is tolerated. Western societies in the past 30 years have been marked by a new surge in toleration of individual behaviors that in earlier periods would have been considered unacceptable. Directly and indirectly, Western secular democracy is now promoted to the world through the process that is called Westernization. Westernization does not necessarily proceed in a hegemonic way. In particular, little variation from the idealized family morality has occurred in countries where the family system is reinforced by a strong social morality—where variation from the ideal is deemed to be illegal, antisocial, or contrary to the teachings of the prevailing religion. In these countries, the ideal is policed by the strong, formal institutions of the society, principally the institutions of religion and the state. Where the ideal is rigidly enforced, as in post-revolutionary Iran, family change cannot be predicted well from changes in the characteristics of individuals such as changes in education, occupation, or economic well-being because the individual is constrained from operating outside the prevailing idealized morality. In such circumstances, it is pointless to seek to distinguish between changes that are “structural” and changes that are “ideational” because ideology is structure and structure is ideology. Family change must be interpreted within a framework that is political: how much and what type of change in family organization will be acceptable to the ruling authorities. Individuals can experiment with the boundaries of change and find that in some areas, these boundaries are relatively flexible whereas in others they are rigid. In contemporary Iran, the boundaries are defined or interpreted by religious authorities. Change may proceed in some aspects of family life because the change is not viewed as a threat to idealized family morality. For example, birth control and a small family size are accepted, whereas cohabitation or sexual relations outside marriage are anathema. During the period of the Shah, Westernization, in its milder form of 30 years ago, was given greater rein. Although many interpretations of the Islamic revolution are possible, many Iranians today believe that the revolution reversed the excessive encroachment of Westernization on Iranian idealized morality. Thus, changes in the Iranian family need to be interpreted not in a conventional Western sociological framework of structure and ideology but in terms of the interpretation of idealized morality by religious and state institutions, an altogether more political approach. This does not mean that social dynamism is not possible. Iranians now are much more highly educated than in the recent past and are consequently more open to social change. They have a strong desire for better economic outcomes for their families and a belief that these should be attainable. However, change must proceed within the political context, a context in which structure and ideology are largely indistinguishable. (Abbasi-shavazi & McDonald, 2008).

Conclusion

Based on schematic diagram of the image below, family change in Iranian society in a historical process and especially to being the Islamic Revolution as a turning point and also the years after it, have been field of struggling and conflict between tradition and modernity and forces of the two fields that have been examined in this study have been structural and ideational forces. In the conflict areas, Structural forces have been providing change background through the process of structural change and also modern institutions such as industrialization, urbanization, development, education, transportation, communications, and developing innovative technologies and In contrast, the moral and ideational forces, rooted in tradition, religion and state institutions have seen as the brake. Also, an important part of the ideational forces that result from development transformations and suggested namely developmental idealism as the ideational forces competing to tradition-oriented institutions strengthened mental and moral positive attitudes in relating to development and providing change context. At another level, the confrontation between the idealized family morality, that take its power of the institutions of religion, tradition and state (after the Islamic Revolution), to developmental idealism that take its change energy of infrastructure development and manifestations of modernity, is permanent and continuous. Developments described show that the final route of family variation has changed in favor of the developmental idealism in the face of idealized family morality, that is, an important part of the explanation of changes in the family is developmental idealism. Therefore, this variable shows a positive correlation with the development positions. Although idealized family morality is strengthening in front of change but finally succumbed to the changes, and so far only has played the role of moderator. The state before and after the revolution have been at odds with each other. Before the revolution this institution was in favor of developmental idealism and after the revolution in direction to tradition. After the

revolution Government more democratic, conservatives or even more radical were different only in degree of moderating and softening. Therefore, the role of government in the political realm and laws and regulations is secondary role in the family changes and there is a negative correlation between changes in family and idealized family morality. This means that as much as functional role of institutions, traditions, religion and government are strong in Iranian families, later developmental idealism can reach the level of family change in Iran to the level of global change across the world.

Author's proposal of a theoretical model for Iranian family change



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