

## Students' marriage age increase, affecting factors and priorities

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of research is to identify and prioritize the factors influencing the increase in age of marriage among students of Islamic Azad University of Islamshahr. Methods: This study was descriptive survey and the statistical population was Islamshahr Islamic Azad University students at the second semester of 2015-16 academic years among whom 350 students were selected based on the sample size estimation table of the Morgan and Kerejcy populations as stratified random sampling. The information gathering tool was the self-made questionnaire including 31 components according to the 5-points Likert scale with 0.89 reliability based on Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive inferential statistics and single-group Z inferential test were used to analyze the data. Results: The results showed: First, all Z score agents are more than critical Z score in confidence level of 0.99 and  $\alpha / 2$  (2.58) = 0.01 and the second, The existence of the phenomenon of unemployment, the society approach to increase the level of education, the fear of the phenomenon of excessive increase in the costs of living, lack of sufficient income to marry, fear of failure in life, the spread of aristocracy culture, extreme emphasis on the nobility of the two parties, changing the criteria for an easy marriage, fear of supplying suitable supplies for life, and the difficulty of families' deal as a result of complex social relations are as the most important factors in increasing the marriage age of students respectively. Conclusion: economic factors and living conditions are more influential on the increase of marriage age of students more than cultural phenomena and social values.

**KEY WORDS:** STUDENTS, ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY, MARRIAGE AGE INCREASE, PRIORITIZATION, AFFECTING FACTORS

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## INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion of culture and in the Islamic culture, the pivot of reforms is the culture. Culture is the extract of social life and it is by culture that the person is linked and coordinated to the people around at various dimensions and is identified and determined of the other societies. Certainly, the existence and survival of human beings and societies is related to the culture (Fazl Ellahi Ghomeshi, 2013). Universities and students are of the most important cultural elements of the society that play a major role in the structure of society by creating knowledge and the promulgation of culture and ways of life. Marriage and families are of the symbols of Islamic culture as an inevitable necessity not only for psychological and physical comfort of the people, but also to strengthen values and family institution, social health and a fortunate for excellence, purity and pure life. Therefore, the timely marriage of students not only emphasizes the adherence to culture and values but also, the sanctity of the pure and scientific environment of the university is also specification. Marriage (Ezdevaj) is made up of the word “Zoj” meaning as couple and pair. In fact, a person who has been alone and single tries to form the smallest unit of the society as the family and marriage can be known as a social contract based on compromise and compromise between the man and the woman and the stability of the society (Biabangard, 2002).

In the Qur'an's view, marriage is the source of peace of the human spirit and is a great sign of God's mercy and grandeur (Rome Sura: 21). Marriage is an intimate relationship between man and woman for a long time and this relationship is not to satisfy the immediate desires but the future life and the happiness of men and women and their children are formed based on this relationship. There is a need for constant compromise and high level of sacrifice in the marriage but if the man and the woman have more compromise before the marriage, there is a possibility for higher compromise after the marriage (Ahmadi Monfared, 2008).

Marriage is a process of interaction between man and woman held under Sharia and customary legal ceremonies the loyalty to which is accepted by Sharia and social laws and organizations (Ibid: 20). Marriage is an action that causes the interaction between the two sexes based on the constant sexual relationships; therefore, the relationship between two people of the same sex is not considered as marriage whether contemporary or permanent and on the other hand, in the marriage definition, the mere physical relationship between the opposite sexes does not seem sufficient since marriage requires a social agreement that causes the legality of the physical relationships (Sarookhani, 1991). Karlsson

shows marriage as a process of mutual action between two people, a man and a woman, that realizes some legal conditions and holds a ceremony for their marriage and generally, their activity is accepted by the law as the marriage (Karlsson, 1963).

Marriage and marital issues has been one of the most important issues of human life during history. Therefore, this issue has been considered by different scientific fields as sociology, law, economics, psychology, philosophy in addition to religions. Thus, any change and transformation in society will cause changes in the family institution by considering the importance of the family as one of the major institutions of society. Increased marriage age for girls and the phenomenon of certain spinster among them is among the cultural and social changes that are resulted in large changes occurred in the society. Increased marriage age phenomenon is not only observed in Iran but also in postindustrial developed countries like the United States of America, so that on the basis of existing studies, the age of marriage in this country has outstandingly increased since the mid-1960s among its population (Loughran and Zissimopoulos, 2004).

Marriage time and family formation is influenced by several factors. The development and modernization in the new world has caused the change in the time of marriage and its delay with the rapid and considerable change of the individual's economic and social conditions. The collapse of wide family systems, the replacement of industrial and business trading instead of traditional agricultural economy, the complexity of social labor division, the expansion of public education and more involvement of women in economic and social activities outside the house are factors that contribute to delayed marriage (Mahmoudian, 2004).

The increase of the population growth rate is among the factors that has catalyzed the increase of marriage age and the occurrence of certain spinster phenomenon. On the other hand, it should not be neglected that the increase of marriage age and the certain spinster phenomena cause disorder in the natural function of the family institution and consequently, we will naturally face the destroy and the threatening of mental health, the creation of inhibiting dams and barriers in the way of mental growth and sublimation, the occurrence of mental and social diseases and disorders such as depression, anxiety, addiction and social crimes, wasting the massive energy of people that prevents social growth and sublimation, the increase of the age differences between children and parents and interest and perspective gaps between the two generations within the family (Soltanpoor, 2000).

According to this important factor and the emphases of the Islam humanitarian school on timely marriage of

youths constantly as the cause of the mental peace and physical comfort; “And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought” (Rome Sura: 21). According to the necessity of creating a healthy and pure environment for thinking and producing knowledge and the promulgation of the culture and societal values at universities as the center of thinking and knowledge production the most important factor of which is students and their physical and intellectual health is considered as the environment creation and learning experiences for the knowledge production. The students’ marriage at proper ages will cause the succulence at universities and the focus of exactness on scientific objectives. Therefore, the researchers are after providing the possibility of cultural and managerial curriculum for having developed and Islamic valued-based universities by identifying and prioritizing the affecting factors of the students’ marriage age increase.

## INHIBITING FACTORS OF MARRIAGE

Any factor that causes the lack of the formation of marriage of girls and boys or delays the marriage is called the inhibiting factor of the marriage (Dezhakam, 2004: 108). These factors include: economic problems and false customs and formalities, false freedoms and escaping responsibility, military service of boys, the problem of housing, fastidious and possessiveness in mate selection, poverty (Biabangard, 2002: 94 ), disrupting the balance of boys and girls ready to get married because of migration from the villages for the purpose of university education (Sadeghian, 2001: 5), sexual deviation and adultery, male impotence and female undersexed, intense love relationships as falling in love, the lack of coordination of social and economic status of the two parties’ families, time lapse and aged boys or girls, relative income, high intellectual difference between the boy and the girl, ideological and religious differences and so on (Dezhakam, 2004). Sometimes these factors can be overcome and are not majorly important and such as poverty, education time and so on and sometimes, these factors cannot be overcome and there is no possibility for marriage such as love relationships, the intense educational and economic differences and the lack of the complete compromise of the both parties’ families (Dezhakam, 2004). The age of marriage is one of the important indicators to evaluate the physical and mental health of a community (Murayama, 2001). In our country that religious norms enjoy a favorable popularity among people, it carries the domain of the effect of the marriage age to new generation behavioral and cultural identity fields. A significant increase in mar-

riage age after centuries of early marriage experience is considered as important phenomenon in social changes (Hajnal, 1965: 48).

Marriage and family formation is one of the issues discussed by various religions, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, scholars, educators, poets, writers and artists. In marriage and family formation, goals and motivations such as the human desire for the continuity of generations, spiritual and economic needs and requirements are involved that have been varied in different periods of human history (Caldwell, 1981). But what nowadays is the main challenge of Iranian society among young people is the increase of the age of marriage; young people, who do not find the opportunity to marry, young people who are isolated due to wrong social traditions and also young people who like to be single for a long time of their lives. These and other factors have changed the marriage age phenomenon as a problem. It worth mentioning that the consequences of this phenomenon (marriage age) can cause the increase in anxieties and stresses and the prevalence of depression and behavioral disorders and sexual vulnerability. By the lapse of the exciting period of life, it decreases the motivation for marriage and discourages the aged girls to form families (Azad Armaki, 2007).

Besides that, the marriage age increase and certain spinster sends out the marriage of the legal and normal circulation and threatens the security of the family which is in line with other damages as the increase of divorce due to illegitimate relationships (Gidenze, 2007). On the other hand, specific problems such as huge dowries, huge amounts of jewelry payment, various gifts and costumes and glamorous wedding celebrations, renting, mortgage or house purchase, pregnancy and parenting and dozens of other family, economic, social and cultural problems face young people (Eskandari Cherati, 2008). Simultaneous with economic and social changes such as urbanization, education, creation of new jobs and the emergence of various classes, the family system and the governing norms can be seen in the changes in marriage age (Kana’ani, 2006).

Considering the importance of the issue, the increased marriage age seems to be more important from different cultural, political, economic, social and even security for people when it is related to the open minded students of universities. Students are the thoughtful and cultural capitals and future leaders and managers of the societies who have the mission of knowledge production, culture development and cultural services to people and certainly, thinking method and their interpretation can have various effects on the society. Student marriage phenomenon will be the provider of physical and mental happiness and the background provider of the health and the purity of the sacred environment of the

university to produce knowledge and endeavor to reach individual and social sublimation peaks; an objective that the Supreme Leader of Iran institution tries to realize in order to realize the pure life at universities by providing the cultural background and giving financial services and loans in the recent years.

Despite all these efforts and in the way of the God's satisfaction, the student marriage age also needs more investigation according to realities in order to have effective planning to reach the goals with proper reasoning. The review of literature and websites and credited information services of the country show that descriptive researches based on the data analysis are very few although the researches in the related domain are not few some of which are mentioned below.

Karimlu et al (1999) compared the change trend of the age of the first marriage of women in Tehran province with all the country based on the information of the National Health and disease project in Iran and analyzed it based on Bras 8 method.

The results show that marriage ratio in all age groups, and especially in 15- 19 years age group, has completely decreased and generally, marriage age has increased across the country as well as Tehran province. In a study entitled as "the age of marriage is rising: the study of supporting factors", Mahmoudian (2004) found that recent marriages happen at higher ages and education, urbanization, the cooperation of women as labor force, freer marriages, sexual equality and the relative relationship of the couples have direct effects on the marriage age. In a study entitled as "the evolution of women's marriage age in Iran and the population factors affecting it based on attributive study and descriptive-analytical research method", Kazemipoor (2004) concluded that there is a relationship between marriage age, literacy, education, ethnicity, urban and rural residential areas and generally the socio-economic status of people. Moreover, the age structure of population (the disproportion between unmarried men and women) are among the influencing factors on the variations of the age of marriage in Iran.

In a study, Nikmanesh and Kazemi (2006) studied the effective factors on the marriage age increase among the youth and the influencing solutions to come over this problem and showed that marriage opportunities have been more available for girls with delay in marriage than boys and girls have known the main reason for their failure to getting married as not finding a loved one and continuing education. Boys have introduced economic problems and unemployment as barriers to marriage. Hope for marriage in the future is higher in boys than girls. Also, they showed that boys and girls know reducing expectations of their parents as a solution to marriage problems. In the second priority, boys and girls have introduced the overcome of economic problems

and unemployment as the solution. In a study entitled as "the study of the reasons and effects of the marriage age increase among rural girls in Ashtian", Majduddin (2007) concluded that family is of great importance in terms of effectiveness on its members and on different levels of society and the cause of the family is marriage. So, the health of the society and family is related to a healthy and permanent marriage.

Also, social factors and problems caused by this such as poverty and unemployment will cause to the migration, marriage and the permanent residence of the rural boys in cities and the lack of sexual balance in the village, so that it causes the increase in the number of the single girls in the village and the delay in their marriage age followed by the increase of the damages and social deviations. In a study entitled as "Marriage Age; increase factors and the strategies to decrease", Rajabi (2007) has introduced the increase of the marriage age as one of the important issues of the human society because by the increase of the marriage age, the youths are deprived of the normal sexual instinct satisfaction way and its consequences and benefits.

In past societies, boys and girls got married at puberty or shortly thereafter and staying single was considered a social shortage. But with more complexity of societies and the creation of false desires and motivations, the social tastes changed and as a result of this taste changing, the natural and instinctive need for marriage was repressed and this process has gone so far that today in some Western societies, young people have totally refused marriage and regarded it as a barrier to their freedom. They will turn to marriage only in time that they lose their youthful vitality and require a caregiver. Unfortunately, this wrong culture has also affected Islamic societies, including our Islamic community, so that the increasing age of marriage has caused many problems in the country. Problems such as depression and loss of vitality among the youth, obsession in choosing spouse, the problematic and unmarried elderly children at home, increased anxiety especially in girls, uncertainty, loss of freshness and beauty, hopelessness and deciding to not to marry for reducing the desire for marriage, carelessness in selecting a spouse, the risk of diversion, and dozens of such problems that challenges many of our youth.

In a study entitled as "the criteria for choosing the education level of spouses and comparing it among male and female students", Forodastan et al (2008) concluded that the education level of spouse is very important in the view point of students and is one of the spouse selection criteria. Moreover, there is a significant difference between male and female students in the education level of spouse. The girls showed the highest the tendency towards the higher education level of spouses and boys

showed the lowest tendency towards the higher education level of spouses. According to the results of this research, there is this formal attitude in the society that the education level of men should be higher than his wife. Moreover, statistics show the increase in the number of the girl students at universities compared to boys.

This trend can cause the increase in marriage age of youths and especially in the number of single educated girls in the societies. Some strategies are recommended in the way of reforming the current attitudes. In a study entitled as “the assessment of the youth attitude towards marriage and the recognition of its consequences and effects”, Kazemipoor (2009) concluded that in Iranian society, the family institution and the interactions among its members has not developed as long as the growth and the development of industrialization and urbanization. In this regard, divorce has been higher among the people with lower social status. Finally, according to the interaction view, most youth have pay attention to rational selection for spouse selection and the attitude towards marriage has changed to a rational selection among young people.

In a study entitled as “the study of the effect of cultural factors on marriage model in Shiraz”, Kazemi and Niazi (2010) concluded that the marriage model is more modernized by the increase of the developmental idealism of individuals. Moreover, gender, age, value priorities, income, education levels and the level of using mass media tools have had a meaningful relationship with marriage model. Based on the multi-variate regression results among all the independent variables, gender variables, developmental idealism, the level of using mass media tools, age, value priorities and income explain 73 percent of the changes of dependent variable. The gender variable has the highest effect on the marriage model. In a study entitled as “the study of the effecting factors on the marriage age of women in Iran; an economic approach”, Zarabi and Mostafavi (2011) stated that marriage is a social, demographic and economic phenomenon and the marriage age is a good indicator to study it. The research results prove the positive effect of education level on the marriage age of women. Moreover, the urbanization variable shows negative effect in general compared to being rural. The difference of marriage age is also seen among different ethnic groups. Also, the results show that marriage age is lower among families of higher economic classes and finally, marriage age faces an increasing trend among recent age groups compared to the past.

In a study entitled as “Effect of socializing with the opposite sex before marriage on marriage age and willing to marry among students of Tehran University”, Farahani Khalajabadi et al (2011) concluded that the experience of advanced sociability before marriage is

one of the determinants of late marriage among students after controlling for sex and economic status and family culture so that the experience of advanced sociability with the opposite sex before marriage delays the marriage about 2 years. Also, this sociability has a more significant relationship with marriage among girls and less significant relationship with marriage among boys. In a study entitled as “the reasons of girls’ marriage age increase among single girls and married women from 25 to 44 in urban centers of the country”, Habibpoorgetabi and Ghaffari (2011) concluded that girls who marry later have higher education, have supernal attitude towards marriage and believe that the costs of the lost opportunities with marriage is higher than marriage opportunity.

On the other hand, if the society condition, whether economically or socio-culturally, is not ready to accept such changes, its negative consequences would be more than its positive ones. In a study entitled as “An introduction to the statistics of young people marriage in Iran with the analysis of divorce and marriage statistics and the explanation of the major barriers to marriage”, Bankipoorfard et al (2011) concluded that cultural barriers have more effects than economic barriers but they are less paid attention to. In addition, the marriage trend in recent years is been worrying so that marriage growth rate has decreased despite the population growth and divorce rate has significantly increased. In this condition, the marriage age average has increased especially among girls.

The result is that the marriage of peers, training life skills at various levels, permanent monitoring and special attention of managers to planning and a national commitment to solve this problem are of the ways out of this critical situation. In a study entitled as “the relationship between women’s education with their marriage age increase and preventing strategies emphasizing Islamic approach”, Mirsondosi and Mohammadi Qale Sefidi (2011) concluded that there is a significant, negative and inverse relationship between the education of the married women and the economic expectation level of Tehran girls. In other words, the higher their education level goes, the less their economic expectations are. There is a direct and positive relationship between the education of the married women and the social pressures level so that the higher their education level goes, the higher is the level of social pressures and the person is more willing to get married. In a study entitled as “the economic and social factors related to the marriage age increase in Kermanshah”,

Moradi and Saffarian (2012) showed that there is significant relationship between the variables such as the people’s attitudes towards gender equality, democratic parenting style, authoritative parenting style, education and enjoyment of being single, the strictness of parents

and expectations. The results of the regression show that the use of media, parents' intervention, parenting style, sexual inequality, housing and self-confidence are respectively important in the explanation of the dependent variable that have entered the regression equation. Taken together, these variables have explained and predicted the marriage age from the conceptual atmosphere of the dependent variable.

The results of Hosseini and Geravand (2013) as "the assessment of the factors affecting the behavior gap and attitudes of women to the appropriate age for marriage in Koohdasht" indicate the fact that there is better explanation of gap in behavior and the attitudes of women towards appropriate marriage age from the socio-economic, demographic, and cultural and ethnic background characteristics. Fazl Elahi Ghomeshi and Maleki Tavna (2013) in "mate-selection culture among students: criteria and priorities" indicated that mental and intellectual health has the highest priority and political view is of the least important criteria among students and modesty and family and personal decency, having marital honesty, moral agreement between the spouses, security and peace in life, reliability, high sense of responsibility, physical health and cultural and educational fit between the spouses were the most important criteria for mate selection among university students respectively. The correlation between students' ranking of two universities was significant. They concluded that students pay minor attention to mundane and physical characteristics compared to spiritual factors that is in more coordination with cultural and Islamic teachings.

The realistic analysis of the previously mentioned researches show that the researches in coordination with the objectives of this research have been very few and the conduction of this research in the sacred city of Qom and via referencing students emphasize its uniqueness. However, the identification and prioritization of the effecting factors on the marriage age of students is not been previous observed with the presented trend.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method is practical in terms of purpose and it is a descriptive survey in terms of data collection. The statistical population consisted of all students of Islamic Azad University in the second semester of 2015-16 academic years as about 7,000 according to authorities. The sample included 350 people who were selected based on the sample size estimation table of the Morgan and Kerejcy populations (quoted in Hasan Zade, 2004) as stratified random sampling. The information gathering tool was the self-made questionnaire including 31 components according to the 5-points Likert scale

with 0.89 reliability based on Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation and dispersion coefficient and inferential statistics such as single-group Z test were used.

## RESULTS

The above table shows the status of the collected data about the effecting factors on the marriage age increase among students and its prioritization in their view. According to the information, all the studied criteria of Z score are higher than table Z at the confidence level of  $\alpha / 2$  ( $2.58$ ) = 0.01 and 0.99. According to the significance of the average difference with the average of the expected gained score (3) with 99% reliability, it can be concluded that 31 components of the studied components are acceptable and favorable. In accordance with the data, the highest average (4.35) was related to component 2 (the unemployment among young people) is located in the first position of the second with dispersion coefficient of 22.03 and after that, component 1 (the increase of higher levels of education among youth) is placed in the second position with the mean of 3.84 and dispersion coefficient of 22.09 and component 7 (the phenomenon of high cost of living for young people) is placed in the third position with the mean of 4.26 and dispersion coefficient of 23.71.

The lack of income for marriage among young people, the fear of the phenomenon of failure in life among youth, the expansion of multiplier culture and pride and aristocracy among youth, the excessive emphasis on the nobility of the parties, changing standards of marriage from easy to difficult, the phenomenon of rivalry to supply equipment for life and the difficulty of full agreement of the two sides families are in grades four to ten respectively.

According to the students of Islamic Azad University of Qom, military service of boys, gender equality among young people, the excessive emphasis on the age agreement of the couples, the emphasis is on having the vehicle before marriage among young people, reducing the desire for marriage, the emphasis of parents on choosing spouse among relatives and having elder single brother or sister as a barrier to marriage were known as the least important components from 25 to 31 respectively.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Today, the mission of universities in knowledge production, culture, influencing the public culture and providing services is considered as vital the tools of which are behavioral patterns and information including teachers, administrators, staff and the audience. The univer-

Table 1. Prioritizing the factors affecting the marriage age increase among students

		$\sum X$	$X$	n	S	Z	V	R
1	The society approach in the increase of higher education	883	3.84	230	0.88	23.1	22.9	2
2	The unemployment among youth	1001	4.35	230	0.96	29.3	22.03	1
3	The expansion of free relationships between boys and girls	808	3.54	228	1.23	12.83	34.66	21
4	The fear of providing appropriate equipments of competitive life	889	3.88	229	1.12	18.68	28.84	9
5	The parents' emphasis to choose spouse among relatives	632	2.76	229	1.1	3.58	39.85	30
6	Contractive form of dowries between families	769	3.39	227	1.13	11.85	33.32	17
7	The change of the criteria of easy marriage	820	3.66	224	1.06	16.47	28.82	8
8	The fear of the increasing costs of living	962	4.26	226	1.01	26.17	23.71	3
9	The military service of boys	785	3.46	227	1.26	11.46	36.41	24
10	The obsession in religious beliefs of both sides	689	3.06	225	1.06	7.96	34.58	20
11	Idealism and the belief to free life among youth	734	3.26	225	1.17	9.79	35.8	23
12	The emphasis on financial independence and the income of both sides	822	3.62	227	1.14	14.77	31.57	14
13	The lack of boy and girl proportion due to urbanization	711	3.13	227	1.19	8	37.99	28
14	The excessive obsession in choosing spouse	808	3.56	227	1.12	14.29	31.38	13
15	The difficulty of family agreement due to the complexity of social relationships	801	3.54	226	1.08	14.55	30.45	10
16	The lack of sufficient income of the youth	959	4.19	229	1.07	23.87	25.55	4
17	The lack of trust to the other party due to the increase of crimes and deviations	771	3.43	225	1.16	11.99	33.83	19
18	The excessive emphasis on the age agreement of the couples	740	3.29	225	1.23	9.63	37.36	26
19	The intensity of gender pride due to the increase of gender equality in the society	673	3.05	221	1.14	7.14	37.28	25
20	The lack of supportive laws and institutions for marriage	832	3.68	226	1.21	14.69	32.85	16
21	The lack of tendency to permanent marriage among youth	787	3.45	228	1.33	10.82	38.48	29
22	The cultural and value emphases of the society in the marriage of siblings in the order of birth	724	3.25	223	1.32	8.44	40.69	31
23	Attention to the occupation of the boy's or girl's parents	766	3.42	224	1.21	11.37	35.39	22
24	The decrease of trust to the opposite sex in the society	840	3.8	221	1.17	16.53	30.79	11
25	The excessive emphasis on having family nobility for the both parties	834	3.79	220	1.07	17.91	28.21	7
26	The excuses of parents for choosing spouse based on their will (not their youths)	759	3.4	223	1.14	11.81	33.56	18
27	The conflict in decision making between marriage and education	765	3.45	222	1.24	9.3	37.89	27
28	The emphasis on having house and car before the marriage	727	3.27	222	1.24	9.3	37.89	27
29	The emphasis of the society on traditional criteria for marriage	791	3.53	224	1.1	14.08	31.03	12
30	The fear of the failure in marital life	874	3.92	223	1.04	20.45	26.45	5
31	The expansion of aristocracy culture among youth	852	3.86	221	1.07	18.77	27.84	6

sities affect not only the person development but also the living methods of the people of a society through the emergence of internal efficiency (giving sufficient knowledge, insights and ability) and external efficiency (employment and quality of life) through the development of information, skills, character and development of creativity and thinking (Fazl Elahi Ghomeshi and Maleki Tavana, 2013).

They want to teach life methods to students as a soft and inflexible social system and affect the culture of the society. Attention to the marriage age increase

among students is also one of socio-cultural phenomena that universities are faced with as their mission in order to have a completely scientific and pure environment and free of intervening factors for learning the thinking method or learning the learning and problem solving method and creativity in the production of science as the most important capital of the countries in the current era scientific competition and influencing the public culture. The results of the present study with the aim of the identification and prioritization of the effective factors on the marriage age increase among

students of Islamshahr Islamic Azad University showed that: unemployment, the increase of the education level the increase of the living costs are of the most important and effective factors of the marriage age increase among university students respectively.

These results are partly consistent with the research results of Habibpoorgetabi and Ghaffari (2011), Zarabi and Mostafavi (2011), Kazemipour (2009), Forodastan et al (2008), Majduddin (2007), Nikmanesh and Kazemi (2006), Kazemipour (2004) and Mahmoudian (2004) in terms of economic factors and higher education and are congruent with the research results of Mirsondosi and Mohammadi Qale Sefidi (2011) and Farahani Khalajabadi et al (2011) concerning the impact of cultural factors including the pre-marital relationships between girls and boys. The major reason seems to be mostly the environmental conditions prevailing in the holy city of Qom. Also, the components of the lack of income for marriage, the phenomenon of fear of failure in life among youth, the expansion of multiplier culture and pride and aristocracy among youth, the excessive emphasis on the nobility of the parties, changing standards of marriage from easy to difficult, the phenomenon of rivalry to supply equipment for life and the difficulty of full agreement of the two sides families are in grades four to ten respectively.

The other effective factors on the marriage age increase from 10 to 20 priorities are: the decrease of trust to the opposite sex in the society, the emphasis of the society on traditional criteria for marriage, the excessive obsession in choosing spouse, the emphasis on financial independence and the income of both sides, the conflict in decision making between marriage and education, the lack of supportive laws and institutions for marriage, contractive form of dowries between families, the excuses of parents for choosing spouse based on their will (not their youths), and the lack of trust to the other party due to the increase of crimes and moral deviations.

In contrast the following components have the least importance among youth: the obsession in religious beliefs of both sides, the expansion of free relationships between boys and girls, attention to the occupation of the boy's or girl's parents, idealism and the belief to free life among youth, the military service of boys, the intensity of gender pride due to the increase of gender equality in the society, the excessive emphasis on the age agreement of the couples, the emphasis on having house and car before the marriage, the lack of boy and girl proportion due to urbanization, the lack of tendency to permanent marriage among youth, the parents' emphasis to choose spouse among relatives and the cultural and value emphases of the society in the marriage of siblings in the order of birth. This shows a kind of the prior-

ity of economic criteria compared to cultural and social and especially moral issues and social values and sometimes, some anti value issues are made more important in social discussions. The results can reveal the fact that the cultural and social values derived from dominant philosophy are more important among students despite the increasing effects of economic factors on marriage.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to have a healthy, happy and far from intellectual and cultural pollutions and the adherence to Islamic traditions and rules at universities, it is suggested to conduct a large research with precise components for planning and the prerequisites of easy marriage of students as one of the major concerns of the authorities in Supreme Leader of Iran institution.
2. Due to the consolidation of Islamic culture and values through planning based on basic knowledge, the values and symbols of mental, physical, intellectual and cultural health of students should be retained and the background for the production of more knowledge should be provided.

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