

## *Relationship between Gender Preference, Birth Interval and Sex Composition on Fertility Behavior*

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### *Abstract*

**Background & aim:** In past few decades, the reduction of fertility rate in the country is a major concern for planners and population politicians. Therefore, the factors affecting fertility behavior should be understood. This study aimed to determine the relationship between gender preferences, birth interval and sex composition on fertility behavior of females referring to health care centers in Torbat Heydariyeh.

**Methods:** This is a descriptive/cross-sectional study conducted on 241 women in childbearing age in Torbat Heydariyeh in 2015. Data collection tools were Demographic information and fertility history Forms. Data were analyzed using SPSS 16; descriptive and analytical statistics.

**Results:** Based on the results, there was significant association between fertility intention and number and sex composition of previous children and ideal sex composition of children ( $p < 0.05$ ) which means that, fertility intention decreases 0.25, 0.13, 0.15 times in women with more children, having children with both sexes and ideal sex composition with one or two boys, respectively ( $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, there was a significant difference in the mean interval between marriage and first birth and the average interval between the first and second child according to the number of children ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** According to the relation of the time interval of marriage and birth time of the first child, long interval between two births and different composition of children with fertility reduction and also lack of interest in childbearing, interventions and policies should be implemented to the direction of population growth.

**Keywords:** Gender preference, sex composition, birth interval, fertility intention, fertility rate