

Professor Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi

Professor Mohammad Jalal Abbasi-Shavazi is a social sciences academician from Iran. After completing his BA in Social Sciences (Esfahan University, Iran, 1987), he obtained a MA in Demography from the University of Tehran (1991), and a PhD in Demography at the Research School of Social Sciences of the Australian National University (ANU) in 1998. His professional career has combined teaching, conducting demographic research and providing advisory and policy services. His focus of attention has been population and development, reproductive health and fertility, family change, immigration, and refugees. He has been Chairman of the Division of Population Research at the University of Tehran since 2001.

As a social sciences researcher, Prof. Abbasi-Shavazi has contributed to the understanding of the dynamics of fertility decline in Iran, demonstrating that improving the education and status of women, and particularly, facilitating their access to reproductive health services has facilitated the adoption of smaller family size ideals. He has also conducted research on the situation of Afghan refugees in Iran, and is the Chair of the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Refugees. Furthermore, he has played a major role in training and guiding a new generation of demographers in Iran.

Prof. Abbasi-Shavazi has been instrumental in establishing and consolidating population institutions at the national and international level. In this capacity, he has served as member of numerous professional and advisory boards of prestigious population journals and professional association; he was the leading figure in the creation of the Asian Population Association and is now its President. Since 2007, he has served as a member Board of Trustees of the ICDDR,B. In 1993 he was nationally recognized after he co-authored a textbook on population and family planning that became the basic manual used by the Iran Ministry of Education. He prepared the Population Assessment Report for Iran in 2009 in collaboration with the Iran Ministry of Health and UNFPA.

Prof. Abbasi-Shavazi has had long research collaborations with the ANU and is now Future Fellow at the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute. His decade-long research collaboration with the ANU colleagues on Iran's sharp fertility decline culminated in a Springer book titled *The Fertility Transition in Iran: Revolution and Reproduction* that won the 2011 World Prize for the Book of the Year of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since 2006, Prof. Abbasi-Shavazi has been an active member of the Developmental Idealism Study Group, at the University of Michigan. The Group has been studying values and beliefs related to family and demographic behaviour in nearly 20 countries; the results of this interdisciplinary subject has demonstrated that gender equality, marrying later, and achieving a lower fertility are both causes and consequences of socio-economic development. Prof. Abbasi-Shavazi has promoted the view that social, economic and cultural differences among countries are more important than religion as explanations of fertility differentials and he has been a bridge between the world's most outstanding demographers and Iranian scholars and programme managers to study the rapid Iranian fertility decline.