The Y Generation Myth: Perceptions of Young Israelis toward Gender and Family Life

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Introduction

Academic writing on what is known as Generation Y, born after 1980-1994 (Smith, 2010) has focused on major changes in these young people's social behaviors and perceptions. These include, among others, marriage behavior, gender role attitudes, work and political engagements (Furlong, 2009). However, this rich research corpus has concentrated mainly on Western societies (Zinamon, 2012). Gen Y is also regarded, by some, as emerging adults (Tanner & Arnett, 2015), a prolonged adolescence phase spanning between the ages 18-29 (Tanner & Arnett, 2015)[1].

The question that arises vis-à-vis this scholarship is how to locate non-European and non-Anglo-American societies in that matter. Israel, a capitalist country located in the Middle-East, is part of the OECD. However, Israeli society is much more family oriented, with high marital rates, relatively low divorce rates and high fertility rates – all these are opposites of ruling trends in most Western countries (Fogiel-Bijaoui , 2002; OECD, 2017). The aim of this study is to examine Israeli Generation Y's perceptions regarding gender roles and family life while comparing it not only with other countries but also with their preceding generation – Generation X. Emphasis will be given to questions of maternal employment, gender roles between spouses and the centrality of marriage. Concentrating on Israeli society will enable us to expose the contradictory and complex currents (Bhul & Lanz, 2007) that affect the lives of young people around the globe in the 21st century.

[1] Arnett (2015) explains that this life stage spans from 18-29, but regards the heart of this period as 18-25.

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Between Gen Y and Emerging Adulthood: Conceptual Connectedness

The question of generations has long been an interest of sociological, economic and labor studies (Eisner, 2005). It was Mannheim (1952) who argued that a series of adjacent birth cohorts could be called a 'generation' if, during the formative years (childhood and adolescence), they encountered sufficiently large-scale social and economic change (i.e. 'dynamic destabilization') to develop a shared understanding of their cohorts' common destiny. More recently, Eyerman & Turner (1998) defined a generation as birth cohorts with a collective memory emerging from a highly unique shared 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1990) and culture.

In recent years there has been much debate and writing in social studies about generations, especially about what is known as Generation Y, regarding it as a cohort in Mannheim terms (Eisner, 2005). Generation Y, also known as the millennials, are commonly regarded as people who were born after 1980 (1981-1994) and came to age in the new millennium (Smith, 2010). The largest generation in American labor force today (Dimock, 2019), Generation Y is thought to be different in many ways than the generations before it. Gen Y's are regarded as having grown up in an era characterized by globalization, rapid technological advancement and increasing diversity (Ng & Burke, 2006). Much of Gen Y was raised in a time of economic expansion and prosperity. But Gen Y came of age in an era of economic uncertainty and violence. Though it is the most affluent generation, they grew up during the time of the global 2008 economic crisis and global terror post the 9/11 attacks. Studies focusing on American Gen Y population claim that it made Gen Y to be a generation which has seen more at an earlier age than prior generations (Eisner, 2005: 6).

Being, as was noted above, the largest generation in contemporary global workforce, there has also been much debate about this generation's work values and attitudes. Some regard Generation Y workers as lazy and unstable (Almog & Almog, 2016), while others insist that they are affluent, educated, and ethnically diverse. They are viewed as possessing a new focus on teamwork, achievement, modesty and good conduct (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Gen Y is also regarded as wanting intellectual challenge, holding a strong need to succeed and seeking

those who will further its professional development. Meeting personal goals is likely to matter to Gen Y, as is performing meaningful work that betters the world (Eisner, 2005: 6).

Side by side with academic focus on Generation Y in the labor force and in the precarious and unstable job market, there has also been much attention given to changing values towards gender and family life (McDermott, Schwartz, & Trevathan–Minus, 2011; O'Neil, Egan, Owen, & Murry, 1993; White, 2006). Findings of various studies have suggested that Generation Y, in the US and Western Europe, are highly likely to question their stereotypical gender roles, a process which weakens dichotomic conceptions regarding women's role in raising a family and taking care of the 'house' and men's social constructed roles in the public, economic sphere (Mcdermouth & Shwartz, 2013). However, much of these studies have focused on Western, European and Anglo-American societies (Zinamon, 2012; Arnett, 2015).

This specific focus might also be a result of the Emerging Adulthood developmental life stage which was introduced by Geoffrey Arnett (2000) in the time span when the millennials were entering adulthood. The period of emerging adulthood is, according to Arnett, distinct from adolescence and young adulthood (Arnett, 2006a) in that new developmental tasks have to be undertaken. Emerging adults engage in the search for an identity in different domains before they settle into adult roles (traditionally defined as marriage, parenthood, and full-time work). The five defining characteristics and distinguishing principal features are identity exploration processes in the areas of love, work and worldviews, instability, being self-focused, feeling somewhere in between, and looking forward to and experiencing various future possibilities in life (Arnett, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007a). Arnett (2000) emphasized emerging adulthood as a "period that exists only in cultures that postpone the entry into adult roles and responsibilities until well past the late teens" (Ibid. 478). According to Arnett (2006a), demographic changes in industrialized countries in the past half century, such as increased duration of education (more young people in industrialized countries enroll and stay in school), higher age at marriage, and delayed parenthood with a higher age at first childbirth, have resulted in "a prolonged period of independent role exploration during the late teens and twenties" (Arnett, 2000, p. 469). Taking the specific time in history, Arnett has actually written about Generation Y in the United States (Zinamon, 2012). However, Arnett's writings, which

have established a perceived correlation between a generation (Gen Y) and a new developmental stage of life, has influenced academic writing in other Western and European societies making the distinction between Generation Y and emerging adults difficult.

The most common critique of the theory of emerging adulthood is that it does not apply broadly to young people in the age period from the late teens through the 20s (e.g., Heinz, 2009; Hendry & Kloep, 2007; Reitzle,2006; Schoon, 2006; Silva, 2013; for a book-length debate on this topic, see Arnett, Kloep, Hendry, & Tanner, 2011). Specifically, say these critics, it applies to the middle-class and upper middle–class young people who go to universities and colleges and have enough financial support from parents to experience personal freedom and leisure during these years. It is less applicable for those who belong to the working class or poor who have far fewer options. Indeed, much of the studies conducted on Generation Y as a cohort which is characterized by the life phase of emerging adulthood concentrated on college and university students in Europe and the United States (Arnett, 2015). However it was found that the attributes associated with emerging adulthood vary across groups based on ethnicity, race, gender and class (Hendry & Kloep, 2010). The focus of future research, as Arnett himself suggests, should be on investigating the interdependent processes and mechanisms (of which societal transformation is only one) that are involved in human change in the transitions to adulthood.

Taking all this under consideration, it is our aim to focus on Israel as a ground-breaking case study for the comparison between generations. Specifically, Generation Y and the generation that preceded it, Generation X. As many studies have shown, there are differences between these two generations regarding work values, family and gender roles (Marcell et al., 2011; McDermott et al., 2011; O'Neil et al., 1993; Schwartz et al., 2004). However, except for a few exceptions (Kwon & Roy, 2007), there is a lack of engagement with differences between these two generations in non-Western, non-Anglo-American societies (Arnett, 2015).

In what follows we will first explore the differences and similarities which different studies, conducted mainly in the US and European contexts, have indicated between

Generation X and Generation Y. Afterwards we will focus on the uniqueness of the Israeli case study, which will lead to our research quarries.

Between Generation X and Y: Gender roles and family life perceptions

Generation X was born between 1965–1980 and was once called the Baby Bust (Sue & Meahger, 2017). Gen X is the child of the workaholic Baby Boomer. Socialized in a downsizing work world where technology was booming, Gen X is likely to be more self-reliant and individualistic than their parents. It is skeptical but loves freedom (Francis-Smith, 2004). Gen Y was already socialized in a digital world. Moreover, Gen Y, especially in Western industrial countries is constantly connected to the world through digital platforms in a way which is thought to change its values and norms profoundly (Eisner, 2005).

Many studies have focused on comparisons between these generations, a lot of them concentrating on their attributes as workers and their work values (Eisner, 2005, Arnett, 2015). Nevertheless, questions of gender, intimacy, family life and gender-roles in the family have been of interest to many scholars. Findings of these studies varrie between assuming major differences in gender role perceptions between generations to showing some persistants of stereotypical gender roles (Perrone, Wright & Jackson, 2009).

Most Western Anglo-American scholars agree that gender roles in family and work domains are in a state of flux and that there are evident differences between generations. The traditional view of the male as breadwinner and the female homemaker has shifted over time (Lease, 2003), according to this scholarship. Changes in social norms have resulted in men and women placing a high value on both work and family roles (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005). This is also believed to be a result of the capitalist need of two breadwinners in a household (Shu & Meahger, 2017). For example, the conservative swing towards egalitarian notions of women's work in the labor market, which was noted in 1994–2004 in the United States, correlates with the rise of overwork, as the proportion of men who overwork soared during this period when traditional gender roles were reinforced (Shu & Meahger, 2017). In other words, when men work more than women, attitudes towards gender roles tend to regress into traditional stereotypes of women as house-based and children care-takers. .

Furthermore, research with Gen Y, in what is regarded the faze of emerging adulthood, and adolescents, generally suggests that women still tend to be more committed to family than men are (though this gap in family commitment may be declining). In addition, Gen Y emerging adult men and women do not seem to think they need to trade off between work and family commitments (i.e., increased work commitment does not seem to be related to decreased family commitment, or vice versa). It may be that work commitment levels remain equal only until adult marital, parental, or work roles actually must be fulfilled; the gender gap in family commitment may also widen at this point (Friedman & Weissbrod, 2005: 320).

Accordingly, recent studies have shown that women and men still differ in how they perceive work and family (Sue & Meahger, 2017). These studies suggest that taking family-commitment decisions is multi-layered and depends on many variables and not merely on one belonging to a generation or a cohort (Friedman & Weissbrod, 2005). Moreover, according to another recent study, young adults[2], belonging to Generation Y, who have experienced higher divorce rates during their childhood and adolescence, still regard marriage as something of value and expect to get married in the future (Aorcho, 2019). Besides, recent studies in Western-European countries and non Western-European, non-Anglo-American countries, have shown that even in a house where women are the main breadwinner, they are still expected to fulfill their nurturing mothering traditional roles (Geer & Helwig, 2012).

These studies, as important as they are, indicate that not enough research has been dedicated to an empirical comparison between Gen Y and Gen X. Most of the studies assume change or stagnation after concentrating empirically on Generation Y, but these assumptions are rarely compared to Gen X (Sue & Meahger, 2017). Furthermore, as indicated earlier, most studies delve into researching Western, Anglo-American societies (Zinamon, 2012).

One of the exceptional studies regarding that matter is a study conducted in Turkey, a culture which in many ways resembles Israel in its conservative orientation. The study had not dealt directly with family perceptions and gender-roles in a household, but showed that

[2] The mining of the term 'young adults' is controversial. We defined it by the ages of 18-29, to serve analytic motives.

Generation Y males started romantic intimacy more easily than their female counterparts. This may be interoperated as a result of traditional male-female relationship and gender stereotyped common in more collectivist, religious and traditional cultures (Erlimaz & Atak, 2011), such as Turkey and Israel.

Summing up, it is our wish to further research into the question of gender-roles and family life perceptions of Generation Y in a Middle-Eastern, collectivist countries such as Israel (Zinamon, 2012). Furthermore, our study will not only focus on Gen Y but seeks to make an empirical contribution by comparing Generation Y to Generation X in Israel. Moreover, our study will compare the Israeli case to other countries and will broaden the debate about gender and generational change outside of the Western, Anglo-American microcosmus. Furthermore, in our study we separate between Gen Y and the emerging adulthood concept, because we are studying this life time period (18-29) in these two different generations. Before presenting our case study, questions and variables, we will shortly survey the Israeli case and its characteristics.

The Israeli Case Study

Israel is a unique and conflict driven country located in the Middle-East. It has a flourishing capitalist economy on the one side, but an ethnocratic democracy on the other side (Shterenshis, 2019). Israeli society contains within it many different groups - religious, secular, Palestinan-citizens, Jewish-citizens and others. Moreover, Israel has a complex stratification system characterized by inequality on the basis of nationality (Jews vs. Arabs), ethnicity (Ashkenazi Jews vs. Mizrahi Jews) and gender (Cohen, 2006; Swirski, Konor-Attias & Ophir, 2014). Moreover, there exists also an immense inequality between secular and religious-national Jews to the ultra-Orthodox society. Furthermore, there are cultural gaps side by side with economic gaps between each group. As a matter of fact, the group that is most similar in its socio-economic characteristics and liberal orientation to young people in the West, known as Generation Y and emerging adults, is the Ashkenazi-secular group (Zinamon, 2012).

Israel, in many ways, is a collectivist society. Individualism versus collectivism compares the types of relationships societies value, with individualistic cultures valuing independence and

collectivistic cultures valuing interdependence (Perrone-McGovern, Wright, Howell & Barnum, 2014, 24). Israel, which the majority of scholars consider as a family-centered society (Fogiel-Bijaoui 2002; Hashiloni-Dolev 2018; Izraeli 1988), can be defined as showing collectivist attributes side by side with more liberal ones. Collectivist cultures tend to be more traditional regarding gender and gender-roles (Perrone-McGovern, Wright, Howell and Barnum, 2014).

Regarding transition to adulthood, in the so called emerging adulthood faze of 18- 29 (Arnett, 2015), Israel seems to resemble the Meditiranian Model (Scabini, 2000) which is characterized by a prolonged residence with parents with relatively younger marital ages and conservative attitudes towards gender-roles (Zinamon, 2012). At the same time, age at first marriage and age of entering into motherhood has increased in the last two decades, especially among Israeli-Jews (Central Bureau Of Statistics, 2019; Okun, 2013). As indicated earlier, Ashkenazi-secular Israelis resemble in these matters their Western, Anglo-American counterparts, and exhibit a life which resembles the individualistic model (Perrone-McGovern, Wright, Howell & Barnum, 2014). However, most Jewish Israeli-citizens between the ages of 18-21, spend between a year and a half to three years serving a mandatory army time. This time period is in the stage which Arnett define as most important in the emerging adulthood faze (Arnett, 2015). We believe that spending time in a conservative totalitaristic organization, which is characterized by militaristic and chauvinist values (Shafran-Gittleman, 2018), may serve in the indoctrination of traditional and collectivist worldview regarding gender and gender-roles.

Moreover, one of the major characteristics of Israeli society is the centrality of motherhood and of women's role as mothers (Fogel-Bijaoui, 2002; Izraeli, 1988). The importance that Israeli culture attaches to family life in general and childbirth in particular goes hand in hand with its pronatalist policy, which, since the state’s establishment, has encouraged (mainly Jewish) women to have many children (Berkovitch, 1997).The centrality of motherhood is evident throughout class, ethnicity and nationality. Notwithstanding, the Israeli population, especially the Jewish sector, is characterized by relatively high labor force participation rates among women in general and mothers in particular, and a high percentage of women who are

in full-time employment (Mandel & Birgir, 2016). As such, most couples in Israel are dual-earners (Stier, 2010). For that reason, we find it extremely important to compare attitudes between generations not only in regard of gender roles in the family, but also in regard of mothers' employment.

Taking all the above into consideration, the aim of this study is to compare attitudes towards mother's employment, gender roles and familism, between the X and Y generations in Israel, focusing on the time when they were in the stage which Arnett calles 'emerging adults' (ages 18-29). Furthermore, we will compare the Gen Y Israeli age group to their counterparts in other countries.

Methodology

Data source and sample

The study is based on the 1994, 2002 and 2012 waves of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) module on Family and Gender Roles (http://www.issp.org). The ISSP is a cross-national collaborative programme that conducts annual surveys on diverse topics. The Family and Gender Roles modules conducted include attitude toward employment of mothers; role distribution of men and women in occupation and household; attitudes towards marriage, cohabitation, and divorce; household division of labour, and more. For the comparison between countries we used the 2012 module, that was conducted in 41 countries (n=10,768).

In order to examine the attitudes of the age which is termed in the literature as emerging adults, or young adults (Arnett, 2015), the sample included individuals who were aged 18-29 at the time of the survey: 363 from 1994 wave, 380 from the 2002 wave and 279 from 2012 wave. The total number of individuals in our Israeli sample is 1022, 48.6% men and 51.4% women. When comparing Israeli Y generation to this generation in other countries, the total sample amount to 10,768 individuals ages 18-29 at 2012, 47.6%men and 52.4% women.

Variables

Dependent variables

The aims of this study are to compare attitudes towards mother's employment, gender roles and familism, between the X and Y generations young adults in Israel, as well as to compare the Y young adults in Israel to this generation in other countries. In order to answer our comparison queries, we included three sets of dependent variables in the analysis. In choosing questions from the ISSP we were guided by previous research (Pepin & Cotter, 2018; Shu and Meagher, 2017) and we restricted the analysis to questions that appear in all 3 waves of the ISSP "Family and Gender Role" module.

To estimate attitudes about mothers' employment, which measures beliefs about the effects of mothers' labor force participation on children (Pepin & Cotter, 2018), we used three questions following previous studies (Pepin & Cotter, 2018; Shu & Meagher, 2017). The three items ask if respondents agree or disagree with the following statements, on a 1-5 scale: 1. "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work." 2. "A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works." 3."All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. Where necessary, we recorded the scale so that higher values (5) were associated with high levels of support for maternal employment. We construct a scale with these three items by using the mean score (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.60$, in 2012 Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.67$ for all countries),

To measure perceptions towards gender roles in families we use two questions about the division of labor between spouses. Respondents were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed, on a 1-5 scale, with the following two statements: 1. "Both the man and the woman should contribute to the household income". 2. "A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family". Where necessary, we recorded the scale so that higher values (5) were associated with egalitarian attitudes. We examine each question separately because of low value of Cronbach's α (=0.42).

In order to measure perceptions toward families, we use four questions about the ligitination of several family forms, including "new", post-nuclear ones. Respondents were asked to state to what extent they agreed or disagreed, on a 1-5 scale, with the following three statements: 1. "Married people are generally happier than unmarried people." 2. "It is all right

for a couple to live together without intending to get married." 3. "Divorce is usually the best solution when a couple can't seem to work out their marriage problems." 4. "One parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together.". Where necessary, we recorded the scale so that higher values (5) were associated with high legitimation to post-nuclear family lifestyle. We examine each question separately because of the low value of Cronbach's α (=0.52).

Our main independent variable is the cohort. In keeping with previous studies (Shu and Meagher, 2017), and given that the study is focused on young adults (ages 18-29) and is based on surveys from 1994 onward, our cohort variable compares between two generations: individuals that were born between 1966 and 1980 - The X Generation (the reference group in the analysis) and individuals that were born between 1980 and 1995 - The Y Generation - the Millennial Generation.

We include socio demographic variables that have been linked to gender and family life attitudes in previous research (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Shu and Meagher, 2017). We also include respondents' gender (1=women, 0=men), age (in years), educational attainment, distinguishing between university education (=1) and less than university education (=0). Marital status was measured by a dichotomous variable which indicates whether the individual lives in a couple (=1) or not (=0). Employment status was measured by a dichotomous variable captures between those who work (=0) and those who do not work for pay (=1). Religiosity is measured by a 1-5 scale denoting the level of religiosity (5=secular). Descriptive statistics of the research variables in each cohort and in the total sample are presented in Table 1.

Analytical strategy

In order to compare attitudes between the two generations in Israeli society, we first present some cohort's mean tested comparisons regarding the three dependent variables in question. We then will present a cross country comparisons of generation Y regarding the three dependent variables. Last, we will use OLS regression model in order to examine cohort differences in attitudes among Israelis, beyond socio demographic characteristics. Analyses were performed using SPSS v25.

Findings

Table 1. Descriptive statistics (menas, S.D. or %) of the research variables by cohorts, among Israelis aged 18-29

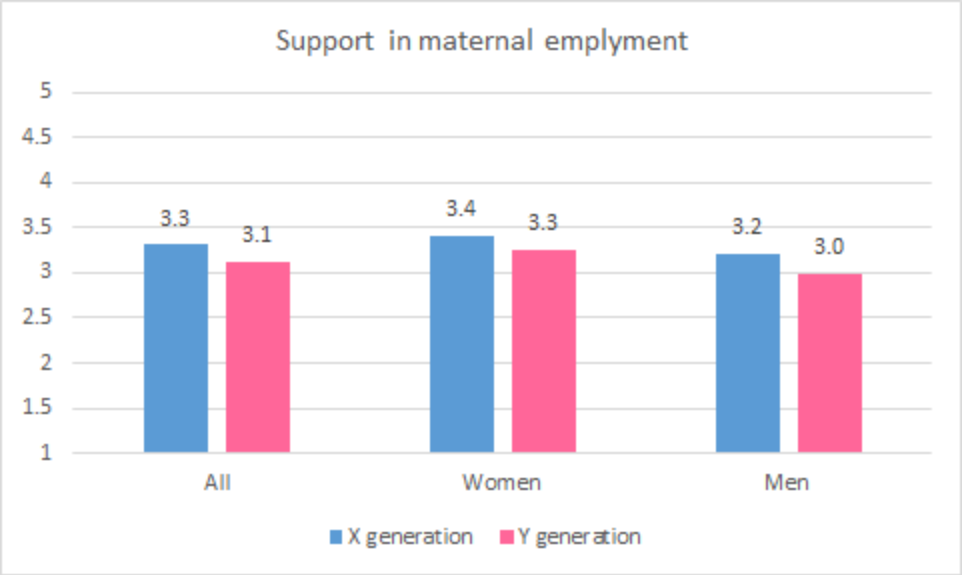
Variable	**X 1966-1980**	**Y 1980-1995**	**Total sample**
Gender			
Women	52.3	49.4	51.3
Men	47.7	50.6	48.7
Education			
University education	17.3*	11.0	15.0
Less than university education	82.8*	89.0	85.0
Work status			
In the labor force	64.1	60.1	63.0
Not in Labour Force	35.9	39.9	37.0
Marital status			
Married or living together	44.0*	23.5	36.8
Un-partnered	56.0*	76.5	63.2
Age	24.6 (2.9)*	22.9 (3.6)	24.0 (3.3)
Religiosity (on 1- 4 scale, 4- secular)	3.48 (0.98)*	2.94 (0.99)	3.28 (0.99)
N	663	359	1022

* $p < 0.05$, Differences between the two generations are statistically significant.

Cohort differences among Israeli young adults

We begin by presenting the distribution of attitudes towards maternal employment, gender roles within families and family life by generation and gender. Figure 1 presents averages on index measuring attitudes towards maternal employment by generations and gender, on a range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), a high value denotes support of maternal employment. As can be seen in the figure, although young adults from both generations show a medium support for maternal employment (around 3), young adults from Generation X show a statistically significant higher support compared to young adults from Generation Y (3.3 and 3.1, accordingly). In addition, in each generation women reported higher support for maternal employment than did men.

Figure 1. Attitudes towards mother's employment by cohort among Israeli aged 18-29

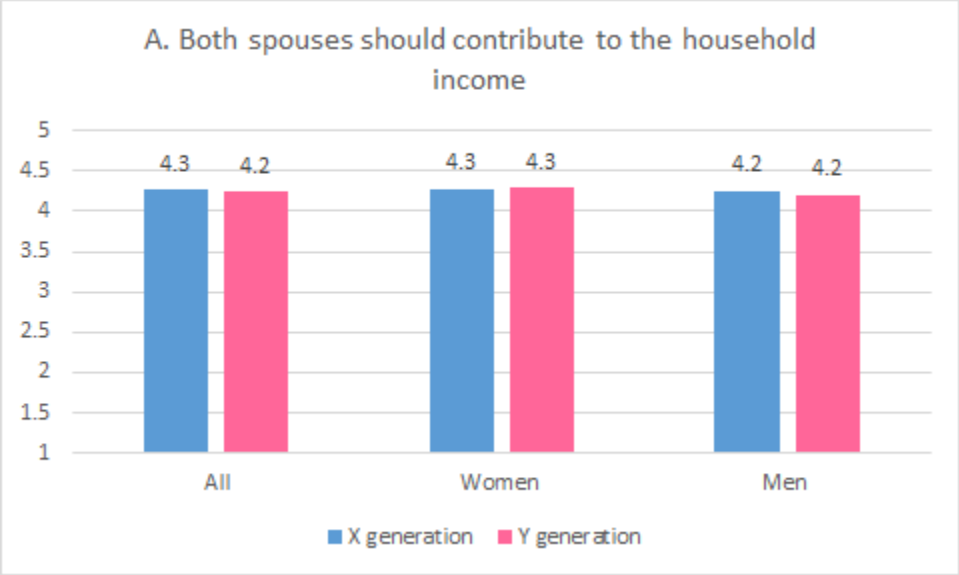


1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

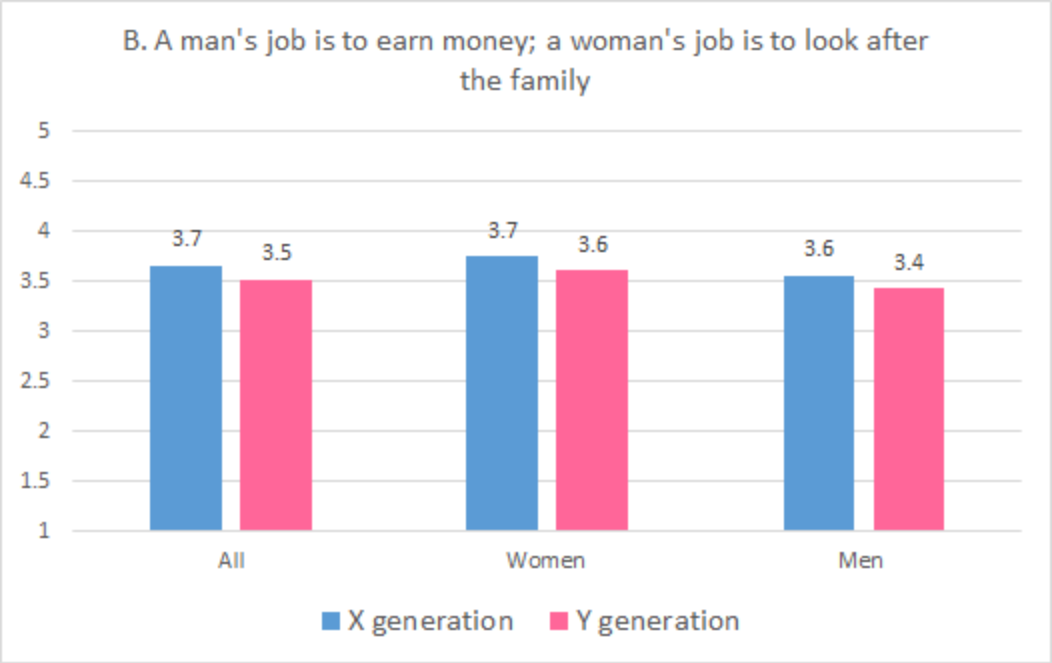
Note: Differences between the two generations and in each generation between the two genders, as well between women from gen X and men from Gen Y are statistically significant by Scheffe test ($p<0.05$).

Looking on attitudes towards gender roles between couples reveal some differing patterns. First, examining the level of support in dual earner family model ("both spouses should contribute to the household income"), we find a high support for this model, regardless of generation or gender: young adults from both genders and generations agree with the statement that both spouses should contribute to the household income (average of 4.2 for both generations). About the same pattern unfolds when comparing the level of support for the male breadwinner-women career mode across genders and generations. Though young adults from Generation X show somehow less support in this model than young adults from the Millennials (3.7 and 3.5, accordingly), these differences are not statistically significant. The exception is women from the Gen X, who report less support for this family model compared with men from the Gen Y (3.8 and 3.4, respectively). Overall, young adults from both generations report high level of support for a family model in which both spouses contribute to the household's earnings, corresponding to the changes that have been occurred in the prevalence of this model among Israeli couples in the last 25 years, known as "the end of the breadwinner model" (Stier, 2010).

Figure 2. Attitudes towards family's gender roles by cohort among Israeli aged 18-29



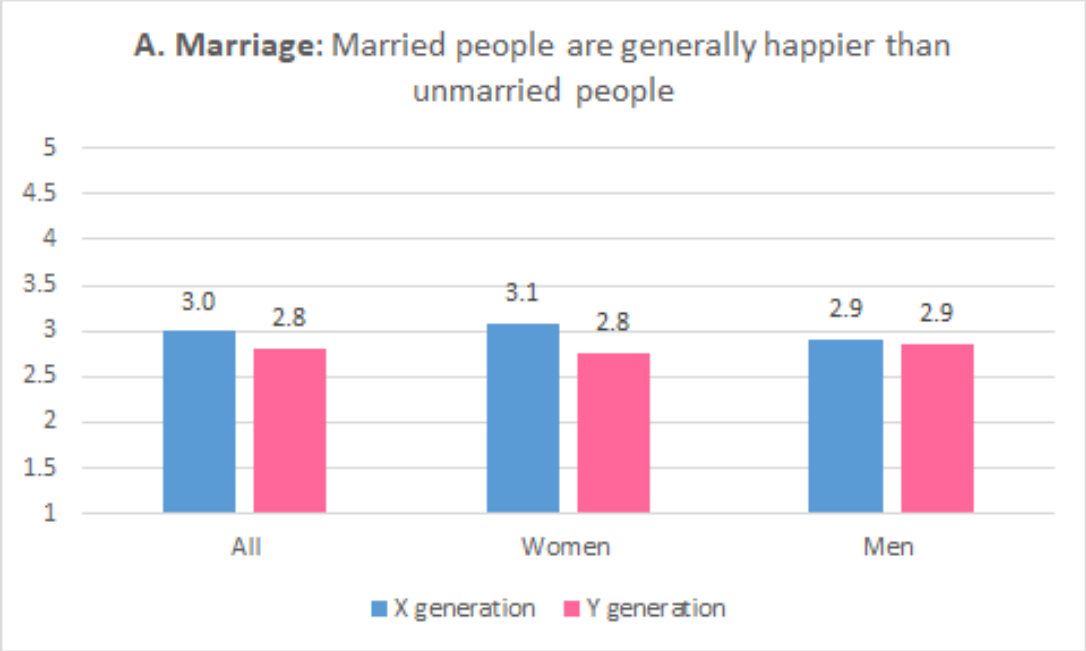
1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.



1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree.

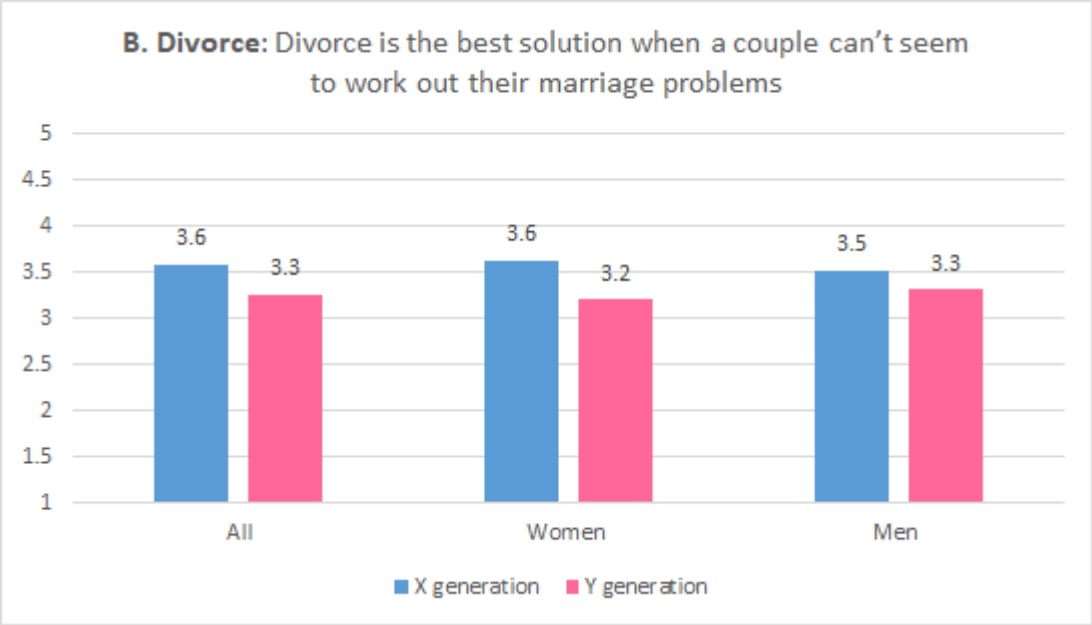
Note: Differences between women from Gex X and men from Gen Y are statistically significant by Scheffe test ($p<0.05$).

Figure 3. Attitudes towards familism by cohort



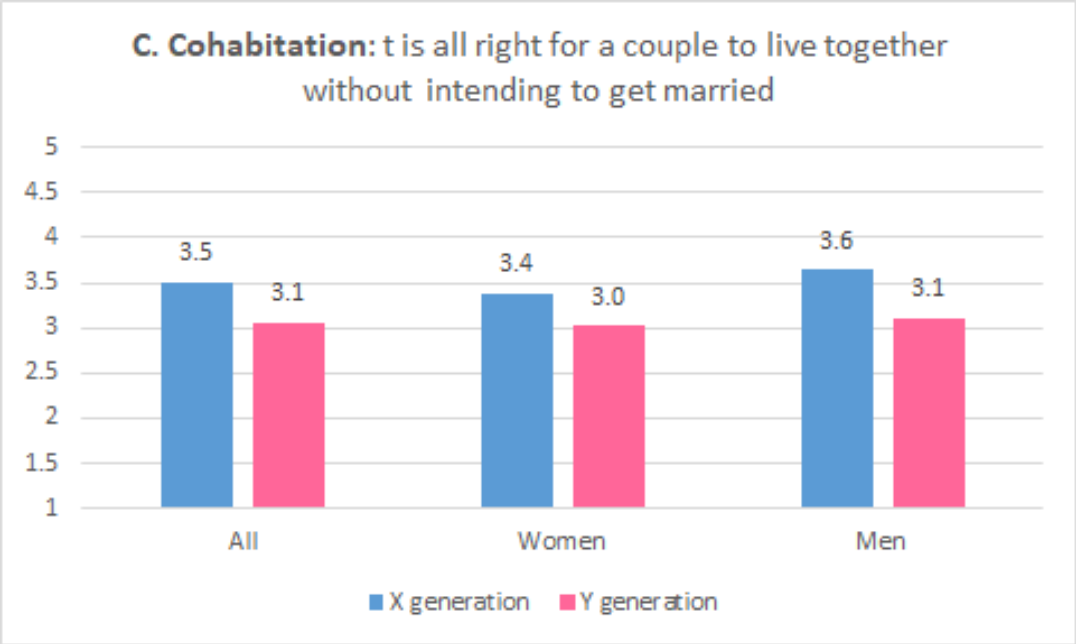
1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree.

Note: Differences between women from Gen X and Gen Ys are statistically significant by Scheffe test ($p<0.05$).



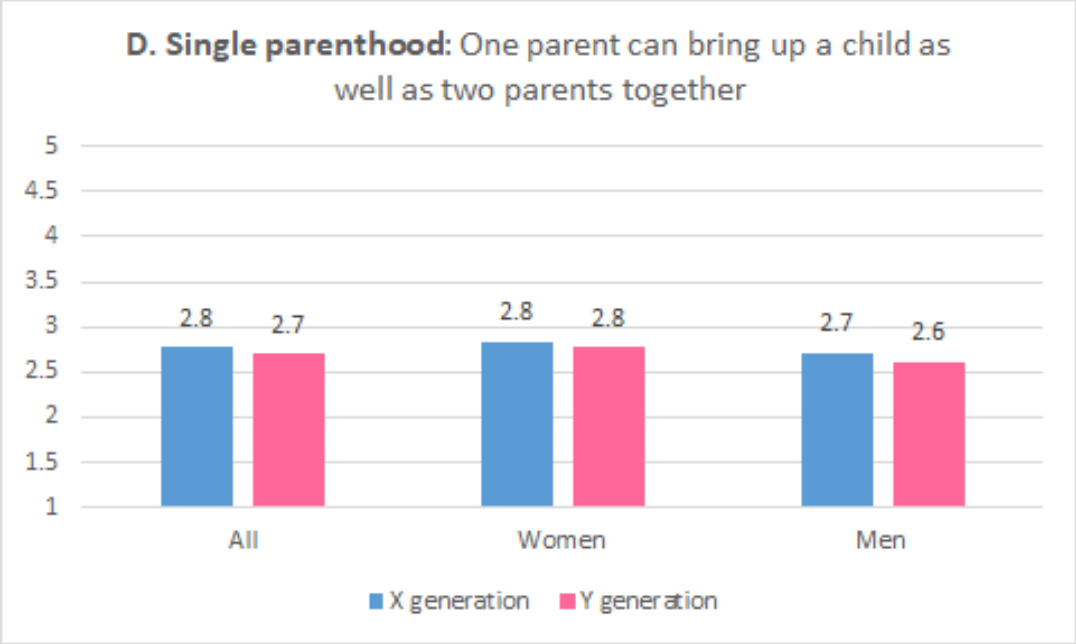
1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

Note: Differences between the two generations, and those between women from Gen X and men and women from Gen Y, and men from gen X and women from Gen Y are statistically significant by Scheffe test ($p<0.05$).



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

Note: Differences between generations in the total sample as well as among each gender are statistically significant by Scheffe test ($p<0.05$). The same for the differences between men from Gen X and women from the Y generation.



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

We next examine generations' differences in the level of legitimation/support for what is defined in the literature as "postmodern" or "post-nuclear" family patterns vrs. marriage: divorce, cohabitation and single-parenthood (Figure 3, panels, A, B, A and D, respectively). We first look at a general support for marriage by the level of agreement with the statement that "married people are generally happier than unmarried people" (Panel A). We find that young adults from the Gen X report significantly less support in marriage than the Millennials (3 and 2.8, respectively). Looking at these generational differences across gender, we find that they are significant only among women (3.1 and 2.8, respectively). Regarding legitimation to divorce (Panel b in Figure 3), we find generational significant differences, regardless of gender, as young adults from the Gen X show higher support for divorce when a couple can't seem to work out their marriage problems compared with the Millennials (3.6 and 3.3, respectively). In addition, the differences between men Gen X (3.5) and women from Gen Y (3.2) were also significant.

The same patterns unfold while examining legitimation to cohabitation (Panel C). Here again, in both genders, young adults from Gen X report higher level of agreement with the statement that "it is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married",

compare with the Millennials (3.5 and 3.1m respectively). In accordance, the differences between men from Gen X (3.6) and women from Gen Y(3.0) were also significant.

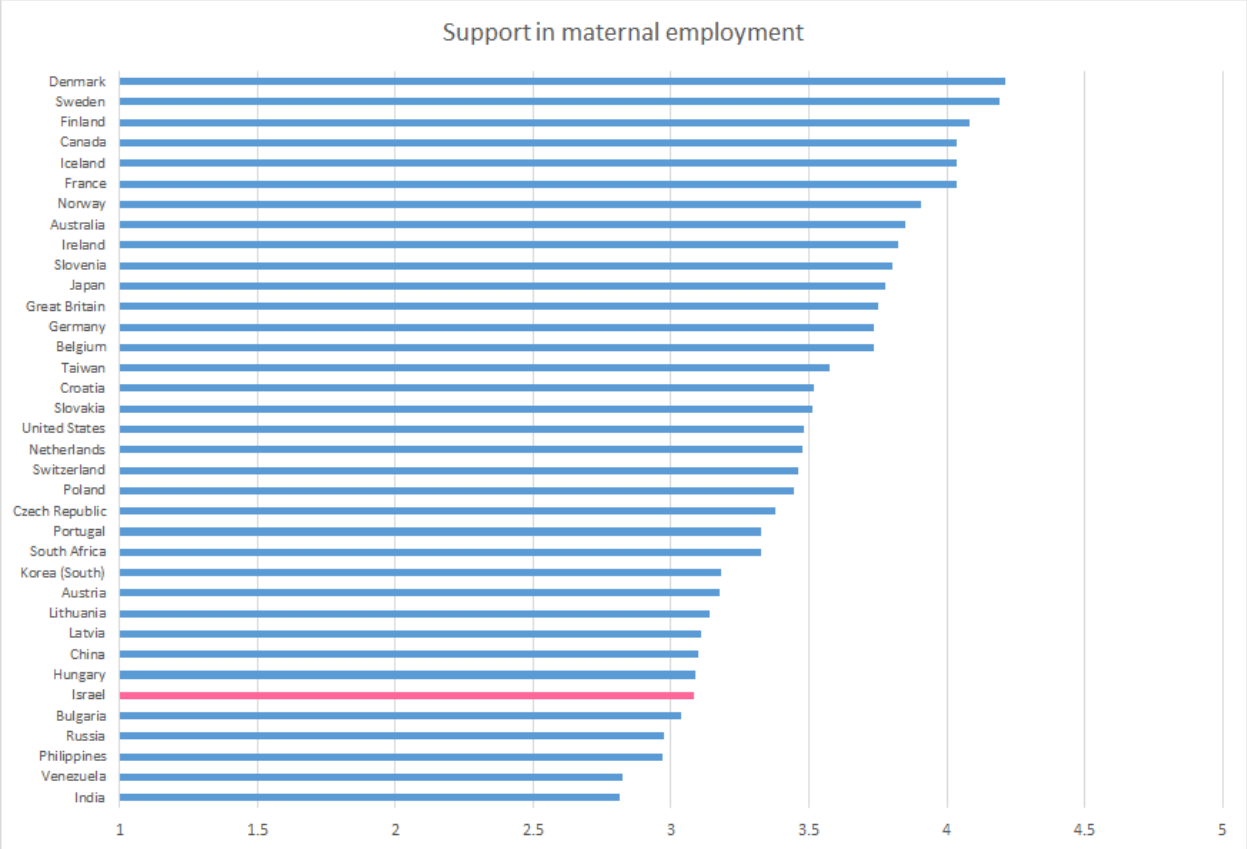
Last, when looking at legitimation to single-parenthood, we find no generation significant differences, as young adults in both generations report a little less than a medium support (2.8) in the statement that "one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together". Looking more closely into the distribution of the answers for this question (not shown here) reveals that only a minority - around 30% in both generations - agrees that one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together. Indeed, when looking at the level of support for each family life in both generations, it seems that single-parenthood is less legitimize than divorce (62% from Gen X and 44% from Gen Y it) and cohabitation (64% from Gen X and 51% from Gen Y support it).

To sum, while divorce, cohabitation and the percentage of unmarried mothers who give birth increase in Israeli society as elsewhere (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019), there is a decrease over generations regarding the legitimation and acceptance of these family behavior associated with the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe, 2010).

Israeli Millennials from a cross-national perspective

We now turn to look on the young Millennials in Israel from a cross-country perspective, comparing their attitudes towards maternal employment, gender roles within the family and family life. When comparing Israeli Millennials' attitudes towards maternal employment to these attitudes among young adults from the same generation in other countries, it is clear that Israelis report on average less support (Figure 4). On a range from 1 to 5, the lowest level of support was in India (2.8) and the highest in Denmark (4.2), while Israelis are at the bottom of this distribution.

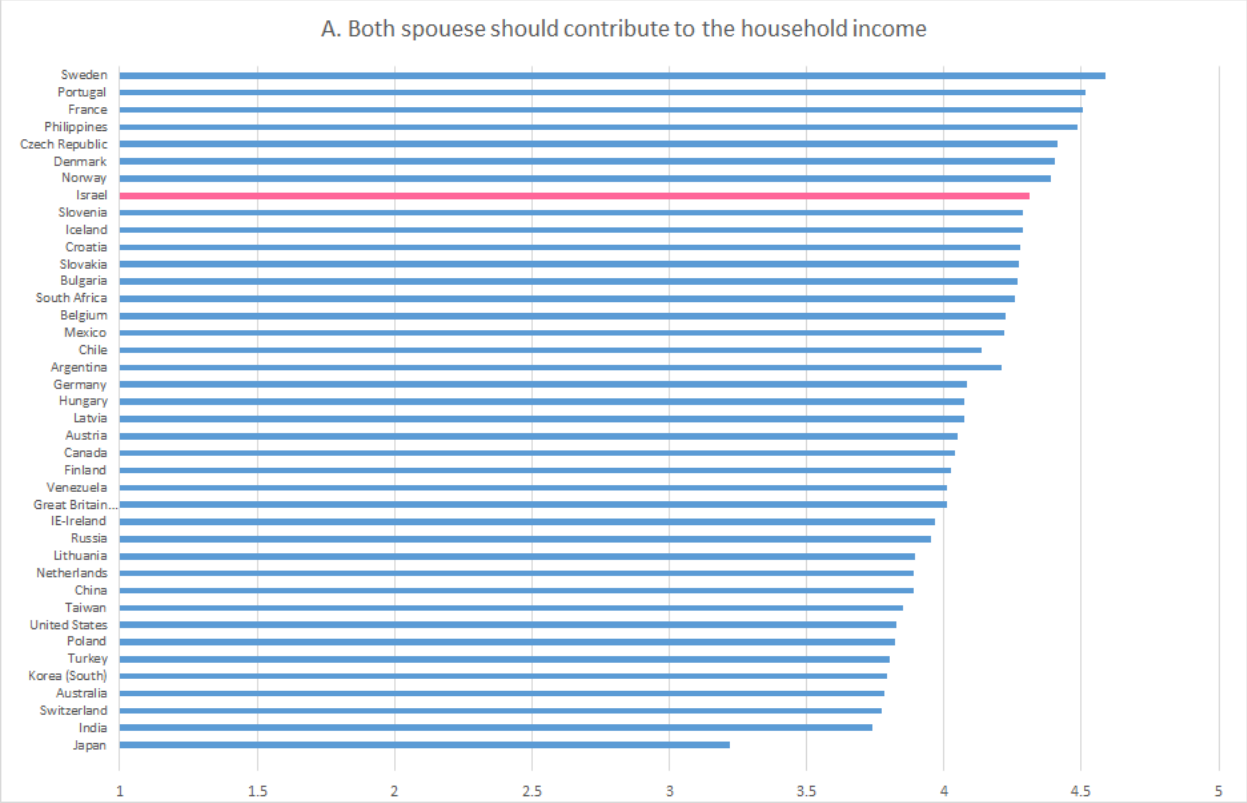
Figure 4. Attitudes towards mother's employment by country among young adults (aged 18-29) born between 1981-1995



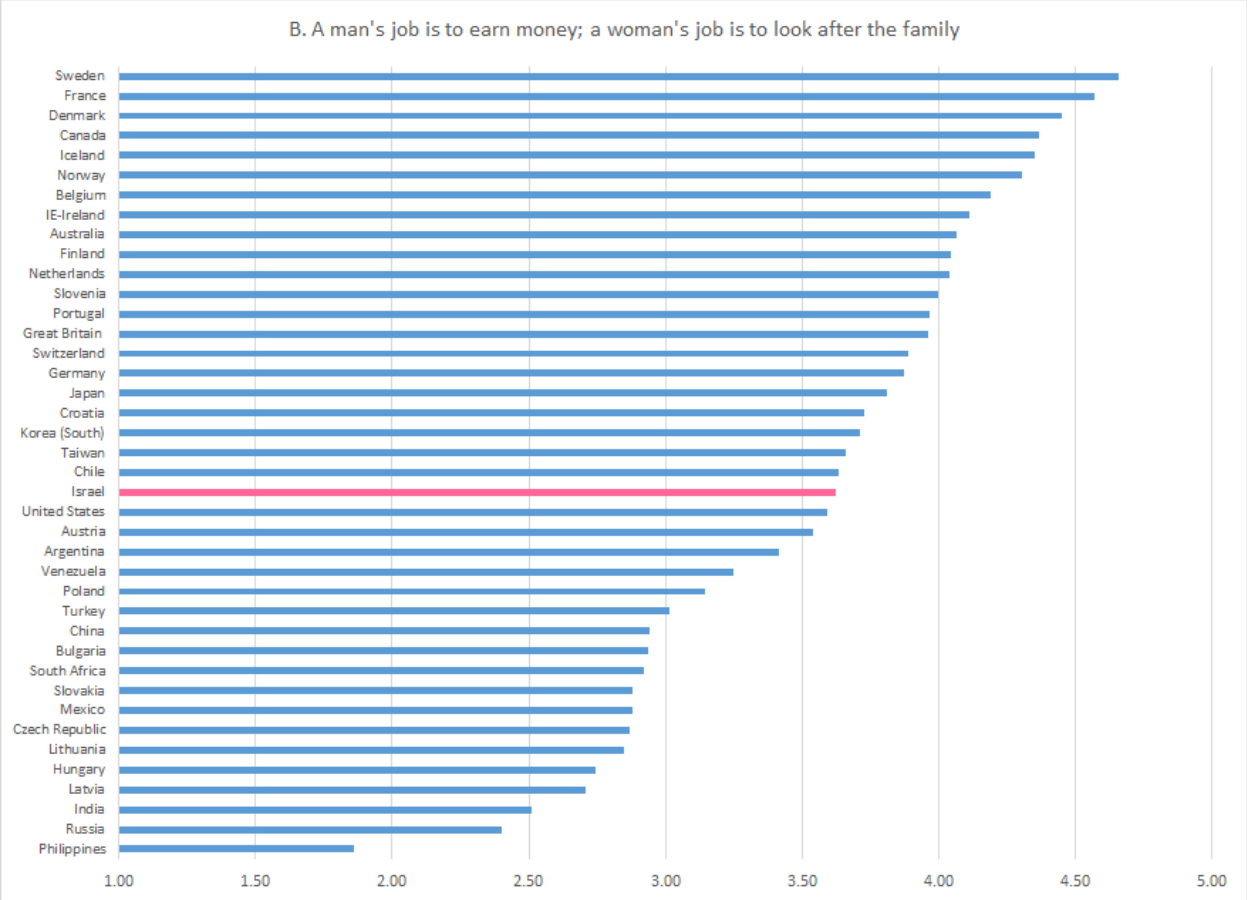
1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

Figure 5 (panels A and B) presents country's averages regarding gender roles among couples. Contrary to what found regarding maternal employment, Israeli Millennials show a relatively high support in the dual-earner models. The highest support for the dual earner model is among Millennials in the socio-democratic countries such as Sweden (4.6), compared to 4.2 among Israelis and only 3.2 in Japan.

Figure 5. Attitudes towards family's gender roles by country, among young adults (aged 18-29) born between 1981-1995



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.



1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree.

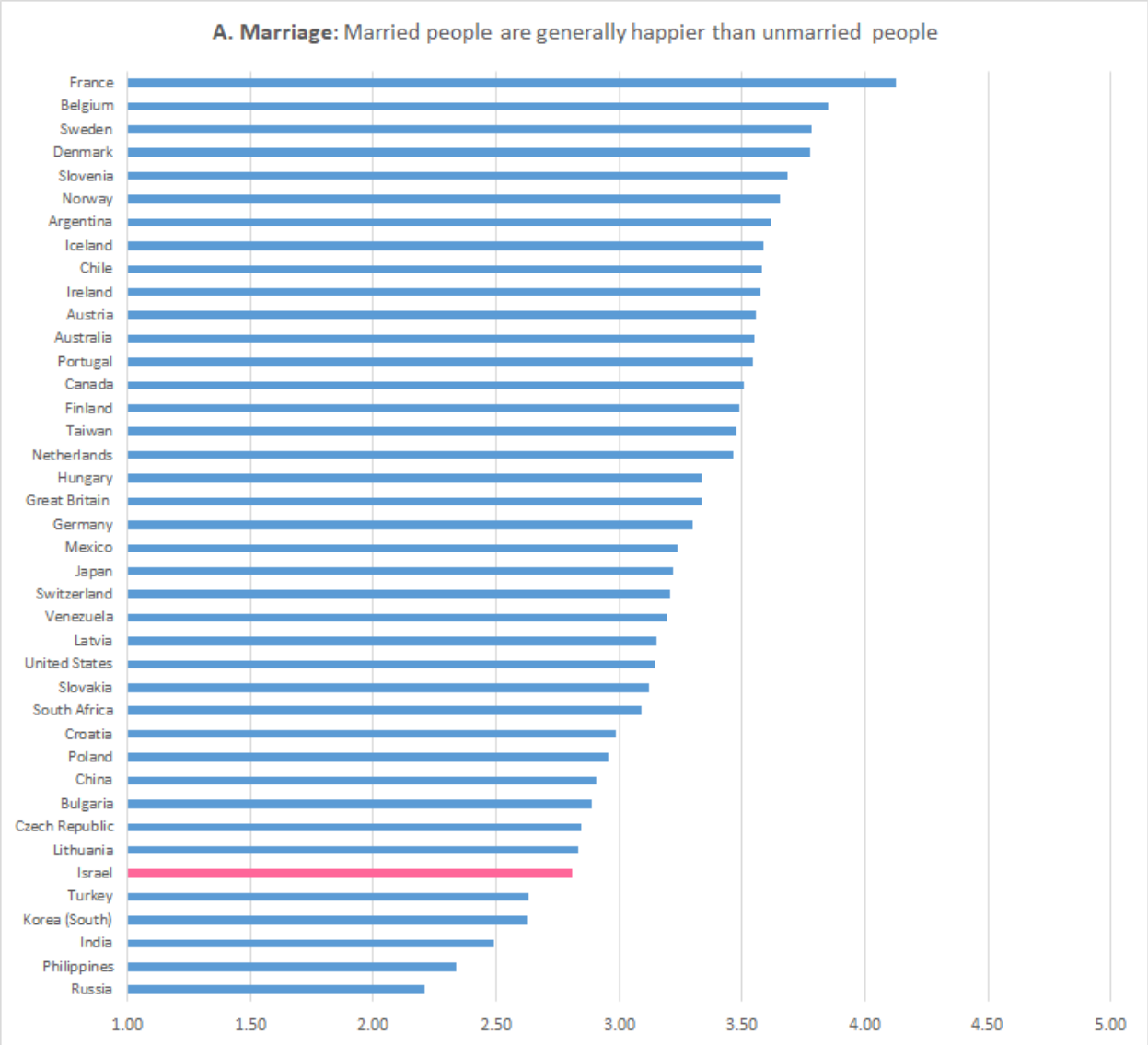
Figure 6 presents cross-country comparison of attitudes regarding several family life patterns among the Y generation, aged 18-29 in 2012. Panel A presents attitudes towards marriage, Panel B attitudes towards divorce, Panel C attitudes towards cohabitation and Panel D attitudes towards single-parenthood. With the exception of divorce, young adults from Gen Y in Israel report a low level of support to cohabitation and single-parenthood and a high level of support in marriage, compared to most of their counterparts in other countries. For example, on 1-5 scale, 1 representing strong agreement that married people are happier than unmarried ones, young Israeli report an average of 2.8 compared to an average of 4.1 in France, 3.9 in Belgium and 3.8 in Sweden (Panel A). The highest support in marriage is among young adults in Russia (2.2). Similar patterns appear when examining attitudes towards cohabitation (Panel C)

and single-parenthood (Panel D). Regarding attitudes towards divorce, Israeli young adults are located in the middle of the distribution.

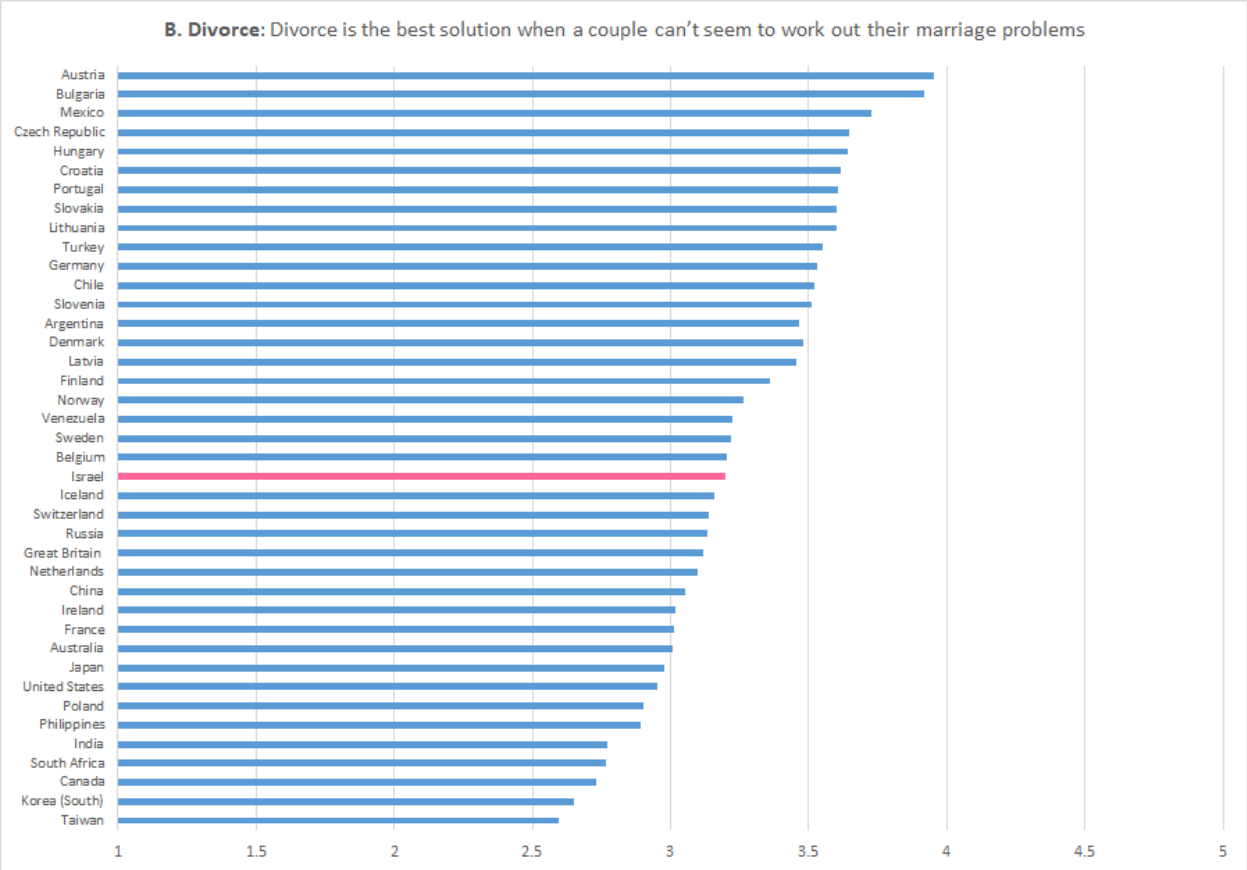
In sum, comparing Israeli young adults from Gen Y to their counterparts around the world, reveals that they have lower support in postmodern family life style. This and more, they have lower support to this lifestyle than Israeli the X generation had in that stage in life.

The cross-country comparison regarding the three dependent variables explores different patterns depend on the specific subject we examine. Israeli young adults from Gen Y have relatively low support for maternal employment as well as for postmodern family life style, as compared to this generation in many other countries. However, when looking at the support for the dual earner model, Israeli Millennials show a rather high level of support.

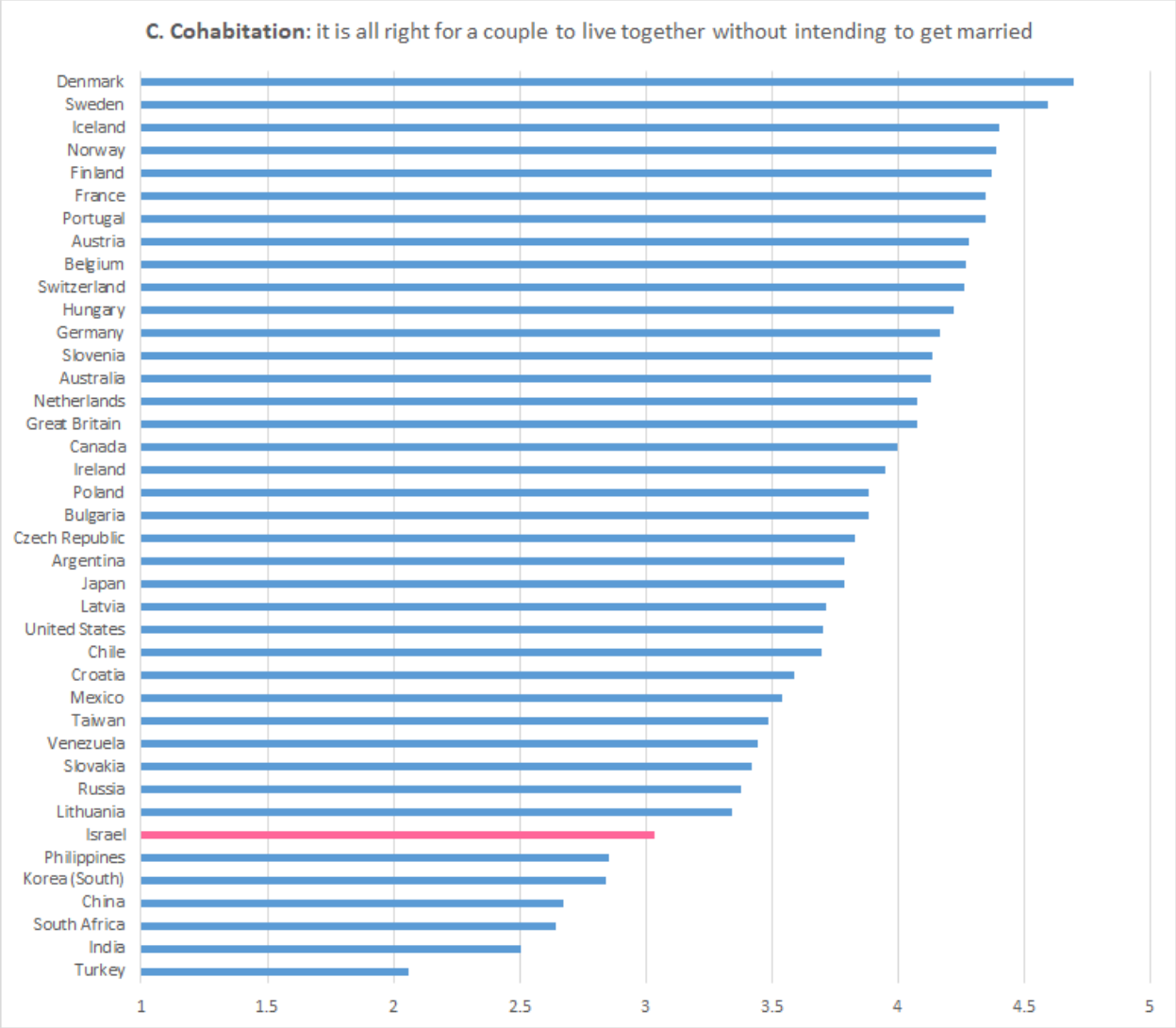
Figure 6. Attitudes towards familism by countries, among young adults (aged 18-29) born between 1981-1995



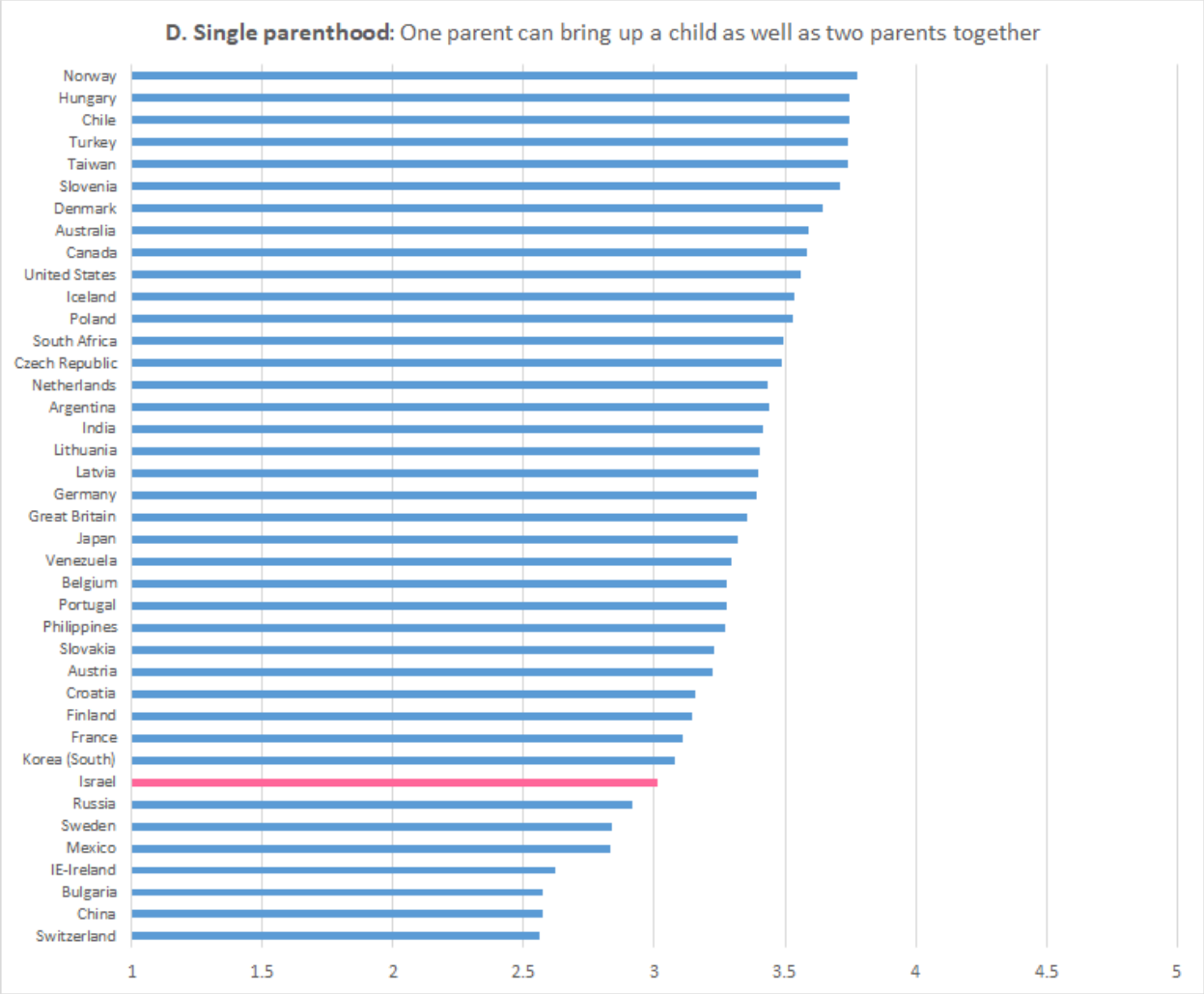
1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree.



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.



1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree.

Multivariate analysis - Israeli young adults

We turn now to multivariate analysis in order to further explain the relations between cohort and young adults attitudes (18-29) towards maternal employment, gender roles within couples and family life. This, while taking into account individual's socio-demographic characteristics.

Table 2 presents the regression findings examining attitudes towards maternal employment (Column 1) and gender roles between couples (columns 2 and 3)including the following independent variables: cohort (X=0; Y=1), gender (man=0; woman=1), academic education (non-academic=0; academic=1), marriage (married=0; not-married=1), employment

(work=0; not work=1), age (quantitative) and religiosity level (quantitative so 0=very religious). The results in Table 2 reveal that cohort, gender, academic education and religiosity were significantly correlated with attitudes towards maternal employment.

From the highest predictor to the lowest, religiosity has a significant relation to attitudes towards maternal employment ($\beta=0.194$, $p<0.001$), so that religious young adults held more traditional positions. After religiosity, cohort had a significant correlation to attitudes towards maternal employment ($\beta=-0.11$, $p<0.001$), so that Gen Y held less supportive attitudes regarding maternal employment, in comparison to Gen X. Then, non-academic education ($\beta=0.109$, $p<0.001$), men ($\beta=0.107$, $p=0.00$) and out of labor force ($\beta=-0.06$, $p=0.07$) individuals, showed significantly less support towards maternal employment, as compared to women, educated and employed individuals.

Continuing with gender roles, and focusing first at shared contribution of the spouses to the household earnings, following the descriptive analysis, here too we did not find it related to cohort. However, it was significantly correlated with marital status, employment and religiosity. The level of religiosity was again the best predictor of attitudes towards spouses' shared contribution to the household earnings, so that religious young adults held more traditional positions ($\beta=0.225$, $p<0.001$). Then, being married ($\beta=0.14$, $p<0.001$) and out of the labor force, ($\beta=-0.07$, $p=0.03$), predicted more traditional attitudes, respectively (Table 2).

Finally attitudes towards the male breadwinner-women-carer model, that also represents gender roles perceptions, was significantly correlated with the variables cohort, academic education, employment and religiosity. The best predictor of attitudes towards gender roles was again religiosity, so that religious young adults held more traditional positions ($\beta=0.21$, $p<0.001$). Then, in decreasing order of impact, non-academic education ($\beta=0.08$, $p=0.02$), unemployment ($\beta=-0.07$, $p=0.03$) and cohort (Gen Y) ($\beta=-0.07$, $p=0.02$), predicted more traditional attitudes (Table 2). Interestingly, controlling for these variables uncovered the cohort differences.

Table 2. OLS regression models predicting attitudes towards maternal employment and gender roles between couples

Variable	Maternal employment		Both contribute		Male breadwinner-woman-carer	
	b	S.E.	b	S.E.	b	S.E.
Cohort Y (ref: 1966-1980)	-0.11*	0.06	0.08^	0.06	-0.07	0.09
Women (ref: men)	0.18*	0.06	0.09*	0.06	0.15^	0.08
University education (ref: less than university education)	0.26*	0.08	-0.01*	0.08	0.27*	0.12
Married (ref: un-partnered)	-0.02	0.07	0.24	0.07	0.14	0.10
Working (ref: not working)	-0.11^	0.06	-0.13	0.06	-0.19^	0.09
Age	-0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.02
Religiosity (high value – secular)	0.17*	0.03	*0.20	0.03	0.26*	0.04

Intercept	3.11*	0.31	3.32*	0.30	2.91*	0.43
R square	7%		8%		7%	

* p < 0.05; ^p < 0.10

Last , we estimated four regression models of attitude**s** towards family life (Table 3). The dependent variables were attitudes towards marriage (Column 1), cohabitation (Column 2), divorce (Column 3) and single parent (Column 4). Starting with attitudes towards marriage, it was found significantly correlated with the cohort, being married and religiosity. Here also, religiosity was the best predictor of attitudes towards marriage, so that more religious young adults held more traditional positions regarding the concept of marriage (β=0.18, p<0.001). Then, in decreasing order of impact, were marriage (β=0.14, p=0.001) and cohort (Gen Y) (β=-0.09., p=0.01), predicted more traditional attitudes toward the concept of marriage (Table 3).

Continuing with attitudes towards cohabitation, it was found significantly correlated only with the variables cohort and religiosity. Again, high level of religiosity were the strongest predictor of traditional attitudes towards cohabitation (β=0.515, p<0.001), and belonging to Gen Y was associated with less support to cohabitation as compared to Gen X (β=-0.06, p=0.04).

Regarding attitudes towards divorce, it was found to be significantly correlated with the cohort, gender, marriage, age and religiosity variables. Here also, the best predictor of less support in divorce was a high level of religiosity (β=0.16, p<0.001). Then, in decreasing order, belonging to Gen Y (β=-0.15, p<0.001), young age (β=0.1, p=0.01), being married (β=0.1, p=0.01) and being a man (β=0.05, p=0.08)

Finally, regarding attitudes towards single-parenthood it was found to be significantly correlated with gender, marriage and religiosity variables. Again, following with the previous direction, religiosity was the best predictor of negative attitudes towards single-parents qualities regarding raising children (β=0.23, p<0.001). Then, in decreasing order of impact,

marriage (β=0.17, p<0.001) and gender (being a man) (β=0.15., p<0.001), predicted more poorly evaluations of the single-parent's qualities regarding raising children (Table 3).

To sum up, the multivariate analysis reveals that differences and similarities that was found in the descriptive analysis hold when controlling for variables considered important in explaining attitudes towards gender and family life. Though Gen X and Gen Y in our Israel sample differ in some important characteristics (such as age, education and marital status), these differences did not alter the patterns found regarding these cohorts' attitudes.

Table 3. OLS regression models predicting attitudes towards family life

Variable	**Marriage**		**Cohabitation**		**Divorce**		**Single-parents**	
	b	S.E.	b	S.E.	b	S.E.	b	S.E.
Cohort Y (ref: 1966-1980)	-0.15^	0.09	-0.17*	0.09	-0.26*	0.09	-0.01	0.09
Women (ref: men)	0.13	0.08	-0.03	0.08	0.14*	0.08	0.37	0.08*
University education (ref: less than university education)	-0.02	0.12	0.09	0.11	-0.10	0.11	0.04	0.12
Married (ref: un-partnered)	0.33*	0.10	0.13	0.10*	0.24	0.10	0.44	0.10*
Working (ref: not working)	-0.06	0.09	0.06	0.09	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.09

Age	0.01*	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.04*	0.01	0.02	0.02
Religiosity (high value – secular)	0.22	0.04	*0.71	0.04	0.20*	0.04	0.29	0.04*
Intercept	1.73*	0.42	0.96*	0.42	1.78*	0.42	0.77^	0.43
R square	6%		30%		7%		10%	

* $p < 0.05$; ^$p < 0.10$

Conclusion and Discussion

The aims of this study were to compare attitudes towards mother's employment, gender roles and familism, between Gen Y and Gen X young adults in Israel (aged 18-29), as well as to compare these attitudes among Israeli Gen Y to this generation in other countries.

Using data from three waves of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) module on Family and Gender Roles, we found that in contrast to many expectations, based on studies conducted in Western and Anglo-American societies (Shu & Meahger, 2017, Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005), Israeli Gen Y is more conservative towards women participation in the labor force than Israeli Gen X was in that same age. For example, young adults from Gen X show a statistically significant higher support for maternal employment compared to young adults from gen Y in Israel. In addition, in each generation women reported higher support for maternal employment than did men.

However, young adults from both generations report high level of support for a family model in which both spouses contribute to the household's earnings, and Gen Y even tend to have a slightly higher support in this model. This Corresponds to the changes that have occurred in the prevalence of this model among Israeli couples in the last 25 years, known as

"the end of the breadwinner model" (Stier, 2010). This support is also evident in Western, Anglo-American based studies (Jurczyk, Jentsch, Sailer, & Schier, 2019).

Regarding attitudes towards family life, we found that young adults from Gen X report significantly less support in marriage than the Millennials, and more support for cohabitation and divorce. Though women generally had higher support for post-nuclear family life, the generational differences held across genders. For example, regarding cohabitation, for both genders, young adults from Gen X report higher level of agreement with the statement that "it is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married", compared with the Millennials. These are evident conservative notions towards family life and coupling (Fogel-Bijaoui, 2012).

Last, when looking at legitimation to single-parenthood, we find no generation significant differences, as young adults of both generations reported a little less than a medium support in the statement that "one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together". Only a minority of both generations agreed that only one parent can bring up a child. This finding is extremely interesting due to the fact that there is a constant rise in single-parenthood in Israel in the last decades (Herbst, 2013). It might be related to the de-legitimation of single mother in Israel (ibid.) and to the centrality of marriage in the Israeli context. To sum up, while divorce, cohabitation and the percentage of unmarried mothers who give birth increase in Israel as elsewhere (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019), our study shows that there is a decrease over generations regarding the legitimation and acceptance of these family behavior.

Finally, after using OLS regression on the Israeli sample we found out that religiosity is the primary predictor of conservative notions towards family life, gender roles and maternal employment. Differences between the two generations were important even after taking into account religiosity as well as other important characteristics such as gender and education. Looking at the cross-national comparison, Israeli Millennials show here, too, low levels of support towards maternal employment and rank in the bottom of the countries participating in the survey. However, Israeli Millennials show a relatively high support in the dual-earner

models. This may be a result of the economic neoliberalism reign in Israel, which results, among others, in the need for a dual-earning household (Lewin Epstein, Stier & Braun, 2006).

Conservative notions towards family life among Israeli Gen Y are also evident in the cross-national comparison. Young Gen Y adults in Israel report low level of support to cohabitation and single-parenthood and high level of support in marriage, compared to most of their corresponding cohort in other countries. In sum, comparing Israeli young adults from Gen Y to their counterparts around the world, reveals that they have lower support for postmodern family life style which is characterized by divorce, single-parenthood and cohabitation (Fogel-Bijaoui, 2002).

Summing up all of our findings, it seems that after some decades in which Israeli society was showing more egalitarian beliefs and post-modern notions towards women's work, family life and gender-roles (Fogel-Bijaoui, 2002; Mandel & Birgir, 2016), the younger generation Israeli society is in the midths of an atni-feminist back-lash.

let us delve a bit more into the possible reasons for this apparent back-lash. Regarding religiousness, our findings stand in line with other studies conducted in different countries, also in Western, Anglo-American societies (Yen & Zampelli, 2016, Pew Research Center, 2019). It is not surprising that religious people hold conservative notions, as religion is usually conservative towards family life styles and feminist activities. Israel has a high percentage of religious citizens belonging to either the Jewish religion or the Muslim one. A large percentage of Israeli society, either Muslim or Jewish, regards itself as somewhat religious.

In a survey conducted in 2018 by the ICBS (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019) 42% of Jewish-Israelis regarded themselves as somewhere between Ultra Orthodox to religious, while another 12% regarded themselves as 'masorti', which means that one is following Jewish tradition and performing some religious traditions. Among the Muslim-Israelis 52% regarded themselves as religious and 4% as extremely religious. It is therefore easy to assume that the conservativeness of Israelis, especially this of Gen Y Israelis, towards family values, maternal

employment and gender-roles, is a result of Israel being a country with a high percentage of religious people. As tempting as it is to point the finger on religiousness as the sole cause, most of the cohort's differences remain significant even after controlling for religiosity. Hence, we want to suggest some other explanations that should be further studied using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

One of the interesting results of our study is the fact that belonging to Gen Y is a predictor of conservative perceptions. This is actually opposite to what was found in the United States recently (Pew Research Center, 2019). A recent study by the Pew Research Center indicated that American Gen Y and Z (born 1995-2008) are the most accepting cohort ever, in the United States, towards cohabitation for example, and also hold liberal beliefs towards women's roles in the family and workforce. However, the United States saw a stall in gender equality in the 90's to early 2000's as well, which some explained differently (Shu & Meahger, 2017).

The conservative swing towards egalitarian notions of women's work in the labor market, which was noted in 1994–2004, correlated with the rise of overwork, as the proportion of men who overwork soared during this period when traditional gender roles were reinforced (Ibid.). This overwork meant that both women and men were working but men had to overwork, which brought back traditional gender roles in the family and outside of it. This was, as was noted (Ibid.), a result of neoliberalism, which pushes both partners in a household to work, while prevailing and even enhancing traditional in-home gender roles.

Similar trends were found in other Western-capitalist countries. Young adults agreed that both men and women should work, but the women still had to take a larger part in household duties and take care of the children (Friedman and Weissbrod, 2005). Europe, Israel and the United States went through neo-liberal changes in recent decades (Lavie, 2015). Israel shows similar inequality trends due to neoliberalism, such as the United States (OECD, 2019). Neoliberalism brings about gender gaps and gender inequalities (Shu & Meahger, 2017), one can not rule out that these trends also brought about a back-lash regarding egalitarian gender role beliefs in Israel. We believe that this line of thought should be further studied in order to

find out the correlation between neo-liberalism and egalitarian gender notions. The fact that our study shows that the countries which are located at the top, regarding egalitarian gender notions, are social-democratic countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Norway, also hints for a correlation between neo-liberalism and anti-feminist notions.

Finally, it is important to note that in the economic and political sphere women are still secondary to men in Israel (Kertcher-Tzameret, 2018). For example, women earn about 59% of men's salaries and are the minority in politics, academia and other public spheres (www.gov.il). During the 1990's-2000 there has been massive pro-feminist legislation in Israel which came to a hault in the second decade of the 21'st century, with the rise of ultra-nationalist and religious governments. Israel is also a country undergoing decades of violent conflict with part of its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians occupied in Gaza and the West-Bank. This violent conflict has brought about ultra-nationalist politics to reign over Israel. These ultra-nationalists, militaristic notions are also characterized by conservatism towards women's rights (Halperin-Kaddari & Yadgar, 2010). We find of special importance the finding that Israeli Gen Y regards maternal employment as more harming towards children in the household than Gen X young adults did. Regarding maternal employment as harmful is an extreme and misogynic way of opposing it.

Because of this, and for all of the above, one can not regard Israeli Gen Y as identical in its characteristics to what was known as emerging adults in Western literature (Arnett, 2015). The trends indicated here are dialectical ones, on the one hand more young Israelis divorce and practice single parenthood, while attitudes towards these behaviors present themselves as concervative and collectivist. Israelis age differently and their life courses are different, even if it seems that they are part of a, so called, global-industrial world. In other words, as Mannheim (1952) would have put it, the Israeli Gen Y consists of women and men who experienced similar specific life-events in a specific cultural-political time and place. They grew up in an era of bus-bombing and terror attacks on the streets and the assassination of Israel's prime-minister Yizhak Rabin in 1995. The economy changed rapidly and the peace process with the Palestinians collapsed. Such an era of instability, together with the growing instability in the labor market, are probably a solid ground for the rise of a conservative generation, especially with regards to gender perceptions.

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