Society

IELTS Writing Task 2 in May 2015Nowadays, more and more people decide to have children later in their life. What arethe reasons? What are the effects on society and family life?

Essay 01:

Many people currently decide not to have babies when they are young and wait until they  
get older instead. There are some reasons for this tendency, and it could have some impacts on family life as well as society.

To begin with, there are several reasons why a number of individuals want to have children later in their life. Firstly, this choice allows them to have more time to enjoy life when they are young. For instance, it is easier for a young couple to travel when they do not have a baby to nurture. Secondly, people who are at the early stage of their career usually have lower income compared to when they are older. Therefore, many people decide to start raising a family after having accumulated enough money to ensure a better life for their children.

However, this tendency might bring about some negative effects on both family life and  
society. The first impact is that having children later will cause a significant age gap  
between two generations. This makes it harder for parents to understand and communicate with their offspring. Additionally, if people give birth when they are too old, the babies being born might be less physically healthy. This might adversely affect the quality of the future workforce if too many people decide to follow this trend.  
In conclusion, there are some reasons why many people prefer to have children later in  
their life, and this tendency can result in some negative impacts on both family life and  
society.

Useful Vocabulary & Expressions:

• nurture: to care for and protect sb/sth while they are growing and developing  
Example: children nurtured by loving parents

• give birth

Essay 02:

It is not until middle age that married couples in today’s society are delaying having their  
babies. This trend is attributable to many factors in life, and it certainly will have great  
impacts on society in general and family life in particular.

Looking more closely into the matter, there are some possible causes of people’s avoidance of being parents. A prominent reason could be that married couples, especially young ones are becoming more independent in their decisions in contrast to their predecessors. As a result of their freedom of choice, they tend to spend more time advancing the career or pursuing higher education before finally having any newborn family members. In addition, many prospective parents could avoid pregnancy owing to the fact that they are unable to support their family financially, and raising a baby is sometimes too costly for parents to afford. Therefore couples are likely to wait until they have earned more income in preparation for their babies to appear.

As more people are hesitating to have children, both society and domestic life are subject  
to many negative impacts. Firstly, the increasing age of pregnancy usually entails higher  
health risks for the mother as well as the baby, as suggested by some researchers, which  
will undoubtedly adversely affect family life. Secondly, the older parents are, the more  
likely that the generation gap will widen. By the time the late babies are grown up, they  
might encounter difficulty adapting to their parents’ ways of life. Thirdly, the reduction in the rates of birth can lead to a shortage of the labour force nationwide, hindering the  
development of the national economy.  
  
In conclusion, people these days have many reasons to have children at an older age, and  
the rise of such a trend will produce some certain negative effects on not only society but  
also family.

Useful Vocabulary & Expressions:

• attributable to somebody/something: probably caused by the thing mentioned  
Example: Their illnesses are attributable to a poor diet.

• pregnancy: the state of being pregnant  
Example: Many women experience sickness during pregnancy.

• To be subject to smth: likely to be affected by something, especially something  
bad. Example: Flights are subject to delay because of the fog.

• The generation gapExample: Conflicts occur due to the generation gap.

• To hinder something: to make it difficult for somebody to do something or for  
something to happen.  
Example: There are factors that might help or hinder a child’s progress at school.

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in December 2015*

***The government and individuals are spending too much money on national celebrations like new year or festivals. Do you agree or disagree?***

People have different views about whether public expenditure on national occasions such  
as new year or festivals is too much nowadays. While I agree that governments and  
individuals are spending a significant amount of money on those celebrations, I would  
argue that this activity is necessary and therefore can be considered acceptable.

It is true that a large amount of money is currently spent on some important celebrations of a country. Firstly, governments are spending a proportion of their budget on holding events to celebrate these occasions. For example, much money is being paid for fireworks on New Year's Eve in many countries around the world. Secondly, individuals also spend money to have celebrations and parties with their families, which is a common habit in many areas. For instance, my parents and I often have a special dinner on the final day of every year.

However, I believe there are great benefits of public spending on national celebrations, and therefore it is completely justifiable. The first advantage is that this is a great way to  
preserve the culture of a nation. To illustrate, Lunar New Year is an important part of the  
Vietnamese culture, and holding celebrations for this occasion is necessary to remind  
younger generations of this tradition. Additionally, since these occasions are usually the  
only times for family members to have time and enjoy together, it is understandable that  
people would want to spend money on something that makes them happy. Finally, as there are only a few national celebrations in a year, the amount of money spent on those days is unlikely to be too much.

In conclusion, I disagree with the idea that people and governments are spending too much money on national occasions.

**Useful Vocabulary & Expressions:**

• **expenditure:** an amount of money spent  
*Example: The government plans to increase expenditure on health.*

• **fireworks**

• **justifiable:** existing or done for a good reason, and therefore acceptable

• **preserve:** to keep sth in its original state in good condition  
*Example: a perfectly preserved 14th century house*

• **remind:** to help sb remember sth  
*Example: That smell reminds me of France*

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in December 2015*

***There is a general increase in anti-social behaviours and lack of respect for others. What are the causes and solutions?***

The widespread problem of anti-social behaviours and disrespectful attitudes towards  
others has long been a major topic of concern in society. Some of the major culprits of this problem will be discussed before the most important solutions are drawn.

Reasons for this alarming situation vary. In some cases, people may hold an anti-social  
attitude or disrespect others because they live in an environment where violence and  
discrimination are the norms. For example, children of sexist parents in rural families in  
Vietnam, irrespective of their gender, show a worrying tendency of disrespecting women.  
In some other cases, it is the lack of parental guidance that is to blame. As modern parents are becoming increasingly busy with their jobs, they may have the proclivity to be indifferent to children education. When there is no one to help young children distinguish between the good and the bad, ill-mannered attitudes may emerge and develop among them without being controlled.  
  
A number of definite actions could be taken to mitigate the problem. On the national level, the first obvious solution is to reduce violence and discrimination. As this would be a massive act, the all voters and legislators should be responsible. Together, they could call for stricter enforcement of the laws on violent and discriminatory acts to deter them from happening. In addition, on the nuclear-family level, parents must not underestimate the significance of their guidance for children. If they notice any signs of an anti-social or  
insolent manner in children, they must provide them with negative evaluations of these  
signs. At the same time, parents could also educate their children about social manners by  
instilling a pro-social sense in them. These actions, albeit small, could have a strong  
influence on children when they mature.

To conclude, it is clear that violence, discrimination and the indifference of parents to  
children education are the major catalysts for increase in anti-social behaviours and  
disrespect for others. Strong measures, such as stringent law enforcement on violent and  
discriminatory acts, must be taken to alleviate this distressing situation.

**Useful words/phrases:**

• **Disrespect**: a lack of respect for somebody/something.  
**Example:** disrespect for the law/the dead

• **Irrespective of**: without considering something or being influenced by it.  
**Example:** Everyone is treated equally, irrespective of race.

• **Proclivity:** a natural tendency to do something or to feel something, often  
something bad.  
**Example:** the government’s proclivity for spending money

• **Indifferent to**: having or showing no interest in somebody/something.  
**Example:** The government cannot afford to be indifferent to public opinion

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in December 2015*

**When people live in a foreign country, they should follow local traditions and customs. Do you agree or not?**

As the immigrants in many countries are rising in number, an opinion emerges that it is  
necessary for these outsiders to embrace the culture of the natives. In my personal view,  
such assimilation is completely justifiable for certain reasons.

In the first place, non-native residents should consider adopting the cultural changes for the sake of their easy immigration. It can be universally acknowledged that the people of a nation take pride in their own cultural features such as beliefs, lifestyle and cuisine which greatly influence their life. Therefore, any slight sign showing the lack of respect for the native culture is likely to result in the unfriendliness or even isolation from the local community. To facilitate the integration process and prevent any potential trouble, it is highly advisable that the settlers conform to the standards of behaviour expected by the  
foreign society.

In addition, it is beneficial for emigrants to accept new traditions and customs as such an  
action boosts mutual understanding between cultures and alleviates the conflicts. If foreign people are willing to change themselves a little to blend in, for example, avoiding the consumption of beef in India or joining the traditional celebration of Tet in Vietnam with the natives, the local people will definitely exhibit a very amiable attitude towards the foreigners. As a result of strengthened understanding and friendship, it is reasonable to say that there will be almost no room for discrimination or conflicts.

In conclusion, I entirely support the view of encouraging immigrants to accept the culture  
of their new homelands, as there will be significant benefits for them eventually.

**Useful Vocabulary & Expressions:**

• **Assimilation**: the act of assimilating somebody or something, or being assimilated.  
*Example: his assimilation into the community*

• **To facilitate something:** to make an action or a process possible or easier.  
*Example: Structured teaching facilitates learning.*

• **To conform to something:** to obey a rule, law, etc.  
*Example: The building does not conform with safety regulations*

*.*• **Amiable**: pleasant; friendly and easy

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in March 2016****Some people think that it is good for a country's culture to import foreign movies and  
TV programs. Others think that it is better to produce these locally.  
Discuss both views and give your opinion.***

People have different views about whether it is better for a country to purchase foreign  
movies or to create domestic ones. While importing movies from other countries can have some advantages, I would argue that producing local movies is a much better option.

On the one hand, there are some clear benefits of buying movies from other countries. Firstly, when a country imports movies that are produced overseas, it can help its people learn about other cultures in a much easier and more effective way. This would help its citizens to be more knowledgeable. Secondly, individuals can learn the good things of other more civilised societies and alter the way they behave. For example, the habit of queuing is a nice thing in many Western countries, and people from other countries can learn and copy this action when watching foreign movies.

On the other hand, I believe it is better for countries to produce movies domestically  
because of some reasons. The first one is that movies made by local people would help to  
preserve the traditions and customs of their own cultures. For instance, many TV  
programs remind young generations of how people celebrate Traditional New Year,  
which is the most important public holiday in some Asian countries. If young people only  
watch foreign movies, the traditional values might be gradually forgotten. Another reason  
is that the film industry often create jobs such as actors, directors or cameramen. Therefore, it is necessary to invest in producing movies in order to provide more employment opportunities for local people.

In conclusion, while purchasing foreign movies is beneficial for a nation's culture to some extent, it seems to me that making local ones is a much better choice.

**Useful words and phrases:**

• **domestic**: *of or inside a particular country; not foreign or international. EX:  
domestic flights*

• **civilised**: *well-organized socially with a very developed culture and way of life. EX:  
the civilised world*

• **queue**: *to wait in a line of people, vehicles in order to do sth, get sth or go  
somewhere EX: We had to queue up for an hour for the tickets*

*ELTS Writing Task 2 in March 2016*

***Many people now live in societies where comsumer goods have become cheap.  
Do advantages outweigh disadvantages?***

The prices of goods have reduced significantly owing to increased productivity, technology and other factors, which allows people to afford various products. Beneficial as this development may seem instantly, there are some drawbacks worth considering.  
  
On the positive side, the life of the population has largely improved in many areas. In terms of daily necessities such as food and clothing, lower costs enable even the impoverished to live on a tiny budget without their serious concern about hunger or the cold. Furthermore, those with average incomes can enjoy products of higher quality more than before. As for higher needs such as entertainment and education, affordable prices provide the majority of the population with access to better and higher education, whereas most common forms of leisure activities have been added to the options of ordinary people for better life quality.For instance, travelling by air for a holiday has become very common because of cheap airline, and more people are now able to attend courses with reasonable fees at centres.

However, price reduction is also accompanied by several disadvantages. One of them is  
the decline in product quality generally caused by the failure to comply with mass  
manufacture standards. An obvious example of this is China made goods which are  
notorious for poor durability as a result of using unqualified materials and unskilled labour in exchange for price competitiveness. Another problem is that people can waste products and resources when the goods are too cheap to mind. For example, households and restaurants throw away a massive amount of leftovers every day worldwide; similarly, water is wasted in many developed countries.

In conclusion, it is obvious to acknowledge the dominant benefits of humans' effort to make products financially available for everyone, but the adverse effects of this development should not be overlooked.

**Useful words and phrases:**

• **Increased productivity** (noun phrase)

• **Afford** (verb)

• **Daily necessities** (noun phrase)

• **The impoverished** (noun phrase)

• **To live on a tiny budget** (expression)

• **To enable sb to V** (verb phrase)

• **Average incomes** (noun phrase)

• **Affordable/ Cheap/ Reasonable/**

**Lower Prices/ Costs** (noun phrase)

• **Ordinary people** (noun phrase)

• **Price reduction/ Price competitiveness** (topic phrases)  
  
• **Be notorious for st** (adjective phrase)

• **Poor durability** (noun phrase)

• **Unqualified materials** (noun phrase)

• **Unskilled labour** (noun phrase)

• **In exchange for** (complex preposition phrase)

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in May 2016****Nowadays, young people admire sports stars though they often do not set a good example. Do you think this is a positive or negative development?***

Although top sports athletes are often poor role models, they gain the admiration of millions of youngsters. This is overall a negative trend for the young generation and society despite one single benefit it may bring about.

I think this trend could be profitable only if the young **disregard the negative** and **focus  
on the positive aspects** of sports stars’ lives. Ronaldo, a **world-class central forward**, for example, is infamous for his **extreme individualism**, but is still a **role model** of diligence and determination for all the efforts he has exerted in football training. Many adolescents who are Ronaldo’s fans have **overlooked** his undesirable **personal traits** and trained themselves hard to achieve **extraordinary** results in their lives. In this way, the young may still benefit from sports stars' valuable life lessons.

However, I contend that this is generally an adverse trend because with the majority of  
youngsters, it may lead to unpleasant consequences. This is because the young could be  
immature and they may **imitate** all the actions of the stars, **irrespective of** whether these  
actions are **beneficial** or not. What these young people may copy may range from a  
**materialistic lifestyle**, an individualistic way of living to more problematic behaviours  
such as sexism, **racism** and **discrimination**. These **outcomes** are negative not only for the juveniles themselves but for society as a whole in the future.

All the existing data provides a **concrete foundation** that even though youngsters may  
learn some useful life experiences from top athletes who do not set good examples, the  
proclivity of admiring and imitating these stars may result in a **wide range** of adverse  
effects and thus is a negative issue in today's society.

*IELTS Writing Task 2 in June 2016*

***It is suggested that everyone wants to have a car, a television and a fridge. Do  
disadvantages of this development for society outweigh advantages?***  
It is true that almost everyone wants a car, a TV and a fridge as some of the basic essentials of a good lifestyle. Despite the benefits, I believe that on a **long-term view** these are outweighed by the disadvantages.

On the one hand, the **growing consumption** of cars, televisions and fridges has several  
benefits. At its simplest, the rise of the consumer society **stimulates economic growth**.  
The increasing sales figures of cars and household equipment are often **associated with**more jobs and wealth being created for society. Another advantage is that people can have a higher **standard of living** than before. Travelling on the road is no longer tedious because individuals can sit in a car, listening to music and enjoying the **comfort of air  
conditioning**. In the same way, people may watch television to relax or to **gain knowledge**, and fridges help them preserve food longer without being stale.

On the other hand, I believe that the above benefits are outweighed by potential problems. Primarily, the use of cars is often **held responsible for** environmental pollution. **Exhaust emissions** from **automobiles** impair the air quality and consequently affect people’s health. For example, in many big cities in the world, urban citizens are suffering from **chronic respiratory** problems due to the poor air quality. Using fridges and televisions also places a pressure on electricity supply in the world. The growing use of these devices in the home merely compounds the problem of insufficient electricity that has become **intractable** in many parts of the world.

In conclusion, taking a **long-term perspective**, I would argue that the drawbacks of this  
trend outweigh the advantages.