

Does Socio-Religious Categories Can Make Difference in Fertility: A Study of Malda District of West Bengal

Authors : Nazmul Hussain, Saba Owais

Abstract : The paper is an effort to come across the fertility differential by religion and socio-economic characteristic by religion. Religion and Socio-economic characteristic are conceptualised as touching demography in two ways- through its theoretical content, and in terms of the socio-economic 'characteristics' of different religious groups. The mean number of children ever born (MCEB) is used to measure fertility. Efficient contrast of Muslims and Non-Muslims shows little difference in their theological positions on demographic issues, with the omission of their position on birth control. The present paper using data from a primary field survey of 2590 households in the Malda district of West Bengal. Older and younger cohorts of women were examined separately for assessing fertility differential. MCEB was found to be high for women with husbands employed as labourers with a low monthly income. This was true for both the cohorts, but fertility levels were much higher among the older cohort. Low MCEB was found with increasing income and for those in regular salaried jobs. The analysis shows that there is a major dissimilarity in the effects of various socio-economic aspects on the number of children-ever-born among the religious groups, suggesting that religious groups may need to be targeted differently by policy-makers in order to influence demographic decision-making.

Keywords : fertility, socio-economic differences, religion, MCEB

Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

Conference Location : Chicago, United States

Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020