

A Multilevel Approach of Reproductive Preferences and Subsequent Behavior in India

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Abstract : Reproductive preferences mainly deal with two questions: when a couple wants children and how many they want. Questions related to these desires are often included in the fertility surveys as they can provide relevant information on the subsequent behavior. The aim of the study is to observe whether respondent's response to these questions changed over time or not. We also tried to identify socio- economic and demographic factors associated with the stability (or instability) of fertility preferences. For this purpose, we used IHDS1 (2004-05) and follow up survey IHDS2 (2011-12) data and applied bivariate, multivariate and multilevel repeated measure analysis to it to find the consistency between responses. From the analysis, we found that preferences of women changes over the course of time as from the bivariate analysis we have found that 52% of women are not consistent in their desired family size and huge inconsistency are found in desire to continue childbearing. To get a better overlook of these inconsistencies, we have computed Intra Class Correlation (ICC) which tries to explain the consistency between individuals on their fertility responses at two time periods. We also explored that husband's desire for additional child specifically male offspring contribute to these variations. Our findings lead us to a cessation that in India, individuals fertility preferences changed over a seven-year time period as the Intra Class correlation comes out to be very small which explains the variations among individuals. Concerted efforts should be made, therefore, to educate people, and conduct motivational programs to promote family planning for family welfare.

Keywords : change, consistency, preferences, over time

Conference Title : ICFP 2018 : International Conference on Family Planning

Conference Location : Sydney, Australia

Conference Dates : January 29-30, 2018