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# The Effect of Socio-Economic and Demographic Factors on Fertility Behaviour in Faisalabad (Pakistan)

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*Abstract -* Societies have different culture, norms, values, customs, beliefs and attitudes towards fertility. In less developed countries people find high fertility as a defensive measure which is due to the low income level and economic roles and productive contribution of children. The present study has been designed to identify the effects of socio-economic and demographic factors on fertility behaviour the universe for the present study comprised rural and urban areas of Faisalabad. A sample of 160 respondents was collected from rural and urban by using simple random method. A well designed Interview Schedule was prepared for the collection of data. Thus the collected data were analyzed by appropriate statistical techniques. It was found a majority of the respondents 99.4 percent agreed that Pakistan population is increasing, majority of the respondents 76.3 percent had viewed to create awareness for fertility behaviour and majority of the respondents 63.8 percent had no family planning centre in their area. It was concluded majority of the respondents 56.3 percent had viewed that family planning is necessary for maternal and child health.

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# The Effect of Socio-Economic and Demographic Factors on Fertility Behaviour in Faisalabad (Pakistan)

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*Abstract* - Societies have different culture, norms, values, customs, beliefs and attitudes towards fertility. In less developed countries people find high fertility as a defensive measure which is due to the low income level and economic roles and productive contribution of children. The present study has been designed to identify the effects of socio-economic and demographic factors on fertility behaviour the universe for the present study comprised rural and urban areas of Faisalabad. A sample of 160 respondents was collected from rural and urban by using simple random method. A well designed Interview Schedule was prepared for the collection of data. Thus the collected data were analyzed by appropriate statistical techniques. It was found a majority of the respondents 99.4 percent agreed that Pakistan population is increasing, majority of the respondents 76.3 percent had viewed to create awareness for fertility behaviour and majority of the respondents 63.8 percent had no family planning centre in their area. It was concluded majority of the respondents 56.3 percent had viewed that family planning is necessary for maternal and child health.

## I. Introduction

The fertility level appears to be the outcome of various demographic, economic, social and cultural variables, such as "age at marriage", "level of educational attainment" "Socio-economic status", "mode of living", "active participation in the work force", "exposure to contraceptive information" and "effect of conservative religious practices". Among these factors employment status, particularly married woman's active participation in labour force contains many of build in variable that could influence her fertility level, though the researchers have not been able to establish which one in the cause and what are the effects (Chaudhry, 1986).

Whereas most of Asia has experienced considerable fertility decline in recent decades, a handful of countries, particularly in South and West Asia, stand out of their lack of significant fertility change. It is commonly argued that the subordinate status of women in these countries, and the weaker position of women relative to women in other Asian societies, are key to the explanation why the fertility transition has been delayed. Most of these countries have witnessed substantial economic development, as the phenomenon is commonly measured; mortality has declined appreciably; and government policy favors curbing population growth. Pakistan is one of these countries. Despite substantial rises in per capita income in recent decades, and despite a 23-year-old population program aimed at reducing fertility, the annual rate of population growth is still on the order of 3 percent. Thus, Pakistan becomes an interesting case study for exploring the question, with particular attention to women's status, of how fertility is determined and what factors are necessary to bring about fertility transition (Sattar *et al.,* 1988).

Fertility behavior in Pakistan, as anywhere else, is subject to socio-demographic conditions as well as religious and cultural traditions. Not only is the fertility decision of couples influenced by for wide range of factors such as education, the position of women and their participation in the work force, economic condition, urbanization, social security systems and so on, but it differs between husband and wife, and between urban and rural areas. The fast growth of population has several implications for our socio-economic developments. In spite of its operation in an unfavorable Socio-economic setting i.e. low literacy rate particularly female education, high infant mortality, low status of women, strong pro-fertility values etc; so far it has been able to achieve a break through in the reduction of fertility.

Socio-economic and cultural norms, value and belief systems of a society usually affect the attitude of the people. The norms are dominated by the values of the society and values are influenced by the beliefs of the people.

Different societies have different cultures and different cultures have different norms, values, customs beliefs, and different attitudes towards fertility. Socio-economic factors about fertility behaviour differ in rural Punjab according to the norms, beliefs and customs of a particular culture in Pakistan (Chaudhry, 1994).

A large number of socio-economic and cultural factors are at work at the micro and macro level of human society which influences human reproductive behaviour.

Some of the earlier studies conducted in India did not find any association between son preference

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and higher fertility. The first All India Family Planning Survey, for instance, found that the parity progression ratios of couples were not much affected by the sex of their living children. However, the survey did find that the desire for additional children was greatest among couples who had daughters only. In another study from Jordan, Bangladesh and India, (Repetto, 1972) observed that the fertility decisions of couples were not influenced by the desire to have sons. On the contrary, they were motivated by the economic advantages associated with having children, regardless of their sex. Repetto argued that couples who already have more sons may be more likely to want more children because of the perceived financial utility of sons, while couples with more daughters may be more likely to terminate childbearing sooner because of the economic liability of having several daughters. An alternate hypothesis advanced by McClelland (1979) to explain the positive association between the number of sons and fertility is that despite a strong preference for sons, couples with several daughters may not risk having an additional child because of the fear that the child may be another daughter.

## II. Methodology

The study was aimed to know the Effect of Socio-economic and Demographic Factors on Fertility Behaviour following objectives will be explored. The universe for the present study comprised rural and urban areas of Faisalabad. Using two stage simple random sampling techniques. In First stage a list of all union councils were prepared of district Faisalabad. Then selected the two union councils from urban area and two union councils from rural areas. Four union councils number in urban areas were UC # 263 – 211 and rural areas were UC # 156 – 249. At the second stage 40 respondents were selected randomly from each union council and got the total 160 respondents selected from four union councils. A well design interview schedule were prepared in the light of study objectives. The collected data will be analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

## III. Results and Discussion

Distribution of the respondents regarding number of children.

| No. of children | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No child | 12 | 7.5 |
| 1 | 11 | 6.9 |
| 2 | 18 | 11.3 |
| 3 | 30 | 18.8 |
| 4 | 46 | 28.8 |
| 5 | 22 | 13.8 |
| 6 and above | 21 | 13.1 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 1 shows that 7.5 percent of respondents had no child, 6.9 percent of respondents had one child, 11.3 percent of respondents had two children, 18.8 percent of respondents had three children , 28.8 percent of respondents had four children, 13.8 percent of respondents had five children while 13.1 percent of respondents had 6 and above children

Distribution of the respondents regarding number of male children.

| No. of male children | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No | 27 | 16.9 |
| 1 | 50 | 31.3 |
| 2 | 66 | 41.3 |
| 3 | 11 | 6.9 |
| 4 | 5 | 3.1 |
| 5 and above | 1 | .6 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 2 shows that 16.9 percent of respondents had no male child, 31.3 percent of respondents had one male child, while the respondents who had two three, four and five children were 41.3 percent,6.9 percent,3.1 percent and .6 percent respectively.

Distribution of the respondents regarding number of female children.

| No. of female children | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No | 17 | 10.6 |
| 1 | 48 | 30.0 |
| 2 | 61 | 38.1 |
| 3 | 27 | 16.9 |
| 4 | 6 | 3.8 |
| 5 and above | 1 | .6 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 3 shows that 10.6 percent of respondents had not female child, 30.0 percent of respondents had one female child, 38.1 percent of respondents had two children, the respondents who had three ,four and five children were 16.9 percent,3.8 percent, and .6 percent respectively.

Distribution of the respondents regarding consult about physician for fertility problem.

| Consult hysician | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No problem | 158 | 98.8 |
| Yes | 2 | 1.3 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 4 shows 1.3 percent of respondents consult any physician to meet the problem of infertility.

Distribution of the respondents regarding preferable ideal family size.

| No. of children | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 14 | 8.8 |
| 2 | 104 | 65.0 |
| 3 | 35 | 21.9 |
| 4 | 7 | 4.4 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 5 shows that 65.0 percent of respondent's viewed that the best the ideal family size is to have two children, 21.9 percent respondents were viewed that the ideal family size three is to have three children.

Distribution of the respondents regarding further number of children.

| Want more children | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 39 | 25.6 |
| No | 121 | 74.4 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 6 shows that 24.4 percent of respondents who want more number of children as compared to existed. while 75.6 percent of the respondents were not desiring any other children.

Distribution of the respondents regarding reason for desiring further child.

| Cause | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No want more child | 121 | 74.4 |
| Blessing of God | 20 | 17.5 |
| To carry on the family name | 8 | 5.6 |
| A felling that children bring husband and wife close | 2 | 1.3 |
| Fear of death of children | 2 | 1.3 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 7 indicates that the attitude of respondents about large family size, 74.4 percent of respondent didn't want more children. However 17.5 percent regarded it as a blessing of God, 5.6 percent reported that large family to carry on the social prestige and 1.3 percent reported that fear of death of children.

Distribution of the respondents regarding their son preference.

| Son preference | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 158 | 98.7 |
| No | 2 | 1.3 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 8 indicate that 98.7 percent of respondents had desire to have son and 1.3 percent of respondents had not any desire for son.

Distribution of the respondents regarding reasons for son preference.

| Cause | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| No preference | 2 | 1.3 |
| Son preference for carrying family linkage | 16 | 10.0 |
| Economic prosperity | 60 | 37.5 |
| Look after in old age | 82 | 50.7 |
| Any other | 1 | .6 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 9 shows that 10 percent regarded that son preference for carrying family linkage, 37.5 percent regarded that economic prosperity, 50.7 percent of respondents reported that male children will be responsible to look after in old age.

Distribution of the respondents with regard to Consideration as more children more earning.

| Causes | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Useful | 41 | 25.6 |
| More useful | 73 | 45.6 |
| Uncertain | 46 | 28.8 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 10 indicates that 25.6 percent of respondents viewed that children are useful in future, while 45.6 percent of respondents reported that children would more useful in future and 28.0 percent viewed it depends whether they are favorable or unfavorable.

Distribution of the respondents regarding ideal Male age at marriage.

| Ideal male age at marriage | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| less then 20 | 4 | 2.5 |
| 20-24 | 52 | 32.5 |
| 25 and above | 104 | 65.0 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 11 shows that 65.0 percent of the respondents favored 25 years and above as an ideal male age at marriage, whereas 32.5 percent of the respondents favored 20 to 24 years as an ideal male age at marriage. Only 2.5 percent of the respondents were in favor of early male marriage(less then 20 years) of boys.

Distribution of the respondents regarding ideal Female age at marriage.

| Ideal age of marriage | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| less than 20 | 15 | 9.4 |
| 20-24 | 139 | 86.9 |
| Above 25 | 6 | 3.8 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 |

Table 12 shows that 86.9 percent of the respondents favored 20 to 24 years and above as an ideal female age at marriage of girls, whereas 9.4 percent of the respondents favored early female marriage(less then 20 years). Only 3.8 percent of the respondents were in favor of female marriage at 25 years above.

## IV. Recommendations

Increasing population has become the major problem of Pakistan. Its population is 151 million in 2005. The population is growing at around 1.96 percent per annum which is one of the highest growth rates not only in Asia but in the world also. At this rate of population of Pakistan will become 168 million in 2010 considering the present trend of Pakistan population growth the economy will hardly be able to sustain the fast growing population and it will not be possible to make significant improvement in the quality of life even under the most favorable rate of economic development. The present population trends are therefore a matter of deep concern. It is generally recognized that in order to achieve a high level of social and economic development in low per capita income and over populated countries, a reduction in fertility is considered essential. The ultimate aim of reducing fertility is to bring down the rate of population growth with out which economic development plan may be seriously affected, specially in countries where resources are limited since population growth and socio-economic development are highly interrelated, an innovative and realistic national population policy, integrated with the over all policies and programmes of social and economic development is highly valued.

There are some suggestions that might contribute to lower birth rate in rural and urban areas of Faisalabad.

1. Marriage either formal or consensual is a prerequisite for child bearing. The patterns of age at marriage are of special significance in a Muslim country like Pakistan where illegitimate births are negligible. Therefore through late marriage, fertility can be reduced to a great extent. For this purpose early marriages should be prohibited and specify the minimum marriageable age for the male to be 28 years and for the female it should be 24.
2. Without the expansion of education, nation as a whole can not make quick and proper progress in the world. It can not stand with the modern technological world. Therefore a minimum level of above middle schooling must be required for urban and rural masses in order to break through the vicious circle of our population.
3. Government of Pakistan needs to develop population planning programme into population development programme. It would contribute to income distribution by reducing the present disparity in family size among various income strata and would thus provide non-peculiar social benefits. It needs to aim for development rather than growth, for the enrichment of the quality of life for those who live below the poverty line or just above it needs to aim for a balance between the pre-dominantly economic and social sector.
4. Government of Pakistan needs to increase the level of awareness about fertility behaviour in rural areas because majority of the population living in rural areas and they have no awareness and even availability of population development programme. Family planning programmes should be started because the fertility level is very high in rural areas and Family planning programmes are also very rare.
5. The family planning services should be improved in terms of the level of their standard because the family planning progammes has failed because of their poor services. It is seen that people are satisfied with the family planning but they are not satisfied with the present family planning services, though they had well services but they had not fully trained staff who promote the family planning services in a better way. And finally there should be monitoring cells to check and observe the activities of the family planning services to meet the desired target.

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