



Determinants of Fertility in Ghana

Abstract

The study has used the Ghana Living Standards Survey data for 1998-1999 and control function approach to identify the significant determinants of fertility (captured by number of children observed in a household) by considering household level data. The determinants of fertility that are considered in this study are the use of contraceptives by the mother and father, hours spent by the mother in taking care of children and personal characteristics of household members, such as the age of the mother, age square of the mother and education of the mother; age of the father, age square of the father and education of the father; consumption expenditure per adult, and the variables that correct for endogeneity and heteroscedasticity such as the fitted residuals for the logarithm of consumption expenditure per adult, and the interaction term between the fitted residuals and the logarithm of consumption per adult. In addition to these determinants, the study also looks at five categories of households, e.g. Agricultural Households, Public sector employees, Private sector employees, Non-farm self employed and Non-working that are included as control variables in the equations.

It has been observed that when consumption expenditure per adult is treated as endogenous, the significant determinants of the number of children observed for households are the logarithmic of consumption expenditure per adult, the quadratic functions in age of the women and her husband, mother's and father's schooling, the number of hours spent by the women in taking care of children, contraceptive use, fitted residuals for the logarithm of consumption expenditure per adult, and interaction term between the fitted residuals and the logarithm of consumption expenditure per adult. On the other hand, when occupations are included as controls in the equations, agricultural households and non-farm self employed have a negative significant effect on fertility.

Keeping in view the significance of the education of the mother and father as determinants of fertility, the Government of Ghana should design policies in such a way to educate more women and men to reduce the fertility rate. Moreover, since the number of hours spent by the women in taking care of children is also a significant determinant of

fertility, it is advisable that the period of maternity leave should be increased so that they can take very good care of the children and their life expectancy increases. The use of contraceptive methods is also a positively related significant determinant of fertility, which shows that the contraceptive methods are not properly used. The Government of Ghana should educate the public about the proper use of contraceptive methods. So far as the effects of occupations on fertility are concerned, it is advisable that more people should be employed in the agricultural sector as agricultural households and non-farm self employed to reduce the fertility rate in Ghana.

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Country where the research takes place

Ghana

How does the research describe the impact of population/reproductive health on poverty reduction and/or economic growth?

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How will the research address a policy need, and what kind of policy lesson is expected?

Since education of the mother and father are found to be the significant determinants of fertility, if the Government of Ghana wants to reduce the fertility rate then policies should be designed in such a way that more women and men are educated. Moreover, since the number of hours spent by the women in taking care of children is also a significant determinant of fertility, it is advisable that the period of maternity leave should be increased so that they can take very good care of the children and their life expectancy increases. The use of contraceptive methods is also a positively related significant determinant of fertility, which shows that the contraceptive methods are not properly used. The Government of Ghana should educate the public about the proper use of

contraceptive methods. So far as the effects of occupations on fertility are concerned, it is advisable that more people should be employed in the agricultural sector as agricultural households and non-farm self employed to reduce the fertility rate in Ghana.

Methods used

This study used control function approach to identify the significant determinants of fertility (captured by number of children observed in a household) by considering household level data.

Data used

Ghana Living Standards Survey data for 1998-1999