

Effect of Caste on Fertility

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we discuss the interrelationship between demographic variable Caste and fertility among women of reproductive age in sample population.

Statistical Analysis Used- Chi-square test significant at level 0.01 etc.

INTRODUCTION

The higher birth rate (fertility) and low death rate (mortality) is the main root of rapid population growth and consequently India has become the second populous country in the world. Population made several studies throughout India reveal that birth rate differs in different castes. Actually the differences in birth rates due to caste variation is obtained in the whole world. In India among Hindus lower castes like Bhangies and Chamar deem to have higher fertility than higher castes. India's population problem by **S.N. Agrawal** 2nd ed. Pg. (101).

According to Agrawal birth rate were found 7.19 in Brahmins, 7.11 in Jatt, 6.97 in Gugars & Ahir & 7.24 in Balmiki and jatav [1]. The several researches in relating to birth rate in different castes indicates that scheduled caste have higher fertility than backward and forward. (*Driver*-1963, *Agrawal*-1970, *Ram and dutta* – 1976, *Mahadevan* -1986, *Aadi Narayan* – 1981, 1988) Etc.

Method-

For the purpose of study the data has been collected from 208 married women of Hindus in the sample population of Azamgarh (U.P.) India according to Castes.

Table (1.1) represents the average life birth per married women according to caste. From the findings of **Table (1.1)** it is evident that in the study area Scheduled caste have higher average number of live birth (3.44) followed by Backward (3.01) and Forward (2.39).

Table (1.2) represents the percent distribution of married women according to their Caste and number of live birth. From **Table (1.2)** it is evident that the proportion of respondent who had five live birth and above was much higher among the Scheduled Caste (48%) as compared to Backward (15.74%) and Forward (5.35%). From the above table it is seen that among the forward and backward the percentage of respondent who had 1-2 live birth was 51.78% and 29.92% respectively. Whereas the corresponding percentage was very low (16%) among the Scheduled caste. From these results it is clear that Scheduled caste have higher fertility than others. The test of Chi-Square confirm that the fertility depends on caste. In this analysis Chi-Square is obtained 29.10 which is very significant at level 0.01.

Table (1.1) Average live birth per married women according to caste

Caste	No. of live birth	Women	Average
<i>Forward</i>	134	56	2.39
<i>Backward</i>	383	127	3.01
<i>Scheduled caste</i>	86	25	3.44
Total	603	208	2.89

Table (1.2) Percentage distribution of married women according to caste and no. of live birth

Caste	No. of live birth			Total
	1-2	3-4	5+	
<i>Forward</i>	29 (51.78)*	24 (42.85)	03 (5.35)	56
<i>Backward</i>	38 (29.92)	69 (54.33)	20 (15.74)	127
<i>Scheduled caste</i>	04 (16.0)	09 (36.0)	12 (48.0)	25
Total	71	102	35	208

*Figures in small bracket represent percent $X^2 = 29.10$ df:4 significant at level 0.01.

RESULTS FROM OTHER STUDIES

There are several studies and survey reports which indicated that castes affect the fertility of women. After survey of the fertility rate based on castes and creeds in rural U.P. Saxena [2] found that the fertility rate among Rajput is 6.77, Shilpi group, balmiki and Jatav have 5.5 and 5.4 respectively. In study of Registrar general the fertility rate in scheduled caste is more comparatively than scheduled tribes [3]. Discussing on caste differentiation Myrdal [4] noted that the high rate of population growth and the relatively slow rate of economic development have made it increasingly difficult for individuals to escape from the confines of the caste system. Upper class Hindus had lowest fertility and Muslims the highest [5].

Saxena [6] found that in lower class both the cumulative fertility in age group 40-44 and average no. of children ever born per married female were highest and these rates were lowest for the upper caste.

CONCLUSION

From these results we conclude that there are different fertility rates in different castes. Thus we can say that fertility depends upon castes. In scheduled castes there are higher fertility in comparison to others such as backward and forward, because among scheduled castes generally marriage of girls are performed at an early age and they are economically and educationally backward.

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