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Impact of Poverty on Reproductive Behavior in Egypt.

This research has been carried out to investigate some of the major aspects related to the impact of poverty on reproductive behavior. The study intends to investigate the effect of poverty on these forms of behavior whether directly or indirectly through a set of intermediate variables assumed for various reasons to alter positively or negatively its effect. This list of variables includes education of spouses, previous and present place of residence, current region of residence, working status before and after marriage and finally price and source of contraceptive methods. The data upon which this research is based were obtained from the 2000 DHS of Egypt. Analysis of data revealed the existence of a positive association between level of wealth and median age of women at marriage which proved to be statistically significant the very poor women married at an age of 18.47 years compared with 19.30 year s for very rich ones. Economic or wealth status of women also showed a positive association with their husbands' education which in turn accounted for significant positive association with wives' age at marriage. According to place of residence it indicated the existence of significant educational disparity between rural and urban women belonging to the same or different wealth categories. The median age at first marriage was higher for working than non-working women. Education in the premarital period played an important role in providing adequate job opportunities for a considerable proportion of educated than non educated women. Current region of residence indicated that poverty reduced age at marriage in urban governorates. Age at first birth in general and among poor women in particular was extremely low by modern standard. The education of the husband maintained also a significant positive association with age at first birth irrespective of wealth. The study also showed that about 25.1% of all married women were currently using contraceptives.