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The Determinants of Fertility Differentials in Egypt: Evidence from the 2000 Demographic and Health Survey.

Using data from Egypt Demographic and Health Survey of 2000 and 1996 census. The main objectives of the study are outlined as follows: to estimate recent fertility levels in the country, to examine differentials of fertility in the country with regard to demographic factors (age of woman, age at first marriage, duration of marriage and contraceptive use), socio-cultural factors. In order to examine factors that are associated with the response variable CEB, two different methodological approaches have been adopted: bivariate and multiple analysis techniques using regression and path analysis model. Examination of the data showed that the average number of children ever born was lower for urban than for rural women even with controlling for age and education. The correlation matrix shows that the dependent variable CEB is highly associated with all independent variables. Fertility has been negatively associated with five of the six independent variables considered in the analysis: age at first marriage, educational level of woman, place of residence, economic status and husband's approval of family planning. Education has a higher positive correlation with CEB among older women than younger women. It shows also that age at first marriage, education, place of residence and index of economic status of women prove to be inversely associated with fertility with a higher coefficient among older than younger age category. The path coefficients for the two age groups show that the index of economic status of women has more marked direct inverse effect on CEB than place of residence and education. The study indicated that the level of fertility is still high by current standards due to the prevalence of early age at marriage and its universality among various segments of the society. The study suggested that enormous amount of capital are needed to achieve real social and economic development in order to generate substantial changes in education, health and sanitation, public utilities and services, employment and income level. The government must encourage females and persuade their parents to retain their enrollment in their education or offering them rewarding employment opportunities.