

Socio-Economic Factors Affecting the Family Size

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Abstract

This study was conducted to explore the socio-economic factor responsible for family size in the six most populous country of the world, Pakistan. Family size refers to the number of children acceptable in a particular society and aligned with societal norms. It can vary from society to society. Increase in population has always been a challenge in Pakistan. Moreover, literate people prefer small family size compared to the illiterate people. Major objective of this cross sectional quantitative study was to examine the socio-economic factors affecting the family size. Multistage sampling technique was used to draw out the sample of 384 workers from small industrial estate of Gujranwala and interview schedule was used to collect data. Statistical analysis of data was made by using SPSS. The study concluded that age of husband, education of couple, and their monthly household income were significantly associated with family size. The results also elaborated that family size was small in educated couples particularly among businessmen, government servants and large in illiterate poor families.

Key words: Family size, illiteracy, age at marriage

Introduction

Family is a major institution of any society. Even in primitive societies family system was practiced. Globally, the family size varies among the societies due to different factors. Americans have average 2.5 children per family that is an ideal family size for them (Carroll 2007). The National Institute of Population Studies, NIPS (2013) reported that in Pakistan, women prefer to have average 4.1 children while men prefer 4.3 children in their family. Moreover, urban people prefer to maintain their family size 3.9 children whereas, people living in rural areas prefer to have 4.5 children in their family. Furthermore, literate persons prefer to limit their family size to 4.0 while illiterate couples prefer to increase their family size 4.9 children. The economic security, health facilities and literacy rate of women has enhanced that resulted in controlled birthrate (Golden Essay, 2005). Positive correlation was found between small family size and increased income of the family (Beydoun, 2001). It is difficult to ignore the education in determining the relationship between family income and fertility. Kakar *et al.* (2011) stated that if marriage age is increased then pregnancy rate is decreased because of awareness about the usage of contraceptives. Kaboudi *et al.* (2013) concluded that due to women education and marriage in mature age has sustainable decrease in child-births during three past decades. Another study by (Owuamanam and Alowolodu, 2010) explored that if family size is controlled then proper education, housing, feeding and clothing to the children is ensured. So the family size is too much important for the prosperity of any society.

Objectives

To examine the Socio-Economic factors affecting the family size

Methodology

This quantitative study was conducted in Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan. Multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample of 384 respondents. At first stage, Gujranwala was randomly selected from the 36 districts of Punjab. There are four industrial estates in District Gujranwala so 96 respondents from each industrial estate were randomly recruited. The data was collected using well-structured interview schedule. Univariate, Bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis of the variables was carried out through SPSS.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The families with minimum one married couple in their reproductive age and they got married at least ten years before.

Results and Discussion

The results of cross tabulation between ideal family size and the age of husband are narrated in table 1.

Table 1. Relation among age of the respondents and their family size

Age of respondents	Ideal family size			Total
	Small (1-3)	Medium (4-5)	Large (Above 5)	
28 to 37	83	49	7	139
	59.7%	35.3%	5.0%	100.0%
38 to 47	26	66	24	116
	22.4%	56.9%	20.7%	100.0%
48 to 57	8	30	34	72
	11.1%	41.7%	47.2%	100.0%
Above 57	5	20	32	57
	8.8%	35.1%	56.1%	100.0%
Total	122	165	97	384
	31.8%	43.0%	25.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 123.26 d.f. = 6 P-value = .000**

Gamma = 0.652 P-value = .000**

** = Highly significant

Data shows the association among age of the respondents and their family size. Chi-square value (123.26) a highly significant which depicts association among age of the respondents and their family size. Gamma statistic showed the highly significant and strong positive relation among the variables. It tells that majority of aged labourer were having more children as compared to young age labour community.

Table 2 explains the relationship between the education of husband and family size.

Table 2. Relation among education the respondents and their family size

Years of schooling	Family size			Total
	1-3	4-6	Above 6	
Illiterate (0)	55	146	82	283
	19.4%	51.6%	29.0%	100.0%

Years of schooling	Family size			Total
	1-3	4-6	Above 6	
1-5 years	46	14	10	70
	65.7%	20.0%	14.3%	100.0%
6-10 years	21	5	5	31
	67.7%	16.1%	16.1%	100.0%
Total	122	165	97	384
	31.8%	43.0%	25.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 76.16 d.f. = 4 P-value = .000**

Gamma = -.582

P-value = .000**

** = Highly significant

Table 2 showed the association between education of the respondents and their family size. Chi-square value (76.16) shows a highly significant association between education of the respondents, and their family size. Gamma statistic shows a significant negative relation among the variables. It tells that majority of illiterate labourer were having more children as compared to literate labour community. The results are Similar with a previous study by Hakim (1994) who also noted that average number of children decreases with increase in education.

Table 3 narrated the relationship between education level of wives and the family size of the respondents.

Table 3. Relation among education the respondents' wife and their family size

Years of schooling	Family size			Total
	1-3	4-6	Above 6	
Illiterate (0)	69	151	86	306
	22.5%	49.3%	28.1%	100.0%
1-5 years	44	8	6	58
	75.9%	13.8%	10.3%	100.0%
6-10 years	9	6	5	20
	45.0%	30.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	122	165	97	384
	31.8%	43.0%	25.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 66.04 d.f. = 4 P-value = .000**

Gamma = -.562

P-value = .000**

** = Highly significant

Table 3 represents association between education of the respondents' wives and their family size. Chi-square value (66.04) shows a highly significant association between education of the respondents' wives and their family size. Gamma statistic also showed a significant negative relation among the variables. It tells that the majority of illiterate mothers were having more children than the literate mothers.

According to Cecilia Larsson & Maria Stanfors (2014), mother's education is positively associated with the use of contraceptives which is the cause of low fertility and helps to keep the family size small.

Table 4 shows the association between monthly income of the respondents and their family size.

Table 4. Relation between monthly income of the respondents and their family size

Income (PKR)	Family size			Total
	1-3	4-6	Above 6	
Up to 15,000	25	67	25	117
	21.4%	57.3%	21.4%	100.0%
15,001 to 30,000	78	95	67	240
	32.5%	39.6%	27.9%	100.0%
30,001 to 45,000	19	3	5	27
	70.4%	11.1%	18.5%	100.0%
Total	122	165	97	384
	31.8%	43.0%	25.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 31.12 d.f. = 4 P-value = .000**

Gamma = -.180 P-value = .025*

* = Significant

** = Highly-Significant

Data represents association between monthly income of the respondents and their family size. Chi-square value (31.12) is showing highly significant relationship between monthly income of the respondents and their family size. Gamma statistic showed significant negative relation between the variables. It tells that majority of lower income class (up to Rs. 15000) had more children as compared to high income labor community. So it can be said that high income is associated with declining the family size. These results are almost similar to a study by Hasan and Sabiruzzaman (2008) who concluded that wealth status adversely associated with family size.

Results of Regression Analysis

Table 5. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Age	.273	.028	.385	9.667	.000**
Education	-.581	.103	-.480	-5.658	.000**
Education of wives	-.163	.059	-.105	-2.768	.006**
Monthly income	-.111	.051	-.084	-2.194	.029*
R Square 0.486					

The value of R-Square in the model summary is 0.486. It shows that the 49 % change in family size was explained by the four variables as age, education, education of wives, and monthly household income.

However residence, religion, wife's age at marriage, use of contraceptives, gender preference, socio-cultural factor, clinical factors and respondents' perception about children in the model were non-significant in this analysis.

The beta value (0.273), of age is representing a positive and significant relation of age with family size. It also shows that aged labour community had large family size as compared to young community. The beta value of education (0.581) is representing a negative and significant relation of education of the respondents with family size. It also shows that illiterate labour community had large family size as compared to educated community. The beta value of education of wives (0.163) is representing a negative and significant relation of education of the wives with family size. It also shows that illiterate wives had large family size as compared to educated wives. The beta value of monthly income (0.111) is representing a negative and significant relation of monthly income of the sampled population with family size. It also shows that if the respondents had more income then they had small family size as compared to lower income community.

Conclusion

The study concluded that age of husband has positive relationship with family size whereas education level of husband and wife has negative relationship with family size and household monthly income has also negative relationship with family size.

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