

International Seminar

on

Past and Present: Revisiting the Demographic Transitions in the South through Individual Longitudinal Data

organized by

IIPS, University of Geneva and IUSSP

The international seminar on ‘Past and present: revisiting the demographic transitions in the south through individual longitudinal data’ was organized at IIPS Mumbai during January 17-18 2013. The seminar was jointly organized by IIPS, IUSSP and University of Geneva. In all 12 papers were presented by the participants – from India, USA, Canada, UK, France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Cameroon – in 5 sessions. Prof. John Cleland from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Ms. Frederika Meijer from the UNFPA India also attended the seminar. All the faculty members of IIPS also participated actively in the deliberations of the seminar. IIPS also invited some Indian scholars to chair the various technical sessions. Prof. P.M. Kulkarni from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Prof. Sonalde Desai from the National Council for Applied Economic Research and Dr. Bali Ram from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur were invited to chair the technical sessions and to contribute to the deliberations of the seminar.



Two papers were presented in the first session. The first paper by George Alter offered new strategies to describe fertility transition in historical Europe and contemporary Africa. Survival curves and growth models were used to describe fertility transition in Belgium, Germany, France, Cameroon, Togo, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria and South Africa. The results confirmed the preponderance of stopping over spacing in historical Europe. However, in African fertility transitions, stopping and spacing emerged together. Whereas, in historical Europe, stopping was more prevalent at lower parities, stopping in Africa was more prevalent at higher parities. The second paper by Petracchi et al. aimed to understand the effects of socioeconomic transformations on reproductive behavior of women who married between 1900 and 1940 in Granarolo, Italy. Their findings suggest that fertility decline in Granarolo seems to have started in the early 1930s. While the pro-natalist policy of the Fascist regime had some effect on single and childless people, it had no effect on larger families.

The second session included three papers. The first paper entitled 'International Dynamics and Fertility Transition in a Rural North Indian Area' was presented by Dr. Mohan Singh. He argued that the desired fertility has fallen to the level of actual fertility where as in the past the desired fertility was always higher than the actual fertility. He mentioned that the desired fertility of mothers and grandmothers has fallen and hence low fertility has become a norm in wider rural community. The second paper by Prosper Fils Olemba Olemba argued that the decrease of fertility observed can indeed be explained by the economic crisis. Olemba Olemba further argued that the decrease of fertility is more a function of the economic satisfaction than that of different policies in favor of the reproduction or the regulation of fertility. The last paper of the session entitled 'What do Parish registers tell us about demographic transition in Africa?' was presented by Sarah Walters. Using longitudinal micro-data from Catholic parish registers in Tanzania, Walters showed that the rising fertility in Tanzania in the 1940s-1970s was driven at least partly by a decline in birth intervals at all ages and parities.

Three papers were presented in the third session. The first paper by Michel Oris discussed adoption of permanent/spacing methods in a Mumbai slum using the framework of Malthusianism of poverty. Findings revealed that sex of household head, religion, age gap between husband and wife, etc. were significantly associated with contraceptive use. Furthermore, neighborhood poverty was significantly associated with both spacing and

stopping. Using pooled data from Africa, Regina Fuchs found that the effect of education on fertility was more pronounced than the effect of wealth. The third paper by Michel Garenne found no association between education and onset of fertility decline in Africa.

Two papers were presented in the fourth session. The first paper, presented by Joseph-Pierre Timnou, aimed to assess the effect of economic development on demographic transition in Africa. The paper concluded that Africa is still far from Demographic Transition. The second paper by Diego Ramiro Farinas examined age- and cause-specific mortality differentials by educational attainment for both men and women in Andalusia. Graded educational differentials in mortality were observed among males and females with higher mortality rates related to lower educational attainment in most causes of death.

The fifth and final session included two papers. The first paper by Ram et al. concluded that the lives of a majority of young Indian males and females were marked by abrupt transitions to adulthood as many exit from study at early ages and enter labor force and marriage at early ages. Age, urbanization, and academic performance were significantly associated with such transitions. The second paper in this session was presented by Suryakant Yadav. His study found evidence of compression of mortality and expansion of morbidity in India.

In the concluding session, rapporteurs for each session presented their observations and content of the discussion. Prof P M Kulkarni from JNU presented the overall summary of the conference and lessons learnt from the conference and its relevance for India. He pointed out that such efforts/events can be organized annually by IIPS and IUSSP.

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