

## SOME RECENT FINDINGS ON 'OPEN BIRTH INTERVALS '\*

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In the *Journal of Family Welfare* (Vol. XIII, No. 2, Dec. '66) Dr. K. Srinivasan has indicated the possible use of open birth interval (the interval between survey date and last birth) as a better indicator of changing fertility than the closed birth interval (interval between two births). However, the present author has not found all favour for the use of open birth interval, despite the fact that the closed birth interval cannot be used in certain circumstances such as the ones mentioned in the above article. The Committee on Comparative Studies of Fertility and Fertility Planning of the International Union for Scientific Study of Population has laid greater stress on open birth interval, by including it as a variable in the 'Core list'.<sup>1</sup> Also this has been adopted as an index in the standard fertility surveys in India.<sup>2</sup> Thus it is clear that right knowledge of the index is of paramount importance in the evaluation of fertility programmes. In the following the author presents a non-technical report of his research findings in this connection.

### CONCEPTS

Before proceeding to judge whether open birth interval is a better index of changing fertility, it is to be noted that open birth interval is inappropriate for that group of women who are known to be sterilized or using orals only (meaning thereby 100% protection against conception and we do not need an index in case we know the group is sterilized). Therefore open-interval should be considered as an index of fertility whether the group to which it is applied uses any type of contraception or no contraception (with efficiencies 0 to 100). Secondly, we expect the following properties to be satisfied by it :

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