

DIFFERENTIAL FERTILITY IN WEST BENGAL IN 1956

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IN an earlier issue of this journal an article on Social Mobility and its association with Fertility was published by the present author jointly.¹ The present article has very close connection with the previous one as both are the product of the same survey conducted by the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta in 1956. The objective of the earlier study was to approach the problem of class differential fertility from a dynamic aspect. In the present study a static approach has been made to the problem of differential fertility with respect to various socio-economic factors like income, education, type of family, urbanization, etc. Much attention has been devoted to studying the differences between the fertility of various groups of population of a country, such as groups differentiated according to locality, income, occupation, religion or other socio-economic characteristics. The findings of the present survey reiterate many of the already accepted results. In studying the various factors which differentiate the fertility of one socio-economic group from that of another, it must be remembered that such factors are often closely related. For example, the variations in family size with income or occupation are closely linked because persons with high incomes are usually in certain specific occupational groups while persons with low incomes belong to other occupational classes. Thus to say that fertility varies with income and with occupation is, to some extent, merely to describe the same phenomenon in two different ways. The enquiry could be carried further by studying the fertility of persons having different incomes within the same occupational group, though such an analysis has not been possible in the present survey in view of the extremely small size of the sample.

Since the data collected for the earlier study, provided materials for the present study as well, it is necessary to repeat the design of the survey. The coverage of the survey was restricted to the rural tracts of eight districts of West Bengal for the selection of rural households, and Calcutta city for the urban sample. The rural sample was divided into three interpenetrating sub-samples, each consisting of eight villages selected at random, one from each district. The urban samples consisted of two interpenetrating sub-samples each of ten census blocks selected at random from Calcutta city. A total of 600 rural households and 500 Calcutta city

¹ Pilot Study on Social Mobility and its association with Fertility in West Bengal in 1956 by S. Janardan Poti and Subodh Datta, *Artha Vijnana*, Vol. 2, No. 2, June 1960.