

DIFFERENTIAL FERTILITY

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IN a nonconceptor population fertility of various groups differs due to differences in age-compositions and marrying habits. The effect of differences in marrying habits gets eliminated in the study of marital fertility. In the present paper the object is to analyse the differentials in marital fertility.

In the demographic surveys* conducted by the Gokhale Institute during 1951-55 an attempt was made to assess the differences in fertility of married women. Several biological and socio-economic factors, which are likely to affect fertility, were considered for their effect on fertility. The biological factors included: (i) age at marriage (ii) duration of marriage (iii) difference between the ages of husband and wife (iv), order of birth of the child, etc. The socio-economic factors consisted mainly of: (i) caste, (ii) income, (iii) occupation of the husband, (iv) occupation of the wife, (v) educational level of husband and wife. Among all the factors, age of the woman was found to be the primary factor affecting fertility. The effect of any other factor was obtained after the effect of age was allowed for. The procedure adopted in testing the effect of any factor was in brief as follows: The married women were first classified in different groups on the basis of the factor under consideration. The initial hypothesis was that age alone affected fertility and no other factor had any influence on it. The expected number of children born to women in different groups was calculated by applying the age specific fertility rates of married women in the total population. The expected number of children thus obtained was compared with the actual number of children born to these women during the period of investigation. If the difference between the observed and expected numbers of children was small, it was concluded that the difference might have arisen from chance variations and there was no reason to suspect that the factor under consideration had any influence on fertility. On the other hand, if the difference between the observed and the expected numbers of children was large it was concluded that the factor under consideration affected fertility. The magnitude of

* Dandekar V. M. and Dandekar Kumudini, *Survey of Fertility and Mortality in Poona District*; Sovani N. V. and Dandekar Kumudini, *Fertility Survey of Nasik, Kolaba and North Satara Districts*; and Dandekar Kumudini, *Demographic Survey of Six Rural Communities*, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona, Pub. Nos. 27, 31 and 37 respectively.