Understanding Fertility Patterns Among Women Through the Lens of Education: A Case of India

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Abstract :

Fertility patterns are a critical aspect of demographic studies, shaping population growth, socioeconomic development, and public health trends. This study examines the relationship between education and fertility among women in India, with a focus on the urban-rural divide across states and union territories. Using data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) (2019-21) considering fertility rate, literacy rate, and place of birth as key variables, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how education influences reproductive behaviour and maternal healthcare choices in India. The study employs quantitative methods, including regression and correlation analyses, to assess the impact of education on fertility while accounting for urban-rural variations. Findings suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with lower fertility rates, delayed childbirth, and increased institutional births, reinforcing the role of education in shaping reproductive behaviour. The findings will help in identifying the urban-rural divide and guiding policies to improve female education and healthcare accessibility for better maternal and child health outcomes. However, significant differences persist, with rural areas exhibiting lower female literacy rates and higher fertility levels compared to urban regions. The study highlights the need for targeted educational and healthcare policies to address these disparities and promote sustainable population growth. The insights gained contribute to evidence-based policymaking aimed at improving female education, reproductive health access, and gender empowerment, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Key words : Fertility patterns, women's education, literacy rate, family planning, healthcare access, gender empowerment.