



Reproductive Health and Women's Economic Activity: A Narrative Review

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To what extent does the nexus between **fertility and women's labor force participation** vary within and across LMICs?

- Upcoming paper “Reproductive health and women's economic activity: A narrative review”
- Income per capita moderates the effect of **fertility on women's labor force participation** across LICs, MICs and HICs (Finlay 2020)
- Women's labor force participation varies (in a U-shape) across LICs, MICs and HICs (Goldin 1995, Verick 2014)
- Fertility numbers decline in favor of child quality (Becker 1973), the low income elasticity of child quantity, and high income elasticity of child quality, the quality-quantity trade-off
- The quality-quantity tradeoff theory extends to explain that with fewer children to care for, women's time is freed to then increase labor force participation. An inverse relationship between the number of children and women's labor force participation.
- Within and across LMICs this inverse relationship is not always observed. The relationship between fertility and female labor force participation varies across income levels.



Fertility and Women's LFP in LICs

- SSA LICs
 - For some women labor force participation increases when her child is born (Heath 2017)
 - Why does she do this?
 - Theory of assessment of monetary vs time investment in child (Heath 2017)
 - Lack of income sharing in the household (Alderman 1995, Doss 2013, Duflo 2004, Dunbar 2013, Heath 2017)
 - How does she do this when both childcare and work take time?
 - Older siblings care for new baby (Heath 2017)
 - Birth spacing (de Jong 2017, Finlay 2018)
- SA LICs
 - Evidence of an inverse relationship between fertility and women's labor force participation in Matlab (Joshi 2012)
 - In SA social norms prevent interactions with the labor market (with or without children) (Jayachandran 2020)

Fertility and Women's LFP in MICs

- LA MICs
 - Lower fertility rates than LICs (2.5 children per woman in MICs compared to 4.5 children in LICs)
 - Informal labor market participation lower in MICs (50% of working women in informal labor market in MICs compared to 90% of women in LICs)
 - MICs have high income inequality
 - Causal effect of fertility on women's labor force participation shows inverse relationship (Caceres-Delpiano 2012, Cruces 2007) or no effect (Aguero 2008, 2011). Studies focus on causality methods, and do no account of income inequality
 - Analysis by parity (Cáceres-Delpiano 2012), motivations for early childbearing (Millán-Quijano, 2015) and household composition of teen mothers (Buvinic, 1998) provide valuable insights into the heterogeneity within MICs of the fertility and female labor force participation relationship
- Other MICs
 - Increase in fertility decreases women's labor force participation in Turkey (Gunduz-Hosgor 2008) and Philippines (Adair 2002)

Has access to family planning mattered?

- For Fertility in LMICs
 - The Bongaarts (yes) / Pritchett (no) debate (Miller 2016, Gunther 2016)
 - Matlab (Phillips 1982) yes but maybe confounding with vaccination trial roll-out (Miller 2016)
 - No (Ethiopia, Desai 2011; Kenya, Kosgei 2011); Yes (Navrongo, Debpuur 2002; Indonesia, Molyneaux 2000; India, Francavilla 2011)
 - Yes, adolescent childbearing and the Profamilia example in Colombia (Miller 2010)
- For Women's Labor Force Participation in LMICs
 - Through fertility and reducing the number of children per woman in Matlab (Joshi 2007)
 - Through delaying age of first birth in Madagascar (Hererra 2019)
- For Women's Empowerment in LMICs
 - Self: how she views herself and her role, ...
 - Relational: power and decision making within the household and community (Ashraf 2014)
 - Environmental: social norms and attitudes, political and legislative framework, ...



Conclusion

- To what extent does the nexus between **fertility and women's labor force participation** vary within and across LMICs?
 - A lot
- Has access to family planning mattered?
 - Yes, but

- Thank you
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