

# A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF FEMALE EDUCATION ON FERTILITY BEHAVIOUR

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## ABSTRACT

*There is a close relationship between Education and Fertility. Fertility is highly affected by education. By educating women, it helps the women to think and decide their own future and family by taking proper decisions which is not only good for their own health and family but also for society and country. Education and women's participation in decision making is better in case of educated women than uneducated women. So, we can say that higher the educational attainment lowers the fertility, lower the educational status higher the fertility rate. The present study was designed to describe the nature of relationship between education and fertility behaviour of women. The area selected for study is Taraboi village of Khordha district of Odisha, from the point of convenience. The respondents of the study are the married women in the age of group 20-40 via random sampling. The tool used for the research was a standardized interview schedule. It was taken from the research study conducted by (K. V. Sunil Kumar, 2020). Using different statistical technique data were analysed. The findings reflect there is a significant difference in awareness level of educated and uneducated women. The study revealed the difference in awareness level of women on the basis of their education towards fertility behavior. It was observed that women having less educational qualification have less awareness about family planning. The study also showed that education has great impact on fertility behavior of women.*

## KEY WORDS

*Fertility, Conception, Female education, Perception*

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## INTRODUCTION

Fertility is one of the major components of population change. Various factors are attributed to the fertility behaviour of various communities. Fertility refers to the actual reproductive performance applied to an individual or a group. On the other hand, fecundity refers to the capacity of a man, a woman or a couple to participate in reproduction (i.e. the reproduction of a live child). Fertility can be measured through birth rate while Fecundity, however, cannot be measured. A man or a woman who has given birth to a live child is considered fertile. The total number of children born by one couple is known as family size. The sequence of births of children is birth order. This sequence in the case of mothers is known as parity which is decided by the number of children born alive. The biological limits of child birth are known as reproductive span. The physiological limits of child bearing capacity and period are known as theoretical maximum fertility. Abortions and still births are classified as reproductive wastage. Birth control by self-control is known as voluntary abstinence.

There is a close relationship between Education and Fertility. Fertility is highly affected by education. By educating women, it helps the women to think and decide their own future and family by taking proper decisions which is not only good for their own health and family but also for society and country. Education and women's participation in decision making is better in case of educated women than uneducated women. So, we can say that higher the educational attainment lowers the fertility, lower the educational status higher the fertility rate. In most of the studies, it has been found that in rural areas like villages, girls are getting married at a very early stage having less or no education and having no source of income for their own livelihood after marriage. They have to become financially independent on their spouse for living. They are becoming mothers of 5-6 children at their own teen ages; due to lack of proper education they are not able to take care of their own health and child which later on leads to various nutritional diseases. Due to lack of proper family planning, women are having more children, do not have proper food to feed them, are not able to provide good quality of education, and are not able to take care of their health issues. A major problem related to female foeticide also found in rural areas, they prefer to have son over daughter as their first child. For which they are killing a no. of foeticides in the

mothers' womb by aborting it or even after a girl child birth they throw them in the garbage. By educating women all these problems can be minimized to some extent. However, a thorough understanding of the causal relationship between fertility and female education has lagged behind the enthusiasm for educational interventions as a tool to reduce fertility.

### RELATED RESEARCH WORK

**Akmam** (2002) observed a significant and inverse relationship between education and fertility. However, the study found success in family planning policies, which have been quite effective in reducing the fertility rate in that country.

**Firdous Ansari** (2015) revealed that education has its impact on the social, economic and health development of a nation especially female education as it binds the next generation to be educated literate women are known to be more aware to take reproductive and healthcare 7 decisions. This study is a critical review of literature which includes different variables that get affected by female literacy.

**Zaheer Khan Kakar** (2011) shows that the education level of women has some effect over family structure (size). In this study, keeping in view the cultural and social background and backwardness of "Baluchistan", we show that the education is playing a great role in changing the traditional thinking and behavior of people of this region, as the result from the present study explains that the rise in education levels showed an increasing consciousness about the benefit of having a small family. And the media has played a wonderful role in increasing the awareness about family planning techniques. Females supporting small family size collectively agreed that better educational and growth prospects for children are the motive for smaller families. Most of them had awareness about family planning. In a large number of the families the couple mutually takes the decision about the family size. The average family size in the sample was three among the educated families which exceeds among some families because of the demand and desire of sons. Even though the analysis of the data in this study showed a moderate effect of female education over the family size, it can be considered significant and it can be assumed that as the level of education increases, the awareness about small families will also increase.

One of the early studies conducted by Mehrotra, regarding the effect of education on fertility, revealed the existence of fertility differentials by education. The differentials being more marked in respect of women's education. Analysing the relationship between educational level and fertility and the mean number of children ever born was found to be significant. Nearly 3.00 percent of the total variety in fertility could be associated with the differences in educational levels. The analysis of variance between a) Illiterates and literate, b) Illiterates, matric and above, and c) Literate, matric and above showed significant relationships for group b and c. The 15.00 per cent and 8.00 per cent variations in group b and c respectively could be attributed to the educational levels.

### JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Education reduces fertility by reducing reproductive span and increasing age at marriage, contraceptive use and work participation. It is known that there is a positive relationship between education and age at marriage. With an increase in educational level not only age at marriage but also proportion of never married women substantially increased which denoted a considerable decline in fertility. Female education also amplifies the use of contraception by providing correct knowledge to the users and non-users about contraception. Mainly the present research study tries to compare different measures of fertility differentials with altered educational levels to examine the influence of education on fertility behaviour. Education changes fertility level but to understand the changing role of female education on 4 fertility this study will be done. The aim is to study whether female education has a significant impact on fertility behaviour in the present situation.

### OBJECTIVES

To carry out the study following objectives are formulated:

1. To study the awareness level among women towards fertility behaviour
2. To study the relationship between female education on fertility behaviour
3. To find the difference in awareness level of educated and uneducated women on fertility behaviour

### METHODOLOGY

In the present study, Survey method was employed for the study.

### DESIGN

The present study was designed to describe the nature of relationship between education and fertility behaviour of women. The study presents the analysis of the correlation relationship between the variables under study. The

study describes the correlation sequences between education and fertility behaviour. On the whole, the nature of the research is descriptive survey type research.

## **SAMPLE**

The area selected for study is Taraboi village of Khordha district of Odisha, from the point of convenience. The respondents of the study are the married women in the age of group 20-40. The sample were both educated and uneducated women and the sample size will be 50. Due to the current covid-19 pandemic situation, it is not possible to collect the data of the entire village. Sampling refers to the procedure used to select sample from the population. Out of the total 50 respondents, there are 25 educated women and 25 uneducated women and they are selected randomly. The sampling technique was stratified random sampling.

## **TOOL**

The tool used for the research was a standardized interview schedule. It was taken from the research study conducted by (K. V. Sunil Kumar, 2020), where the researcher used this pre designed, pre-tested and a questionnaire included topics which are related to the female literacy and fertility behaviour. In the present study, the interview schedule contains total 17 questions were asked by the researcher to women. It includes both multiple choice questions and open-ended questions including their name, age, type of education they have, and some questions related to fertility behaviour to check their awareness level towards it, in which they have to give reasons for selecting a particular answer from MCQs. Each option was assigned by certain marks.

## **PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION**

For collection of data a standardized interview schedule was prepared and used for data collection. The schedule used for the data collection is given at the appendix. Data was collected using the schedule through personal interview method from a sample of 50 respondents. Data collection was done by the researcher with the help of local women. Information on all items was collected from the female respondents only. The survey was completed within 2 months of time. The interview technique was used as the basic method of data collection as the sample consisted of uneducated also.

## **STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE**

The present study used the following tools and measures.

1. Mean
2. Standard deviation
3. Percentile
4. Two tailed unpaired t-test

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Present study, titled as "A Study on the impact of female education on fertility behavior". The study is based on primary data sources. The primary data is collected from women of Taraboi village of Khordha district of Odisha. The qualitative data was collected by interaction with women. Following statistical techniques were used for analyzing the data. The test used to find out the relationship between fertility behavior and female education and difference in awareness level on basis educational status are two tailed unpaired T-test including standardized interview schedule.

### **1. OPINION ABOUT WOMEN'S EDUCATION**

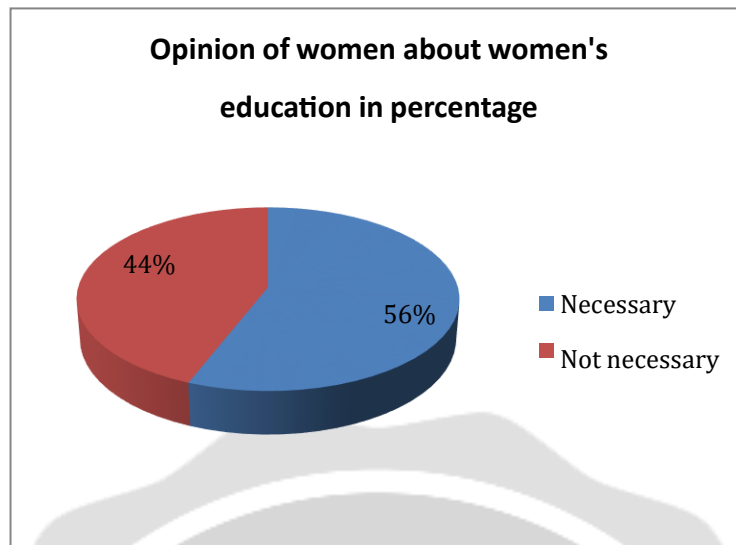


Figure-2: Opinion of Women about Women’s Education in Percentage

While considering the opinion of respondents about girls’ marriage and its relation with education of women, 28(56%) of women thought that a woman must be educated in today’s society to get cope up with the contemporary needs of the society. On the other side, only 22(44%) women thought that education is not so much necessary for awoman, as their primary thought revolves around the mindset that a girl ultimate goal of lifeis marriage then why should someone waste almost half of their life in study and doing job.

1. OPINION ABOUT MARRIAGE

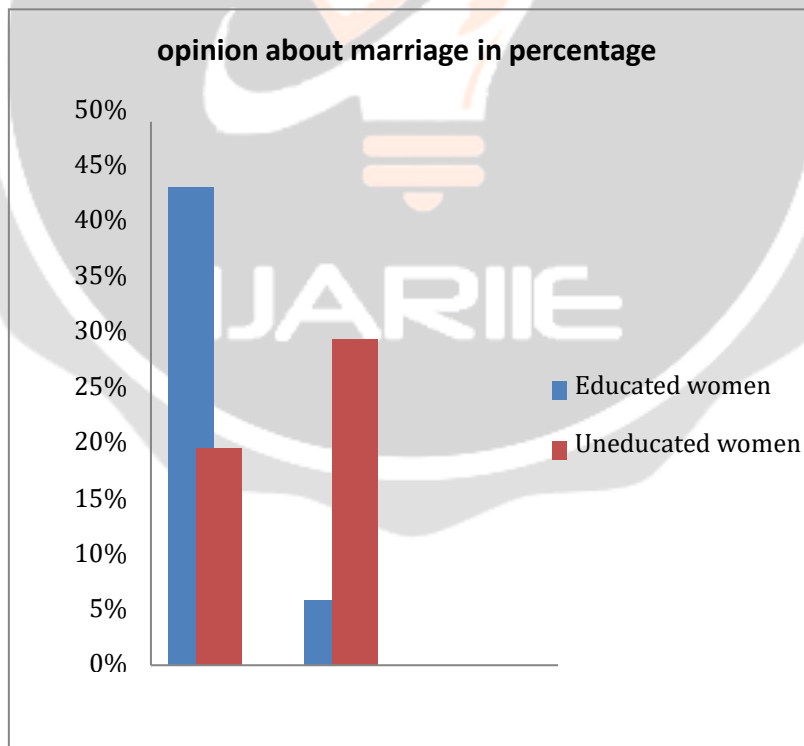


Figure.3: Percentage of women’s opinion about marriage

For reducing population, there should have right awareness among the people about fertility behavior and they should have proper knowledge about initiatives taken by government to reduce overpopulation and to provide mother and childcare protection. One of great initiative taken by government in this area is having a legalized age for marriage both for male and female. From this study, it has been found that 32(64%) women (22 educated and

10 uneducated) are about the legalized for marriage. Out of this, only 20 women known that 18 is legalized for marriage for female. Where 18(36%) women (3 educated and 15 uneducated) don't even know about this government rule, as most of the girls in village get married at early age.

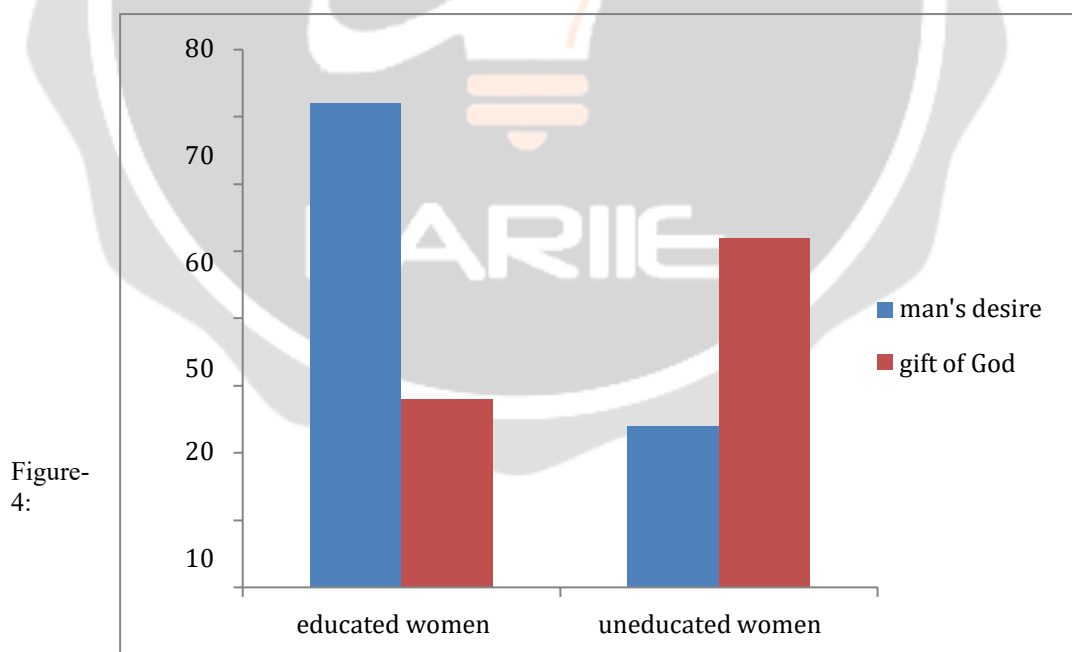
## 2. BELIEF ABOUT CONCEPTION

Usually in the tradition society one's fertility behavior has been depend on their general belief about conception. Suppose, those who are believed that the child birth is an exclusively as the result of man's desire or function of parents, to have greater control over their fertility behavior. In contrast to that those are believed that child birth is an exclusively as a gift of 'God' then none of them do not seem to interfere with conception leaving the occurrence of pregnancy to the nature.

Table -1: Percentage distribution of respondents' opinion about conception of children

Opinion of conception	Educated women	Uneducated women	Total
Man's desire	72% (18)	24% (6)	48%
Gift of God	28% (7)	76% (19)	52%
Total	100% (25)	100% (25)	100% (50)

In table, the value inside the bracket indicates the number of respondents of that particular category



Percentage distribution of respondents' opinion about conception of children

In the present study an over-whelming proportion (72%) of educated women believed that child birth exclusively result of man's desire than their counter-parts (24%). On the other hand, about three-quarter per cent of uneducated or less educated women believed that child birth as the function of 'God' (traditional view) in contrast to only 28 per cent of educated women believing the same.

Table-2: Distribution of number of women belong to particular category indicating time gap between first pregnancy

Category	Time gap Between First Pregnancy		Total
	(0-1 Year)	(1-2 year)	
Educated Women	4	21	25
Uneducated Women	19	6	25

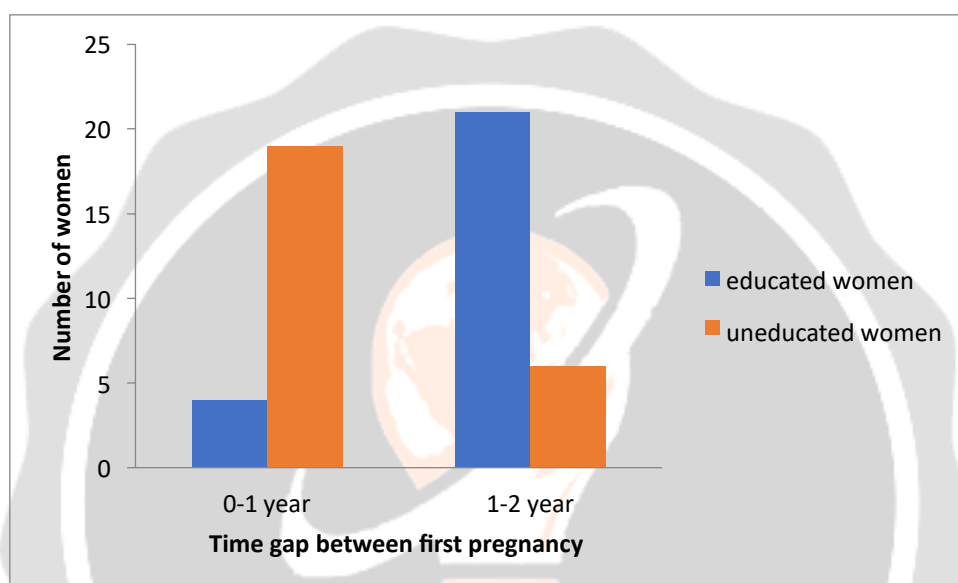


Figure-5: Distribution of number of women belong to particular category indicating timegap between first pregnancy

In the study it was found that the indices which indicate the fertility rate of women on the basis of their education are time gap between their first pregnancy and number of children. Out of the total educated women i.e. 25, 4 belongs to the category of women having child between one year of her marriage, while in the counterpart 21 women belongs to the category having their first pregnancy after 1 year of marriage.

Table-3: Distribution of number of women belong to particular category indicating number of children

Category	Number of Children		Total
	Less than 2	More than 2	
Educated Women	(23)	(2)	25
Uneducated Women	(13)	(12)	25

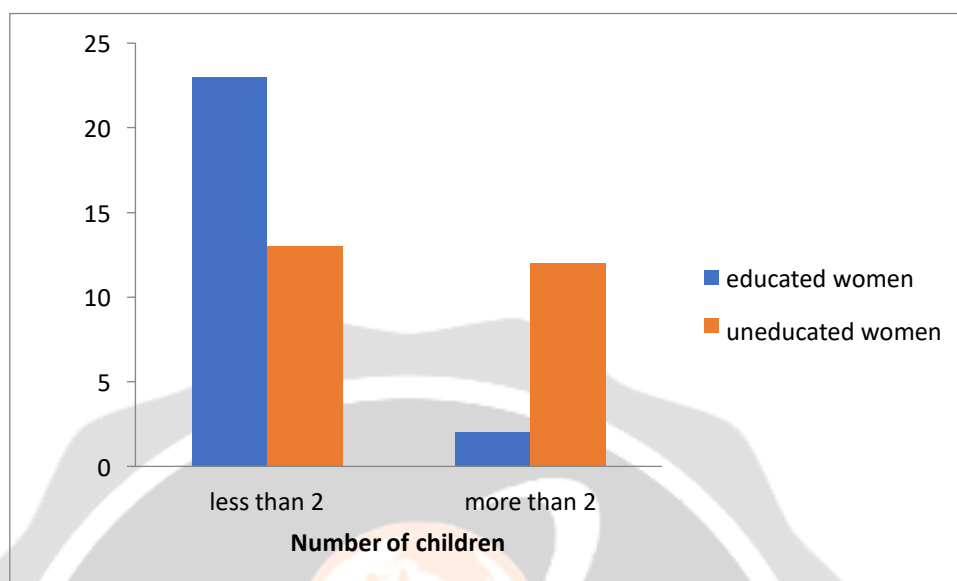


Figure-6: Distribution of number of women belong to particular category indicating number of children

From the table-3, it was found that number of children is considered as an important factor which gets affected by mothers' education. It was again divided into two sub category i.e. having less than 2 children and more than 2 children. Out of which 23 educated women have less than 2 children and 2 have more than 2 children. While the numbers are comparatively very less in case of uneducated women and i.e. only 13 women have less than 2 children and 12 women have more than 2 children.

## MAJOR FINDINGS

There is a significant difference in awareness level of educated and uneducated women. The study revealed the difference in awareness level of women on the basis of their education towards fertility behavior. It was observed that women having less educational qualification have less awareness about family planning. The study also showed that education has great impact on fertility behavior of women.

## IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Identification of differential factors which influence fertility would be more valuable and provide a guideline to the policy planners, administrators and executor for framing evaluator and implementing the population policy and family welfare programmes effectively towards bringing further socio-economic development.
2. Stratification of the population for selecting the sample into the educated women and uneducated women would be a better approach for studying the fertility rather than analysing all the women in a form of cluster since there are a lot of factors affecting their fertility behaviour.
3. Since education is an essential requirement for improving the status of women which in turn reduces fertility, steps should be taken to universalize female education through formal and non-formal education programs.
4. Participation of women in labour force is another factor which influences the higher or lower fertility. Hence, the government should take necessary steps to provide employment opportunities to women who possess requisite educational and other occupational qualifications, so as to enable them to enjoy the benefits of small family norms and also to improve economic position which in turn leads to empowerment of women.

5. Family planning material should be supplied at cheap rate to make it population and people should be made to realize the need and necessity of spacing in the birth of the children both for the health of the children as well as mothers.

## CONCLUSION

The research analysis indicates that educational status of women inversely affects the fertility; higher the educational level lowers the fertility and vice-versa. There is a close relationship between Education and Fertility. Fertility is highly affected by education. By educating women, it helps the women to think and decide their own future and family by taking proper decisions which is not only good for their own health and family but also for society and country. Education and women's participation in decision making is better in case of educated women than uneducated women. So, we can say that higher the educational attainment lowers the fertility, lower the educational status higher the fertility rate. Government should facilitate and provide better opportunities for female education so that educated women perform their role in

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