

A B S T R A C T

Starting, Stopping and Spacing: A Secondary Analysis of the 1977 Trinidad and Tobago Fertility Survey

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The main purpose of this research is to provide a substantive analysis of the 1977 Trinidad and Tobago Fertility Survey. The dissertation seeks to achieve a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms at work in the fertility transition process. An attempt is also made to unravel the effects of the socio-economic background factors on the fertility dynamics.

A multivariate approach using the techniques of statistical modelling is employed in the analysis of the data. The main techniques utilized are the linear logistic regression (logit) models; hazards regression models; life-table/survival analysis and multiple classification analysis.

The research has been conveniently sub-divided into three major areas of focus namely: Age at First Birth Analysis, Completed Fertility Analysis and Birth Interval Analysis. In each of these areas, models are developed to explain the phenomenon and also to highlight the main factors of predictors responsible for influencing change in the response variables. In general, the results highlight the important role of the factors such as level of education, partner's education and labour force participation, all of which capture the contemporaneous influences associated with the level of socio-economic development.

The thesis concludes by developing an overall perspective of the fertility transition and it articulates a policy strategy which could fit into a national socio-economic development plan. It is argued that Age at first birth sets the pace for subsequent fertility and it also represents the area with the greatest leverage for policy planners to act upon.

This study while having been generated from data specific to Trinidad and Tobago, still offers significant insights into the use of fertility studies and surveys as a tool of development planning for developing countries.