Exploring the Disparities on the Actualization of the Ideal Number of Children among Filipino Women

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Family size has been consistently associated with poverty incidence as shown by household survey data over time. According to the 2010 Census of Population, the average household size stands at 4.6 members. With this current situation, this research delves deeper into this vital familial attribute by determining the factors that influence the levels of disparity between a woman’s actual and ideal number of children. Furthermore, the research aims to understand how the odds of actualization of the Filipina’s ideal number of children increases or decreases in relation to the factors that were considered in the study.

The regression model for multinominal response utilized in the study is the proportional-odds cumulative logistic regression model. The results of the study have shown that religious affiliation to the Roman Catholic church doubles the estimated odds of exceeding the ideal number of children among women. Meanwhile, the odds of exceeding the desired number of children decrease as financial status improves. Husband-related factors also affect the actualization of the ideal number of children. More importantly, the discrepancy on the woman and husband’s ideal number of children, as well as the experience of emotional abuse from spouse both leads to an increase in the estimated odds of exceeding desired fertility. Lastly, a woman’s use of contraceptives to delay or avoid pregnancy and whether the woman wanted her last pregnancy are also significant factors that affect the actualization of a woman’s ideal number of children.

Keywords: fertility preference, contraceptive behavior, cumulative logit model, multiple response models