

Poster session

The procreative behaviours of the generations born in 1942 - 1966 in Poland in the context of their plans and aspirations

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This work tries to explain the nature of people's procreative behaviours in the context of their plans and aspirations. The main thesis of this project is based on Easterlin's statement that procreative decisions of young couples conform to their plans and aspirations. These are created in their families of origin and can be modified under the influence of the environment, in order to obtain the desired standard of living. According to Easterlin, the achievement of desired standard of living by young people depends on their plans, aspirations, and economic potential. They assess the relative change to their welfare in relation to the standard of living of their families of origin. Therefore, relative income is an important condition of people's behaviour.

The goal of this work is to verify Easterlin's ideas with reference to Polish generations born after the Second World War, i.e. how the research of people's procreative decisions agree with these ideas. Hence, the main goals of this study are as follows:

- description of the generations researched in the context of their plans, aspirations, and environment (relative income),
- description of the procreative behaviours of the generations researched and the assessment of the influence of these plans, aspirations and environment on their behaviours.

The procreative behaviours of generations researched are described using methods of event history analysis. The investigated behaviours are connected with the birth of the first, second, and third child. The method of relative income measurement is elaborated on. The non-parametric models were estimated with the help of the Kaplan-Meier method. This allowed us to define the procreative behaviours with respect to the childbearing sequence, generation, and socio-economical environment represented by particular variables. These variables include the socio-occupational group of the husband's father and the number of children born to the husband's mother. These two variables describe the family of origin of the married couple. Other variables include the wife's education level and the husband's socio-occupational group. These are used for defining the economic potential of the family. Consequently, semi-parametric models allowed us to analyse the influence of all the chosen variables.

We have used data from the representative, retrospective research “The transformation of family and fertility patterns in Poland, 1991” conducted by the Warsaw School of Economics and Central Statistical Office in 1991 as a part of “Family and Fertility Survey” project. The researched generations cover the following years: 1942-46, 47-51, 52-56, 57-61, 62-66. Baby bust generations include 1942-46 and 62-66, while baby boom generations comprise 1947-51, 52-56, and 57-61.

The characteristic of the population researched with respect to the chosen variables describing people’s plans, aspirations and environment (defining relative income) was taken into account and the following overall conclusions were drawn:

- Procreative behaviours of the population researched were diverse.
- Diverse behaviours were to a large extent the result of differences in the absolute income of a family. This resulted from the socio-occupational status of a married couple. The husband’s socio-occupational group and the wife’s education define this status.
- Relative income determined procreative behaviours of the families of the lowest socio-occupational status.
- The influence of the generation’s size on the relative income and procreative behaviours was not observed.

In conclusion, we can say that the Easterlin’s hypothesis, in a selective way, explains procreative behaviours of the Polish generations born after the Second World War. Namely, it explains the diversity of procreative behaviours in the environment of the lowest socio-occupational status.