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An Empirical Investigation of the Determinants of Fertility

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Poster Presentation 14

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE DETERMINANTS OF FERTILITY

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As sociologists and economists evaluate the demographic trends of the past century, they note that although the global population has grown rapidly, total fertility rates are falling worldwide. Scholars theorize that the fall in fertility rates is due to a variety of social and economic factors. After reviewing major demographic works, I chose five variables which are believed to have a significant impact on fertility: female illiteracy, female secondary education, female labor force participation, urbanization and per capita GNP. Using World Bank and United Nations data for fifty-six countries, I ran linear regressions for 1970, 1980 and 1990 to determine the significance of each variable in each year. Having determined the significance of the variables in my model, I will research specific studies targeting the individual variables or programs implemented which aim to reduce fertility indirectly by directly affecting these other factors.