

Pakistani Women's Perceived Spousal Concordance on Desired Family Size and Birth Intendedness

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Background

- In 2012-13, 16% of all pregnancies were unintended in Pakistan

Gender and Unintended Fertility

- Prior research has overlooked societal gender systems in shaping the reproductive attitudes and behaviors of men and women
 - It is often assumed that couples have common shared interests
- In a highly gendered society such as Pakistan, fertility preferences may not change at the same time, in the same way, for men and women
 - Men's preferences – or at least women's perceptions of their partner's preferences – may influence women's reproductive behavior

Objectives

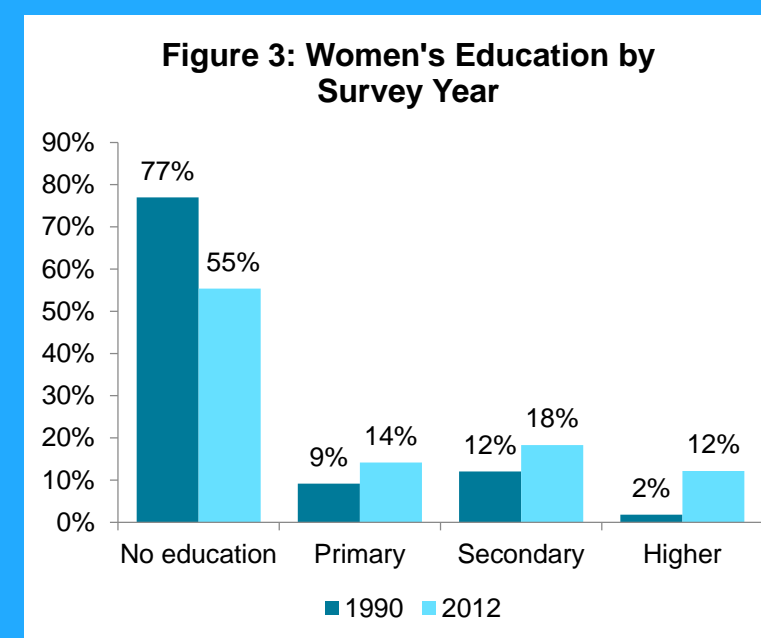
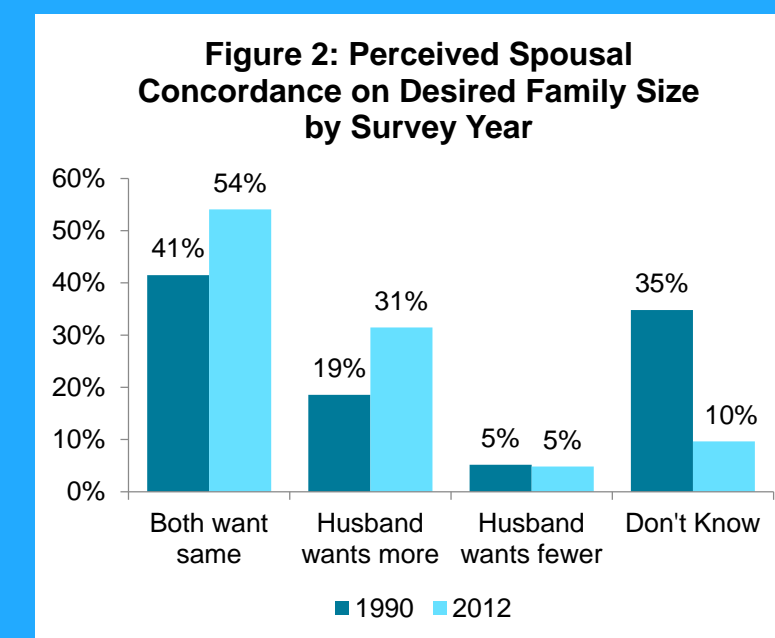
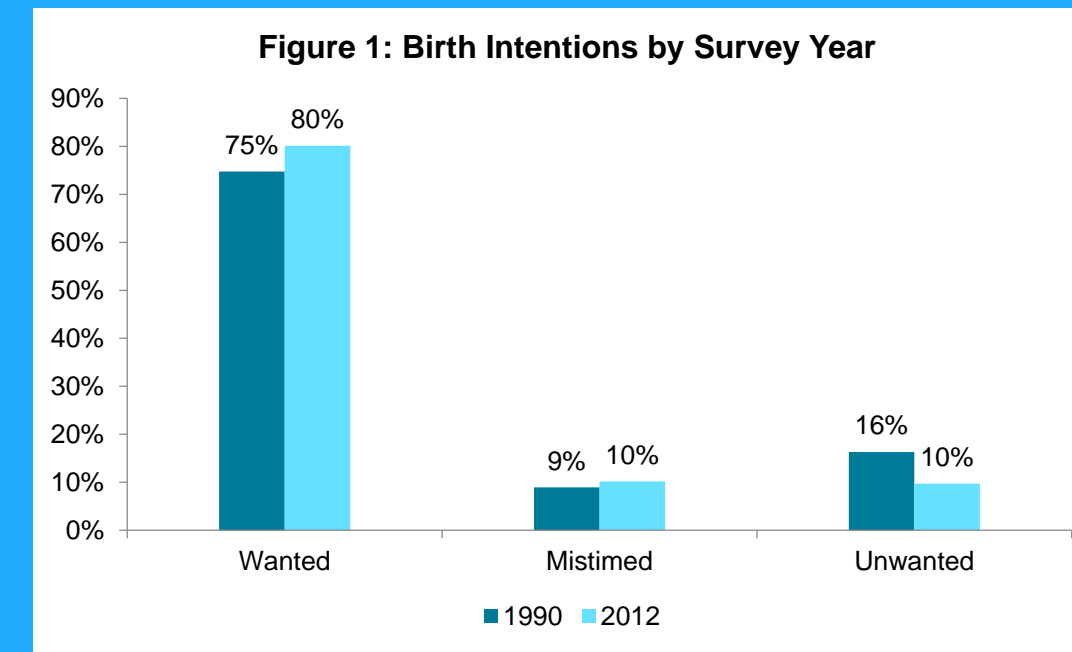
Given stalled fertility but rising female empowerment, this research investigates how women's education and their perceptions of their partner's fertility desires have shifted over time and whether this affects birth intendedness

Data & Sample

- Pakistan Demographic Health Survey (1990-91, 2012-13), ever-married women aged 15-49
- Most recent birth to avoid recall error
- Pooled surveys and disaggregated by birth order

Key Measures

- Birth Intentions: Wanted, Mistimed, Unwanted
- Perceived Spousal Concordance on Desired Family Size: Both want same, Husband wants more, Husband wants fewer, Don't know
- Wife's Education: No education, Primary, Secondary, Higher



Analysis

- First Order Birth: Logistic Regression (mistimed vs. wanted)
- Higher Order Birth: Multinomial Logistic Regression (mistimed, unwanted, wanted)

Results

Logistic Regression Predicting First Order Mistimed Pregnancy/Birth by Perceived Spousal Concordance and Wife's Education (n=2,126)

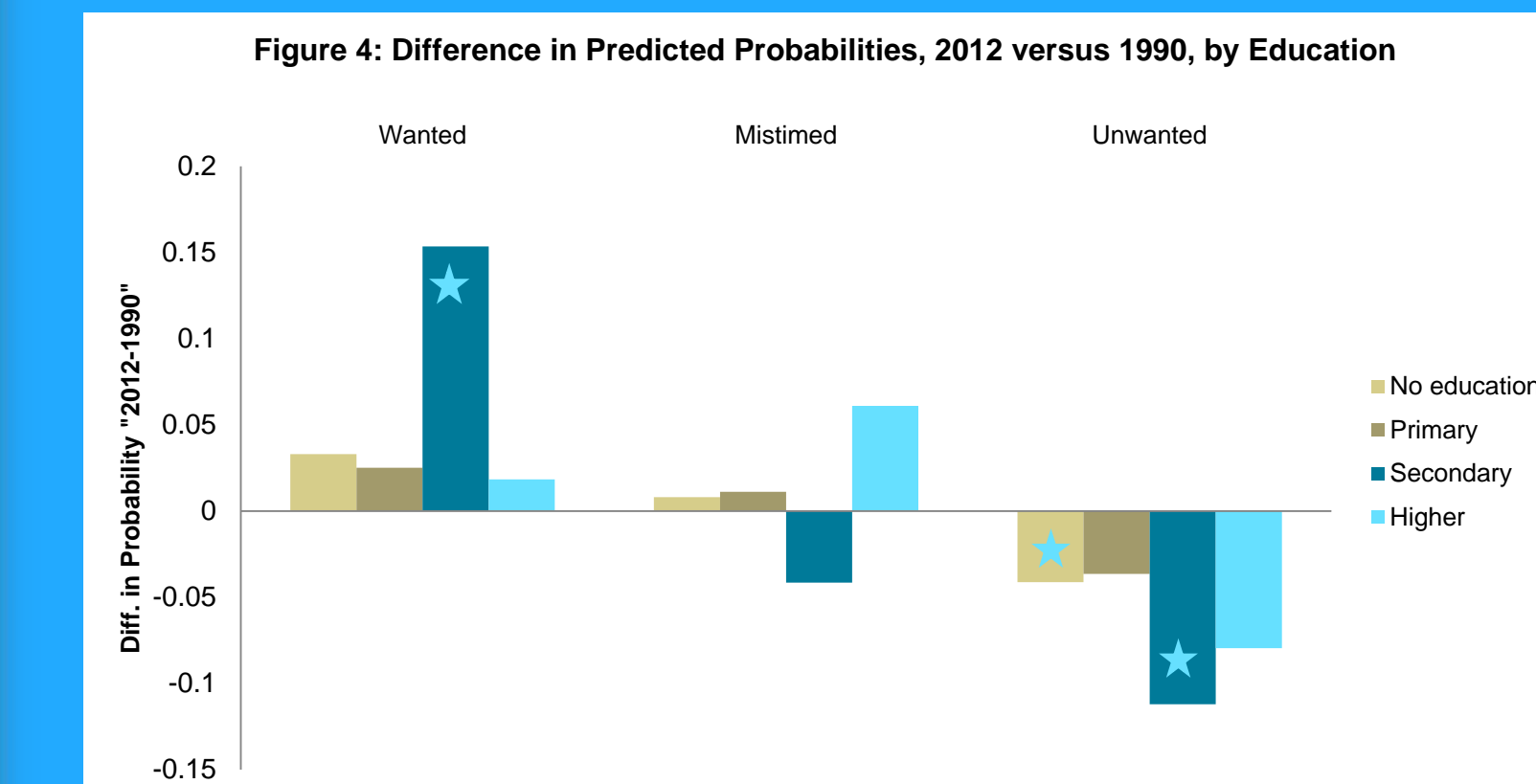
	Model 1: Perceived Spousal Concordance	Model 2: Model 1 + Wife's Education	Model 3: Model 2 + Couple's Educational & Age Gap	Model 4: Model 3+Controls
Year (omitted=1990)				
2012	0.78	0.62	0.67	1.18
Perceived Spousal Concordance(omitted= Both want same)				
Husband wants more	1.01	1.13	1.16	1.28
Husband wants fewer	1.41	1.53	1.50	1.54
Don't know	0.68	0.77	0.76	0.77
Wife's education (omitted= No education)				
Primary		1.93	2.22	1.90
Secondary		1.78	2.24	1.60
Higher		1.99	3.17*	2.31

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
Model 3 & 4 include controls for couple educational gap, wife's age, couple's age difference, work status, place of residence, household wealth, and dummy for pregnant women

Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting fertility Intentions of Higher order Birth/Pregnancy by Perceived Spousal Concordance and Wife's Education (n=9,004)

	Model 1: Perceived Spousal Concordance			Model 2: Model 1+Wife's Education			Model 3: Model 2+controls+Interactions		
	Mistimed vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted	Mistimed vs. unwanted	Mistimed vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted	Mistimed vs. unwanted	Mistimed vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted	Mistimed vs. unwanted
Year (omitted=1990)									
2012	1.05	0.55***	1.93***	0.89	0.55***	1.61***	0.95	0.63***	1.51**
Perceived Spousal Concordance(omitted= Both want same)									
Husband wants more	0.88	0.92	0.96	1.00	0.92	1.09	1.02	0.84	1.22
Husband wants fewer	1.26	1.02	1.25	1.30	1.02	1.28	1.42	1.04	1.36
Don't know	0.58*	0.69**	0.84	0.70*	0.69**	1.01	0.73	0.77*	0.94
Wife's education (omitted= No education)									
Primary		2.04***	1.06		1.93***	1.40*		1.14	1.24
Secondary		2.58***	1.00		2.57***	1.50*		1.01	1.49
Higher		2.63***	0.80		3.30***	1.43		0.71	2.01*

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
Model 3 include controls for couple educational gap, wife's age, couple's age difference, work status, number of living sons, preceding birth interval, experienced any child death, place of residence, household wealth, and dummy for pregnant women



Summary

- Did women's empowerment (proxied by education) accompanied by spousal concordance on desired family size contribute to decline in unwanted fertility?
 - Spousal concordance in general is not associated with birth intendedness
 - Education is associated with increase in risk of experiencing mistimed birth relative to wanted birth
 - Unwanted fertility declined for women with secondary education between 1990 and 2012

Limitations

- Lack of data on husbands' fertility intentions and perceptions of their wives' desired family size
- Temporal ordering of outcome and independent variables
- Retrospective measurement of pregnancy intentions

Conclusion

Despite increasing female education, many women seem to be unable to assert their preferences even though they seem to be communicating more about fertility preferences