

Abstract:

Relatively little attention has been given to the interpretation of age-at-marriage differences in fertility. This paper discusses possible demographic and sociological sources of this differential. The argument is made that sociological interpretations deserve increased attention since most of the observed differential persists after control for likely demographic components (premarital pregnancy, unwanted fertility, and subfecundity) and for correlated social and background variables (education of self and parents, religion, farm background, number of siblings, whether respondent's parental family was intact, and husband's age at marriage). Multiple-classification analysis is employed. The analysis concludes by noting that age at first birth has an even stronger relationship with fertility than age at marriage and that the sociological dimensions of age relevant to age at marriage are even more appropriate to age at entrance into motherhood