

CONTRACEPTIVE USE AND INTENTIONS AMONG CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN INDIA: A TWO-STAGE LOGIT ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY EFFECTS

Niyati Joshi, C.P.Prakasam, Rajiv Ranjan and Nandita Saikia

International Institute for Population Sciences

Govandi Station Road, Deonar, Mumbai, India

Email:n2joshi@rediffmail.com

Extended Abstract:

Orthodox Christian church in Ethiopia is conservative and pronatalist forces. Minority group are also a major cultural force in reproduction and different religious affiliation are present within the ethnic groups providing a context allowing a greater understanding of the effects of religious birth control. Although all observers agree that the unique personal identities that result from this diversity are fundamental elements of social organization, attitudes, and behaviors, previously, no systematic treatment of these issues have been offered in demographic studies. In this context, we seek to determine whether exposure to persons of diverse social identities in their communities reduces the impact of women's own social identity on fertility control. Also, this study becomes important for population who migrate due to displacement either due to natural calamity or forced migration like developmental activities and who loses their social identity due to forced migration, cannot settle their birth practices and may be affected with the original inhabitants which may be pronatalist, in such cases study of community effects and social identity on contraceptive intentions and use become very important.

For the purpose, we utilize the data from National Family Health Survey (India) (1998-99) which is a survey of around 90000 women on their maternal and child health factors out of which significant percent women are Christians. The study has gathered a wealth of information on the marital and fertility behaviours of the women aged 15-49. For this study we use data for currently married women in their first marriage aged 20-49 and married to the head of the household. We compare the social identity of Christian women

with that of non-Christians who are in majority in their both ethnic and religious identities. When women live in communities where their own social identities are the majority, the norms of the women in majority are expected to be reinforced. We develop an entropy index to understand the diversity of community and its effect on contraceptive use and intentions.

For analysis, we apply two-stage logit model analysis and select explanatory variables as social identity (A), compositional factors (B), household education (C), work status (D), ethno religious composition (E) and diversity (F) and demographic control variables (G), Contraceptive Use (H) and Future Contraceptive Intentions (I). For understanding the role of social identity and community effects on contraceptive use and intentions of the Christians and non-Christians, first we generate a  $2^8$  cross-classified table of selected categorical variables and apply log-linear analysis and we select interaction models for both groups initially by Brown Screening Technique and then standard stepwise procedures. Analytically this becomes two stage logit model. We apply logistic model whose parameters give the path coefficient to understand the interactions and paths and we compute higher order interactions to determine interlinking paths and its impact on contraceptive use and intentions.

The analysis suggested different paths among Christians and non-Christians of the mechanism of contraceptive use and intention and we found that models (A,B,C, D,H, I) for Christians at first stage and (B,C,G,F,H,I) at the second stage. Similarly we found for non-Christians the best fit model as (A, B, D, G, H, I) first stage and (B, D, E, F, G H, I) the second stage.

Therefore, the analysis suggests that social identity is an important factor for increasing contraceptive use for both Christians and non-Christians but diversity (which is very among Christians) is found to be strongly affecting the contraceptive use and intentions among Christians. The interaction of Compositional factors, household education, work status, and diversity and demographic control variables affects the Contraceptive Use and Future Contraceptive Intentions among Christians.

Therefore the study suggests that for increasing the contraceptive use and intentions in any society, social identity of community and its impact puts a larger effect through the interaction of compositional factors like individual religious affiliation and educational

status and group identity of minority or majority. Work status acts as a normative factor on the path to increasing contraceptive use. As in non-christians contraceptive intentions have been found to be very high which may be the impact of diversity on the desire to control births.

The study throws light for policy and population program managers that there is a need to incorporate the importance of community effects and social identity of the communities while developing the intervention strategies for increasing contraceptive use and intention and it is also important to consider the paths through which they more effectively interact .This study is also important when there is continuous displacement and resettlement of the population either due to natural calamity or developmental activities which enforces the communities to dislocate and mix with other communities and where reinforced norms may be of original communities for birth limitation due to majority or minority and that may pronatalist and if the displaced population have come from birth limitation environment, it would be difficult to such a situation and social identity would be coming out to be a very important factor advocating for contraceptive use and intentions.