A Meta-analysis of the Relationship between Women’s Fertility Intentions and Level of Education

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The complex effect of education on fertility has been widely studied in the literature and is a topic of high relevance in research on reproductive behaviour. Fertility intentions are an important channel through which education affects fertility. However, the relationship between fertility intentions and education is not necessarily the same as the relationship between actual fertility and education. Empirical evidence indicates that more educated women do not intend to have fewer children than less educated women but they end up with fewer children and they revise downwards their intentions more often than their lower-educated counterparts. Aim of this study is to investigate the conditions under which a positive relationship between women’s educational level and childbearing intentions is observed. Linkages between fertility intentions and education in the literature are examined by the use of a meta-analysis. The fertility intention gap between low and high educated women appears to be relatively higher in Canada, France and Italy as compared to Germany. Supply of pre-primary childcare and female labour force participation seem to explain some of the regional differences.

About the presenters
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