

VID Colloquium

The Response of Marital Fertility to Short-term Macroeconomic Stresses. An Event History Analysis: Ethiopia, 1973-2011

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For centuries, whether induced and other human-made macroeconomic shocks has been threatening the welfare of mankind and the causal linkages between these macroeconomic fluctuations and demographic outcomes has remained the interest of researchers and policy makers. However, previous studies mainly employed an aggregated level analyses which lack details to understand the mechanisms through which crisis affect demographic outcome and to examine the differential impact of crisis by different socioeconomic groups. This thesis combine a retrospectively collected individual level longitudinal data, from the most recent Ethiopian demographic and health survey, with macroeconomic indicators to fill these gaps. The results of a two-level discrete time event history analysis confirms the absence of deliberate and planned response of births to short term economic stresses that Ethiopians has been facing over the last forty years. The delayed response of births rather indicate to the importance of malnutrition and migration in channeling the effect of crisis. That is, economic misery increase exposure to disease and malnutrition which lower fecundability, and higher risk of spontaneous abortions. Moreover, Economic shocks force partners to separate temporarily as a spouse migrate in search of job elsewhere. Rural households, landed and agrarians responded strongly to short term economic stresses. The death of the previous child, education and service sector employment are important moderates of the effect of economic hardships. The study calls for policy measures in improving the productivity and diversified income sources of the small holder agrarians.

About the presenter

Endale Kebede is currently a student at the European Doctoral School of Demography (EDSD). He has a double master degree in economics from the University of Warwick (UK) and Lund University (Sweden). He started his research in demography at Lund University where he was supervised by Prof. Tommy Bengtsson and other staffs of the Center for Economic Demography. In his master thesis he has analyzed the response of marital fertility to short term macroeconomic stress that Ethiopian has been facing over the last four decades, from the retrospectively collected individual level DHS of Ethiopia. The thesis was awarded as the 'Best Master's Thesis 2014' of the Department of Economic History. His research interest is, in general, on the linkage between economic and environmental changes with demographic outcomes.

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