

Title of Article: Ecology, Development and Fertility Behaviour in South Central India

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Abstract: The paper is about the impact of levels of socio-economic development on fertility, examines two different settings one developed called Guntur district and a least developed called Kurnool district both from the South Central State of India. The objective was to examine the impact of socio-economic development on the fertility of the two districts. This is done using variables such as castes, value of children, and age at marriage, education and the number of infants that died; all in the bid to assess their differential influence on fertility behavior between the developed and least developed districts in the same State. The data for this paper were drawn from a secondary data. Using a multi-stage random procedure 1000 eligible couples were selected at random from both districts. Path analysis was employed for the analysis as it gives holistic visual understanding of the direct and indirect relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable (fertility). In addition, it helps to rank the order of importance of causal factors on differential fertility behavior. The findings reveal that the incidence of infant mortality, education of wife, age at marriage, caste status and value of children were better in Guntur, minimize the pronatalistic influence in the district compared to Kurnool where all these variables are worse, leading to high pronatalistic tendencies in the latter district. The paper recommends raising the level of social development through imaginative interventions to tackle and improve the overall quality of life of population particularly in the least developed district of Kurnool.

Key words: pronatalistic, Guntur, district, Kurnool, socio-economic, development, fertility