Pakistani Women's Perceived Spousal Concordance on Desired Family Size and Birth Intendedness
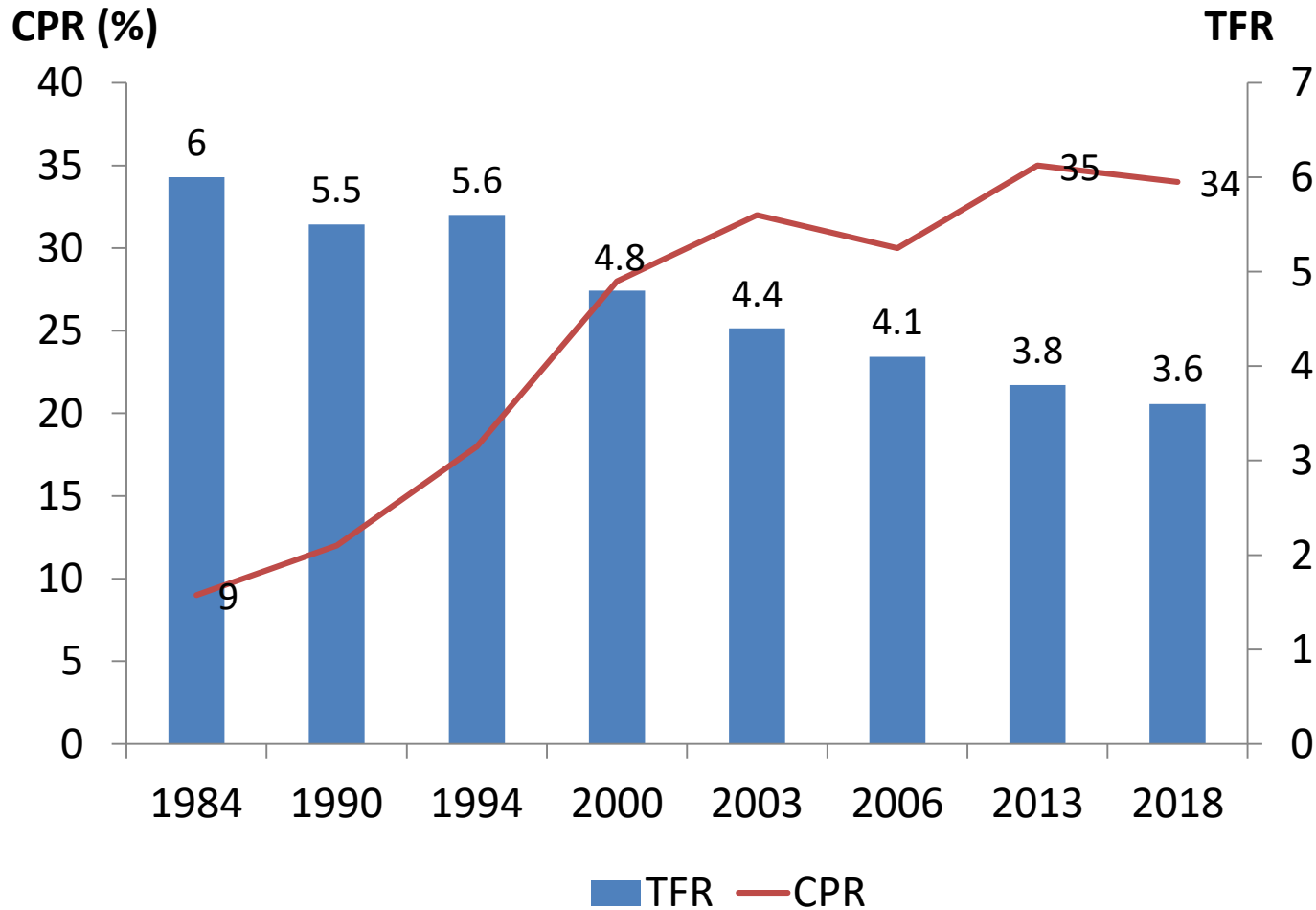
Saima Bashir

Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

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Fertility Stall in Pakistan

Unintended Fertility

- Unintended childbearing (both mistimed and unwanted) occurs when women have more children than they desire

- In 2012-13, 16% of all pregnancies are unintended
  - 9 % mistimed
  - 7% unwanted

Drivers of Unplanned Childbearing

- Lack of knowledge of contraception and sources of supply
- Low quality and limited availability of family planning services
- Cost of method, services, travel, and time
- Health concerns and side effects
- Objections from husbands or other family members

Gender and Unintended Childbearing

- Overlooked societal gender systems in shaping the reproductive attitudes and behaviors of men and women

- It is often assumed that couples have common shared interests

- However, gender necessarily and differentially effects the fertility decisions of a couple

- Men's attitudes and desires toward fertility shape the fertility outcomes of the couple

Contd…

- Lack of attention to gender is especially problematic, given marked improvement in women's education over time.
- In last two decades a gradual improvement in female literacy occurred in Pakistan
  - with rates increasing from 21% in 1990 to 47% in 2011-12
- Gender changes at the societal level sometimes are slow to translate into gender changes in interpersonal relationships.

Spousal Concordance and Unintended Fertility

- Is spousal concordance on fertility desires linked to birth intendedness?

Hypothesis 1: Women's perceived spousal discordance on desired family size increases the risk of unintended pregnancy/birth, particularly for higher order births.

Women's Education and Unintended Fertility

- Is female education level linked to birth intendedness?

Hypothesis 2: Educated women will be less likely to experience unintended fertility than women with no formal education.

Educational Gradient of Unintended Fertility

- Role of diffusion processes in spreading smaller family ideals

Hypothesis 3: Educational differences of unintended childbearing will decrease over time.

Data

- Pakistan Demographic Health Survey

  - 1990-91 (4,049 ever-married women aged 15-49)
  - 2012-13 (7,087 ever-married women aged 15-49)

- Most recent birth to avoid recall errors

- Pooled surveys and disaggregated by birth order
  - First Order Birth/Pregnancy=2,126
  - Higher Order Birth/Pregnancy=9,004

Dependent Variable

- Birth Intentions

  The DHS asks women "At the time you became pregnant with (name), did you want to become pregnant then, did you want to wait until later, or did you not want to become pregnant at all?"

  Dependent variables has 3 categories:
  - Wanted pregnancy/birth (respondent reports that she wanted to become pregnant)
  - Mistimed pregnancy/birth (respondent reports that she wanted to wait until later)
  - Unwanted pregnancy/birth (respondent reports that she did not want to have any (more) children at all).

Key Independent Variables

- Perceived spousal concordance on desired family size

  "Do you think your husband wants the same number of children that   you want, or does he want more or fewer than you want?"

  - Same number of children (reference)

  - More than wife

  - Fewer than wife,

  - Don't know

- Wife's education

  - No formal Education (reference)

  - Primary education

  - Secondary education

  - Higher education
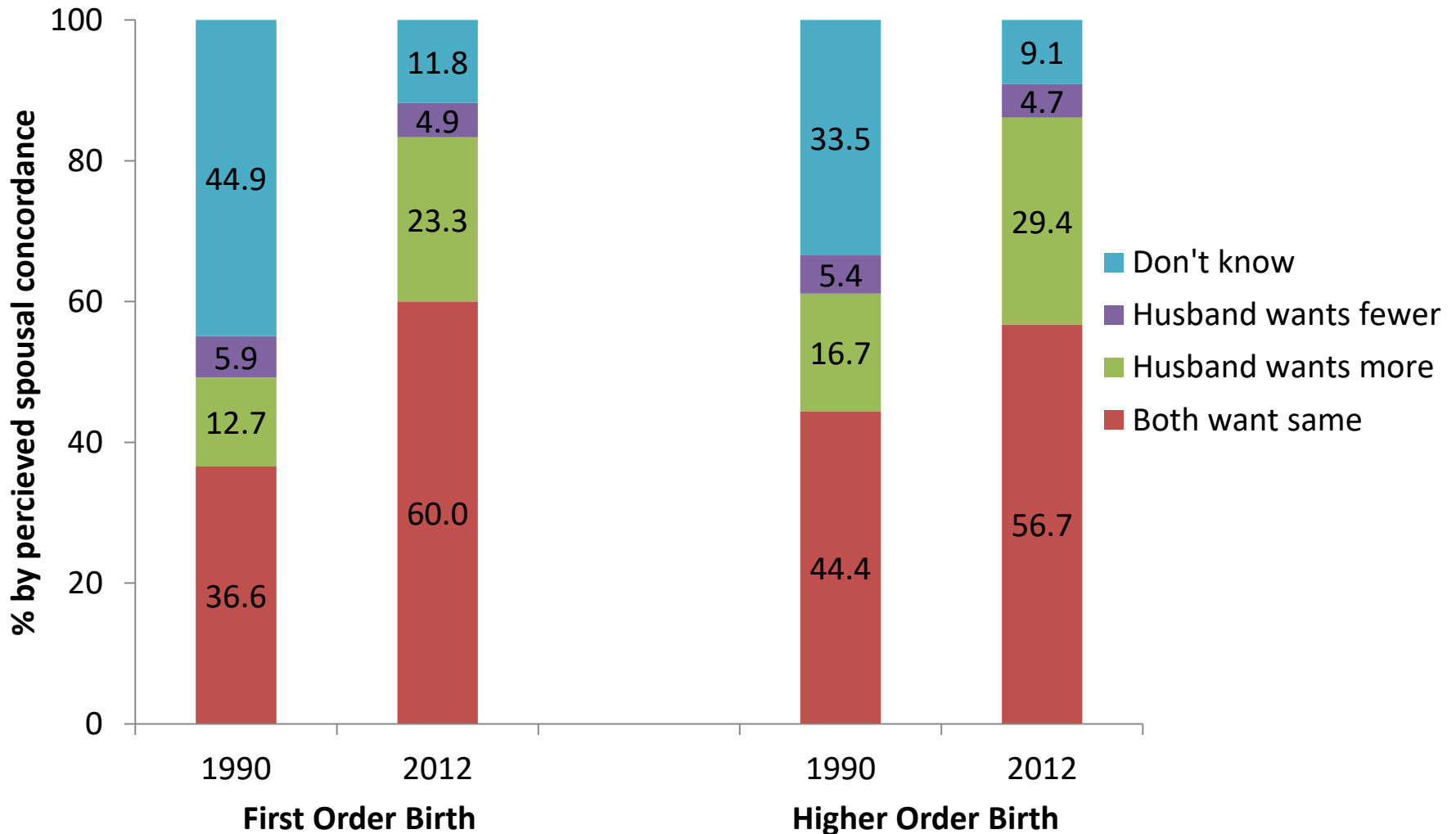
Analytical Strategy

- First Order Birth
  - Logistic Regression

- Higher Order Birth
  - Multinomial Logistic Regression
  - Predicted Probabilities From interactive Multinomial Logistic Regression Models

Births Intentions by Birth Order and Survey Year

More women knows about their husband's fertility desires in 2012-13

Perceived Spousal Concordance on Desired Family Size and Birth Intendedness

Fertility Intentions of Higher Order Birth

	1990			2012		
	Wanted	**Mistimed**	**Unwanted**	**Wanted**	**Mistimed**	**Unwanted**
Perceived Spousal Concordance on Desired Family Size						
Both want same	65.71	11.57	22.72	76.73	11.93	11.34
Husband wants more	73.26	9.65	17.09	75.01	11.58	13.4
Husband wants fewer	70.91	12.73	16.36	72.4	13.26	14.34
Don't know	73.94	7.6	18.46	82.86	7.43	9.71

Women's Education and Birth Intendedness

Variables	Fertility Intentions of Higher Order Birth						
	1990				**2012**		
	Wanted	**Mistimed**	**Unwanted**		**Wanted**	**Mistimed**	**Unwanted**
Wife's education							
No formal education	72.9	7.8	19.3		78.5	8.6	12.9
Primary	63.4	16.6	20.1		72.1	13.9	14.0
Secondary	56.4	19.4	24.3		74.6	15.9	9.5
Higher	72.9	10.4	16.7		74.5	17.7	7.8

Multinomial Logistic Regression: Higher Order Birth

Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting fertility Intentions of Higher order Birth/Pregnancy by Perceived Spousal Concordance and Wife's Education (n=9,004)

	Model 1: Percieved Spousal Concordance		Model 2: Model 1+Wife's Education		Model 3: Model 2+controls+Interactions	
	Mistimed Vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted	Mistimed Vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted	Mistimed Vs. wanted	unwanted vs. wanted
Year (omitted=1990)						
2012	1.05	0.55***	0.89	0.55***	1.05	0.69***
Percieved Spousal Concordance(omitted= Both want same)						
Husband wants more	0.88	0.92	1.00	0.92	1.02	0.84
Husband wants fewer	1.26	1.02	1.30	1.02	1.36	1.01
Don't know	0.58*	0.69**	0.70*	0.69**	0.74	0.79*
Wife's education (omitted= No education)						
Primary			2.04***	1.06	1.37	1..07
Secondary			2.58***	1.00	2.26***	1.58*
Higher			2.63***	0.80	0.85	0.96

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Model 3 include controls for couple educational gap, wife's age, couple's age difference, work status, number of living

Predicted Probabilities of Unintended Childbearing by Education

	No formal education	Primary	Secondary	Higher
1990				
Wanted	0.73	0.7	0.61	0.75
Mistimed	0.09	0.12	0.17	0.08
Unwanted	0.17	0.18	0.22	0.17
2012				
Wanted	0.77	0.73	0.77	0.77
Mistimed	0.1	0.13	0.13	0.14
Unwanted	0.13	0.14	0.11	0.09

Summary

- Over time unwanted fertility has declined in Pakistan
- Did women's empowerment accompanied by spousal concordance on desired family size contribute to decline in unwanted fertility?
  - Spousal concordance in general is not associated with birth intendedness
  - Education is associated with increase in risk of experiencing mistimed birth relative to wanted birth
  - Difference in level of unwanted fertility declined for secondary educated women between 1990 and 2012

Limitations

- Non-availability of data on husbands attitudes regarding the intentions of couple most recent pregnancy/birth and husbands perceptions of their wives' desired family size
- Disadvantage of cross sectional nature of demographic health surveys
- Biases are inherent in the retrospective measurement of pregnancy intentions
  - Recall error
  - Women may rationalize their behavior after having live birth
  - women probably underreport unintended pregnancies that do not end in a live birth (i.e., induced abortion or some other outcome)

Way Forward

- Panel couple level data to examine the fertility intentions over the reproductive life course
  - Because fertility intentions are not static and are reassessed over the individual life course
- Examine the relationship between birth intentions, education and contraceptive failure

Thank you!

For question and queries please email at
saima@pide.org.pk