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No. 177, 2003

Bongaarts, John. "Completing the fertility transition in the developing world: The role of educational differences and fertility preferences," *Policy Research Division Working Paper* no. 177. New York: Population Council. ([PDF](#))

Abstract

This study summarizes patterns of educational differentials in wanted and unwanted fertility at different stages of the fertility transition based on data from DHS surveys in 57 less developed countries. As the transition proceeds, educational differentials in wanted fertility tend to decline and differentials in unwanted fertility tend to rise. An assessment of fertility patterns in more and less developed countries with low fertility concludes that these differentials are likely to remain substantial when less developed countries reach the end of their transitions. This finding implies that the educational composition of the population remains a key predictor of overall fertility in late transitional countries and that low levels of schooling can be a cause of stalling fertility.



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