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Reconciling studies of men's gender attitudes and fertility Response to Westoff and Higgins

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Abstract

A reflexion by Westoff and Higgins (2009) in response to a study by Puur, Oláh, Tazi-Preve and Dorbritz (2008) has been recently published in this journal. Both articles addressed the relationship between men's gender attitudes and fertility, using different datasets and quite different measures of gender attitudes, producing divergent results. Based on that, the authors of the reflexion suggested caution regarding the conclusion of the Puur et al. analysis. We respond to their arguments here by elaborating on the theoretical underpinnings of the claim presented in the original article and thus the importance of the differences of the measures of gender attitudes applied in the two studies (gender roles in the public sphere vs. the private sphere). With this contribution, we stress the need for further research on the association of men's gender attitudes and fertility.

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