A Turkish Paradigm: Ideal Family Size, Family Planning, and Women’s Values and Beliefs

By

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Abstract

I use a representative sample of 6519 ever-married women from the TDHS 1993 to model the associations of women’s values and beliefs with ideal family size (IFS), and current practice of family planning (FP) in Turkey. I fit two multinominal logistic models to test these associations, controlling for socio-demographic background, marriage and reproductive behavior, and lifestyle. Covariates are also modeled as principal components for Moral Individualism, Fundamentalism, Conventionalism, and Pragmatism, and as linear combinations for lifestyle, gender equality, marital relationship, religious beliefs, and traditional family norms. As expected in the main hypothesis, associations of Moral Individualism with FP and with IFS are significant in positive and negative directions respectively. This is supported at least partially by the associations with FP and IFS, of lifestyle, religious beliefs, gender equality, and traditional family norms. Structural variables are less significant, supporting in a nuanced way, the main hypothesis. Associations of socio-demographic variables with FP and IFS are weak to not significant, so is association of ethnicity and FP. Odds ratios support the well documented positive association of women’s education and FP. Husband’s religious beliefs and education stand as a Turkish oddity for being crucial determinants of both practice of FP and IFS.