

Childbirth conditions research

December 2019

Research and analysis objectives

The research investigates the circumstances of childbirth and mothers' experiences of the childbirth experience itself. The aim of the research was to find out what factors influence the positive experience of childbirth. Our question is how people, events, objects and circumstances that occur during this period leave an impression and make memorable an experience in the life of the mother and her family members. The aspects studied are interesting and valuable in themselves, but even more remarkable is their impact on family planning. Indeed, the way in which childbirth is experienced has an impact on the willingness to have children in the future, and this approach has demographic relevance.

Research methodology

The data were collected by interviewing 2000 mothers. The average age of respondents was 35.7 years at the time of the survey. The majority of mothers have a tertiary education (45.5%), most of them are aged 35-39 (32.2%) and live in a city (38.8%). In terms of marital status, 68.3% are married. In terms of financial situation, the majority are well-off (53.1%).

The study's conclusions

1, Among those who have children at a young age there are more women with several children.

- Mothers with three or more children give birth to their first child at age 24.
- Mothers with two children give birth to their first child at the age of 28.
- Mothers with one child have their first child over the age of 30.

2, Those with lower levels of education give birth earlier and have more children.

- Those with eight years of primary school or less give birth to their first child at age 21, while those with a degree give birth over age 30.
- In terms of number of children, the average number of children is 2.64 for mothers with eight or fewer grades of education, and 2.06 for mothers with a university degree.

3, Those who are married have more children, are more likely to choose their own doctor and midwife and to give the doctor a "financial gift", and have a higher proportion of father-accompanied births.

- The average number of children for married women is 2.5, the highest compared to other marital statuses.
- 75.5% of married women had their own doctor or midwife.
- 67.2% of married couples gave a "financial gift".
- 65.3% of married women had the father present in the delivery room.

4, A better socio-cultural background has a positive effect on the period of pregnancy, while a vulnerable pregnancy has a negative effect.

This is supported by:

- The older the mother, the more positive her perception of the pregnancy period.
- The higher the mother's educational level, the more positive her perception of the pregnancy period.
- The better the mother's financial situation, the more positive her experience of the pregnancy period.
- The experience of pregnancy was negatively affected if the mother was at risk.

5, A positive birth experience was associated with a favourable socio-cultural background.

This is supported by:

- In terms of financial situation, those in the best financial situation were the most satisfied with the birth experience. A less favourable socio-economic status was associated with a more negative perception of the birth experience.
- Married people were the most satisfied with the circumstances of the childbirth experience.
- Satisfaction with the circumstances of childbirth increases with age.
- The more children a mother has, the more satisfied she is with the birth experience.
- In terms of the type of settlement, mothers who are most satisfied with their childbirth experience live in towns, or in the capital.

6. Social and family support is positively associated with the childbirth experience.

This is supported by:

- Women who chose their own doctor or midwife had a more positive experience of childbirth.
- Respondents who had the father or another relative present at the birth were more positive.
- Mothers were more positive if the father was present in the delivery room when the baby was born.

7, Caesarean section was negatively associated with birth experience.

This is supported by:

- Mothers who gave birth naturally reported a more positive birth experience.
- Mothers who gave birth by planned caesarean section reported a more positive birth experience.

8. Pre-planned caesarean sections are more common in at-risk pregnancies.

This is supported by:

- A higher proportion of planned caesarean sections are among at-risk pregnant mothers. 52.7% of at-risk expectant mothers gave birth by planned caesarean section.
- A higher proportion of mothers with multiple children have a planned caesarean section. For mothers with three or more children, the rate of planned caesarean section is 52.3%.
- The rate of planned caesarean sections increases with increasing maternal age at delivery.

- 74% of twin births were planned caesareans.

9. A positive perspective on the days after delivery is associated with a more favourable socio-cultural background.

This is supported by:

- Above age 20, the older the mother, the more positively she experienced the postpartum days.

- Mothers in the capital and in towns are the most satisfied with postpartum days.

- The most positive views on the days after childbirth were held by cohabiting mothers and married mothers.

- Mothers in a better financial situation were more positive about the days after childbirth.

10. Postpartum days are positively associated with the number of children, the way the child was born, breastfeeding and whether the mother was given painkillers during delivery.

This is supported by:

- Mothers with three or more children had a more positive experience of the postpartum period.

- Women who gave birth naturally had a more positive experience of the postpartum period.

- Mothers who were able to breastfeed their baby in hospital had a more positive experience of the postpartum period.

- Those who did not receive painkillers or anaesthetics during childbirth had a more positive experience of the days after birth.