



Fertility, Desires and Intentions: A Longitudinal Analysis

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This research paper will utilise data from the four waves of HILDA: 2001-2004 for its longitudinal fertility analysis of men and women. The data analysis method consists of the creation of a data set of all couples in 2001, i.e. women aged 18-44 years and their matched partners and then measuring changes that occurred to them with respect to achieved fertility, expectations and intentions in 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04. This is a balanced panel data, as only women and men who were members of a couple in 2001 were followed through. The research questions include:

- What is the magnitude of the changes in achieved fertility between 2001 and 2004 for men and women who were members of a couple in 2001?
- Re fertility desires, expectations and intentions consistent over-time or do they vary from year to year?
- What factors influence intentions to have (more) children (demographic and socio-economic factors, parenting stress, relationship satisfaction, domestic division of labour, etc)?
- Have the fertility intentions in 2001 materialised in subsequent waves of HILDA? If no, what factors are associated with this?
- Are those who gave births between waves the ones who said they intended to have children?
- What proportion of those who were asked when they intended to have the next child in 2002 HILDA had born the intended numbers of children by the time they specified?

This research is integral to the author's previous research work on women's fertility, and men and women's fertility differences in achieved fertility, expectations and intentions, which were based on the cross-sectional 2001 HILDA dataset. Though the period covered is short, this paper will make the first attempt to understand the dynamics of Australia's fertility.