

Son Preference and Desired Family Size in a Rural Community of West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT In the present study, the desired family size and preference for son and their socio-economic and demographic determinants were studied among rural populations of West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, India. The data were collected from 214 respondents from the rural area of West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh. The mean desirable number of children is 2.5. More than half of the respondents desired to have only two children and only 3% of male respondents desired to have one child. The data also showed that more than half of the respondents opted for at least one son. With regard to the choice of first child, majority of men (70%) are in favour of son as their first child and only 2% desired to have daughter as their first child. Among women respondents, these figures are 55% and 2.5%, respectively. These parameters are associated with some of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The study concludes the existence of son preference, which is undesired fertility behaviour among this population. Also the study warrants checking the possible gender bias in child health programmes.