

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does fertility mean?

**Answer:** In demography, the word fertility is used in relation to the actual production of children or 'occurrence of births, especially live births'. Fertility must be distinguished from fecundity which refers to the capacity to bear children. In fact, fecundity provides an upper bound for fertility.

2. What are the measures of fertility rate?

**Answer:** As a measure of the rate of growth of population various fertility rates are computed such as:

- Crude Birth Rate (CBR)
- General Fertility Rate (GFR)
- Specific Fertility Rate (SFR)
- Total Fertility Rate (TFR)

3. What does Crude Birth rate?

**Answer:** The crude Birth rate method is the simplest of all the measures of fertility and consists in relating the number of live births to the total population. This provides an index of the relative speed at which additions are being made through the child birth.

4. What is General Fertility Rate?

**Answer:** General Fertility Rate is a probability rate since the denominator consists of the entire female population which is exposed to the risk of production, reflects the extent to which the female population in the reproductive ages increases the existing population through live birth and takes into account the sex distribution of the population and also the age structure to a certain extent.

5. What is the disadvantage of using General Fertility Rate?

**Answer:** General Fertility rate gives a heterogeneous figure since it overlooks the age composition of the female population in the child bearing age. Hence it suffers from the drawbacks of non-compatibility in respect of time and country.

6. Why the specific fertility rate is highly skewed?

**Answer:** Fertility data for different countries show that generally specific fertility starts from a low point, rises to a peak somewhere between 20 and 29 years of age and after that declines steadily. The age specific fertility curve is therefore a highly positive skewed curve.

7. What is a total fertility rate?

**Answer:** A simple technique is to obtain standardized fertility rate. This leads to total Fertility Rate (TFR) which can be obtained by adding the Annual Age specific fertility rate.

8. Why is TFR a hypothetical figure?

**Answer:** TFR is a hypothetical figure giving the number of children born to a unit of  $k = 1000$  females with the following assumptions,

- None of them die before reaching the end of the child bearing age i.e. all of them live till at least the age of 50 years
- At each of the age group in the child bearing age, they are subject to the fertility conditions given by the observed age specific fertility rate.

9. What is the advantage of Crude Birth Rate?

**Answer:** Crude Birth Rate is simple, easy to calculate and readily comprehensible, based only on the number of births (Bt) and the total size of the population (Pt) and does not necessitate the knowledge of these figures for different sections of the community or the population.

10. Why is crude birth rate not a probability ratio?

**Answer:** Crude Birth Rate is not a probability ratio, since the whole population cannot be regarded as exposed to the risk of producing children. It is only the female and the child bearing age group are exposed to risk and as such whole of the male population and female population outside the child-bearing age should be excluded from the total population.

11. What are the factors that determine the level of crude birth rate?

**Answer:** The level of Crude Birth Rate is determined by a number of factors such as age and sex, distribution of population, fertility of the population, sex ratio, marriage rate, migration, family planning measures and so on.

12. How is the total fertility rate obtained?

**Answer:** The total Fertility Rate (TFR) can be obtained by adding the Annual Age specific fertility rate.

13. How is crude birth rate defined?

**Answer:** Crude Birth Rate (CBR) defined as follows:

Crude Birth Rate is equal to total number of live births in the given region or locality during a given period t (Bt) divided by total population of the given region during the period t (Pt) multiplied by k a constant usually 1000.

14. Why is crude birth rate not suitable for comparative studies?

**Answer:** Crude Birth Rate assumes that women in all the ages have the same fertility, an assumption which is not true since younger women have, in general higher fertility than elderly women. Crude Birth Rate thus gives us an estimate of a heterogeneous figure and is unsuitable for comparative studies.

15. How is specific fertility rate defined?

**Answer:** Specific fertility rate is defined as specific fertility rate is equal to number of births to the female population of the specific section in a given period divided by total number of female population in the specified section into k where k is equal to 1000 usually.