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Subject: Assisted Reproductive Technology and multiple births

Posted by [ianjaric](#) on Tue, 18 Sep 2018 14:19:37 GMT

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Hello DHS,

I am working on multiple births and have a question with respect to assisted reproductive technology. I have pooled all BR files. Some countries have triplet rates that greatly exceed that which would be expected based on Hellin's Law, according to which the frequency of triplets expressed as a proportion of twins is similar to the frequency of twins expressed as a proportion of singleton births. Some of these countries also have a high rate of quadruplets, although the numbers involved are small in absolute terms. Jordan and Egypt are particular outliers.

I wonder if use of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) in these countries might be responsible. Although I cannot see anything listed in the Recode Manual, I wonder if there are some surveys/countries in which ART is more common than it is in others, and for which something is coded, and if so are there specific keywords used by DHS that I could enter as character strings to search the variable labels in order to identify women who have used ART. Presumably, despite the focus of DHS on low-income countries, the private use of ART must be something that surveyors come across from time-to-time.

Thank you for producing and maintaining such an excellent resource.

Ian

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Subject: Re: Assisted Reproductive Technology and multiple births

Posted by [Trevor-DHS](#) on Tue, 18 Sep 2018 18:23:41 GMT

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Thanks for the question and the comment about triplets and quadruplets. We will take a look at these rates.

For assisted reproductive technology, to my knowledge we have never collected any data on assisted reproductive technologies. I also checked with colleagues and none of us know of any examples of data in this area. Sorry we can't be more helpful.

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Subject: Re: Assisted Reproductive Technology and multiple births

Posted by [ianjaric](#) on Wed, 19 Sep 2018 07:25:07 GMT

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Thanks for investigating this. I did in the end do a search for variables that contained labels with the strings "assisted", "reproductive", "technology", "IVF" and "fertility". I saw that in some of the Colombia surveys there are questions about fertility treatment, but that is it. It's good to have it confirmed from you.

I have been doing some further research into this using aggregated multiple birth data, and I am leaning towards thinking that ART is probably not a significant contributing factor to multiple births. If any of your colleagues would like to know more I would of course be happy to discuss it.

Thanks again!

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