FP-18-09 Childbearing Desires, Intentions, and Attitudes Among Women 40-44

Karen Benjamin Guzzo
Bowling Green State University, kguzzo@bgsu.edu

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Intentions to Have a Child in the Future
Wanting to have a child does not necessarily mean a woman actually intends or expects to do so. This section examines the proportion of women who responded affirmatively to the question “Looking to the future, do you intend to have a(nother) baby at some time in the future?” Again, mothers aged 40-44 are compared to childless women 40-44. Between 2002 and 2013, the proportion of 40-44-year-old women who wanted to have a child in the future increased among those with and without children. More than twice as many childless women reported wanting to have a child in the future than women who already had children. In 2002, slightly more than one in three childless women aged 40-44 wanted to have a child compared to one in five mothers. In 2013, 42% of childless women wanted to have a baby in the future compared to only 20% of their peers who already had children.  

Feelings About Not Having Children Among Childless Women
Finally, this section examines trends from 2002 to 2013 in how childless women would feel about not having children based on responses to the question “If it turns out that you do not have any children, would that bother you a great deal, some, a little, or not at all?” The proportion of women who want a child (Figure 1) with the percentage of women who actually intend to have a child (Figure 2) is apparent that a fewer women aged 40-44 expect to fulfill their childbearing desires. In 2016, less than half of childless women aged 40-44 reported wanting to have a child in the future increased among those with and without children. More than twice as many childless women reported wanting to have a child in the future than women who already had children.  

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