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The Measurement and Interpretation of Infant Mortality Coefficients

In three of the merged files--Malaysia, The Philippines, and Thailand--the measures of infant mortality are expressed as a rate (usually a q value * 1000 or, in the case of Malaysia, a real Infant Mortality Rate). We can interpret these measures as infant mortality rates. In Indonesia the values are probabilities of death (q values). Therefore they are scaled 1000 times smaller than the other countries. To be consistent we have been dividing the IM rates by 100 and multiplying the q values by 10. We then, in tabling the coefficients from regression runs, shift the coefficient one decimal place to the left. This last step is not strictly necessary (we could, for the countries with IM rates, divide by 10, and for Indonesia we could multiply by 100) but I suppose we decided to do it this way to be consistent as we shift the decimal place for each of the other contextual variables. The interpretation of the coefficient for IM (after dividing or multiplying and after shifting the decimal point) is; a change of 10 points in infant mortality will result in such and such a change in fertility.

Phil

Note that for Pat's new Philippines merged file the IM value is actually a q value.