Unmet need and unwanted childbearing in Pakistan: Evidence from a panel survey

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Population Council

Outline

- Background and context
- Objectives
- Data and Method
- Results
- Conclusions and implications

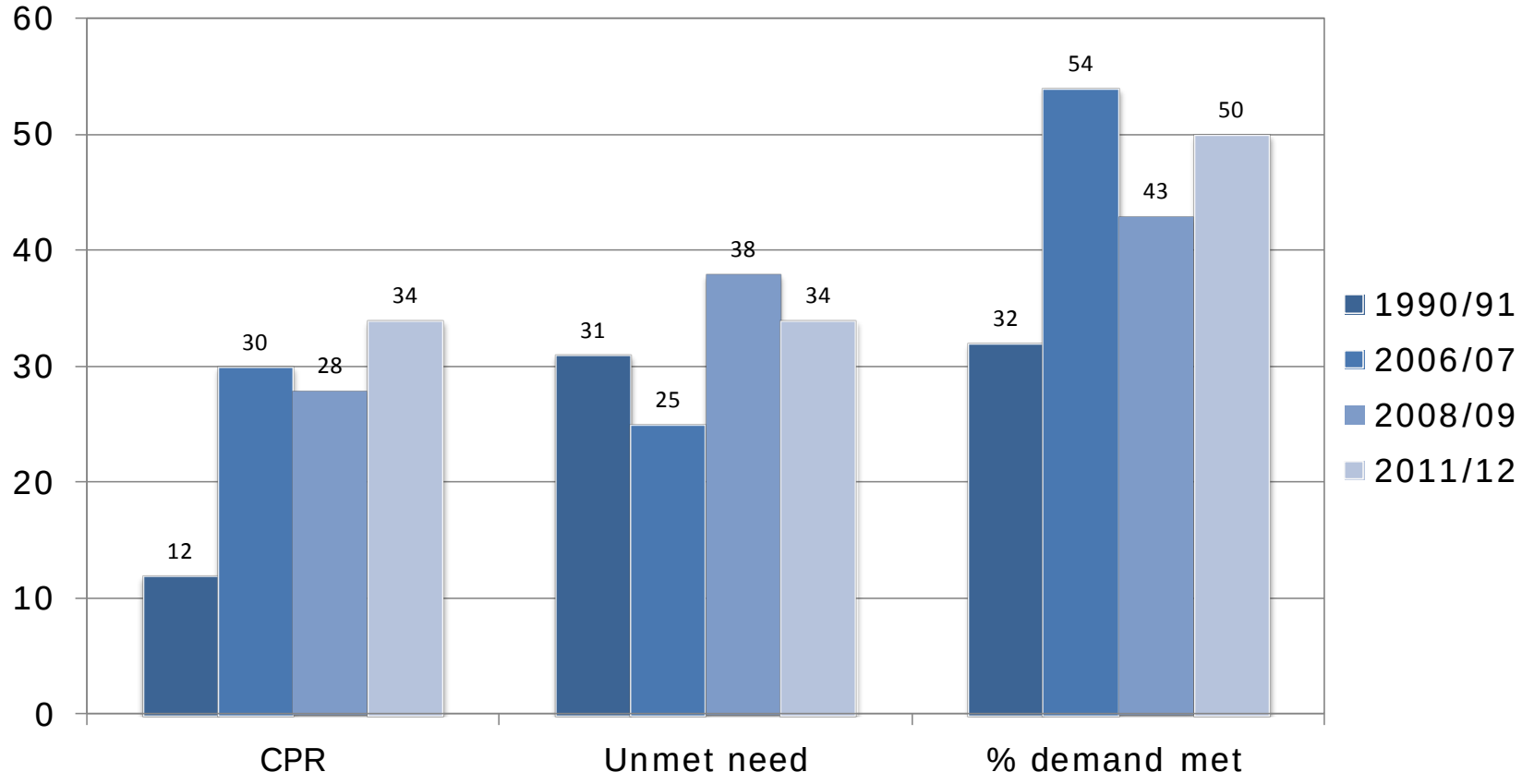
Background

- Unmet need estimated from cross-sectional surveys
- Fertility desires, contraceptive use, and unmet need status change over time
- Raises the issues of stability and validity
- Can be studied by panel studies
- Will contribute to literature generated by a small number of panel studies in developing countries (Egypt, India, Morocco, Peru, and Taiwan)

Context in Pakistan

- Long history of family planning program
- Low contraceptive use
- High unmet need
  - Fear of side effects
  - Lack of access and supplies
  - Husband's perceived disapproval
- High discontinuation
- FALAH project implemented between 2008 & 2012
  - Reinvigorate the concept of birth spacing
  - Improve access to good quality services
- Two cross-sectional surveys conducted in 2008/09 & 2011/12

Comparisons of PDHS and FALAH results



Specific objectives

- Assess stability of unmet need
- Assess validity of unmet need
- Compare the effects of two strategies on unwanted fertility:
  - Elimination of unmet need
  - Elimination of unwanted fertility among those with met need

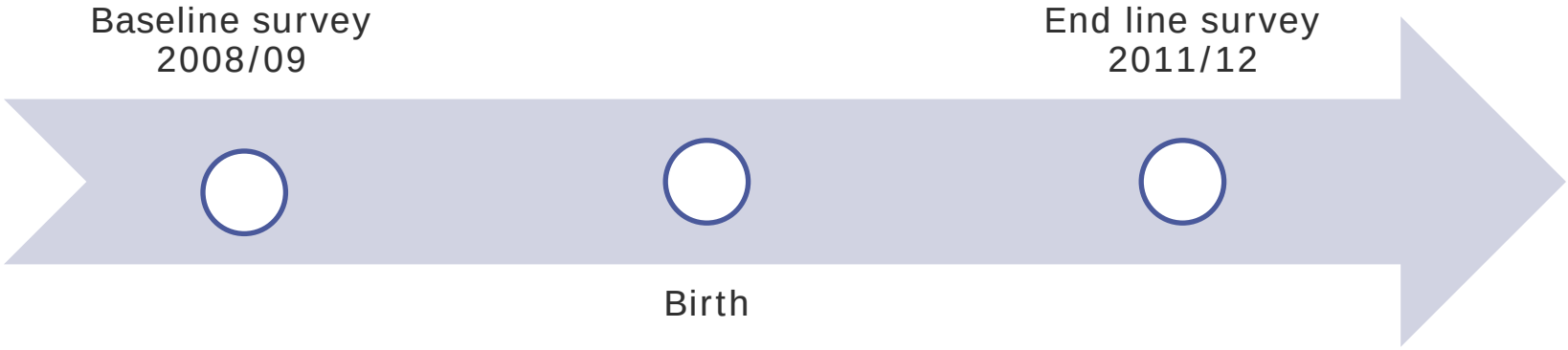
Data

- About 5300 women interviewed in 2008/09 and 2011/12 under FALAH project
- Panel selected after matching respondent's & husband's names in the same household visited in two cross-sectional surveys

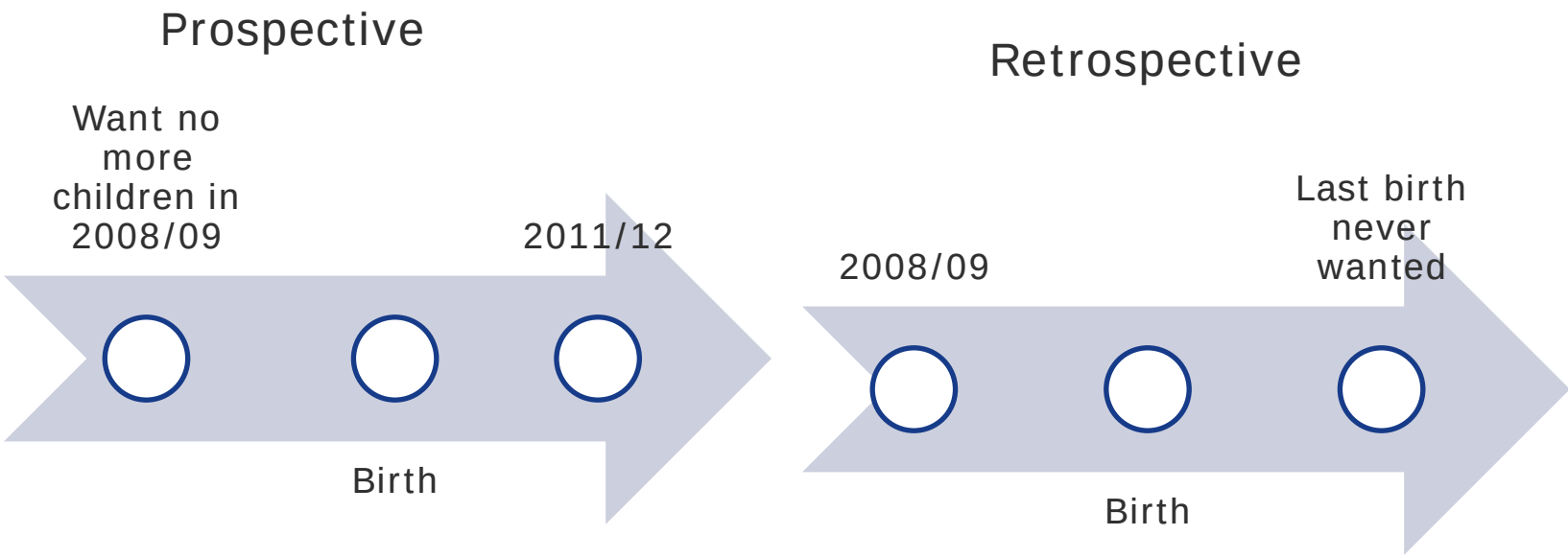
Measurement of Unmet need for Limiting

- Used revised definition (Bradley et al 2012)
- Divided women in three groups:
  - met need (using contraception)
  - unmet need for contraception
  - no need for contraception
    - want soon, want later, infecund

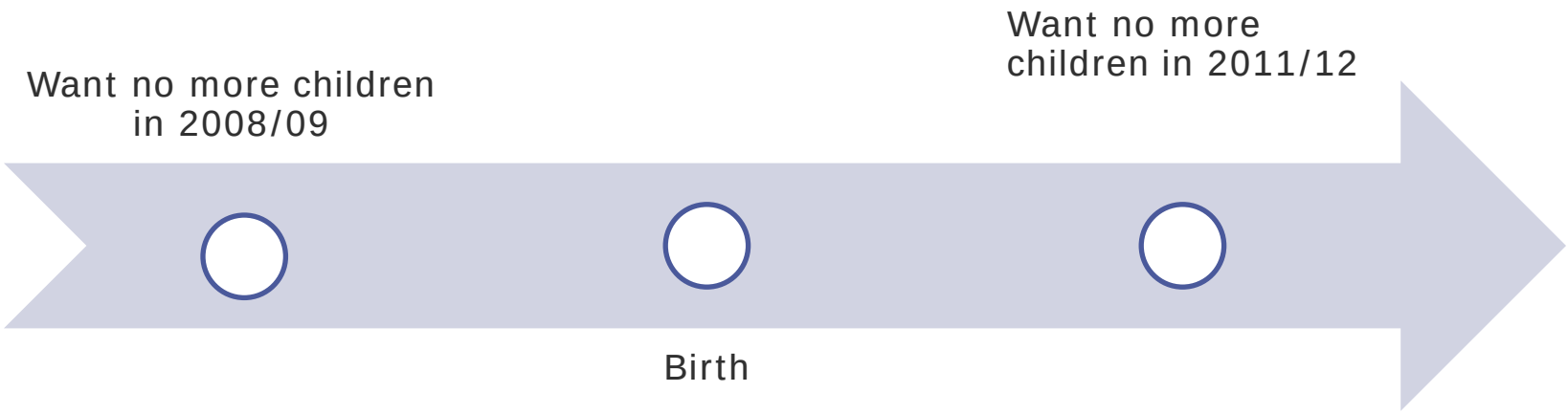
Measurement of Fertility



Measurement of unwanted fertility



Measurement of adjusted unwanted fertility



Results

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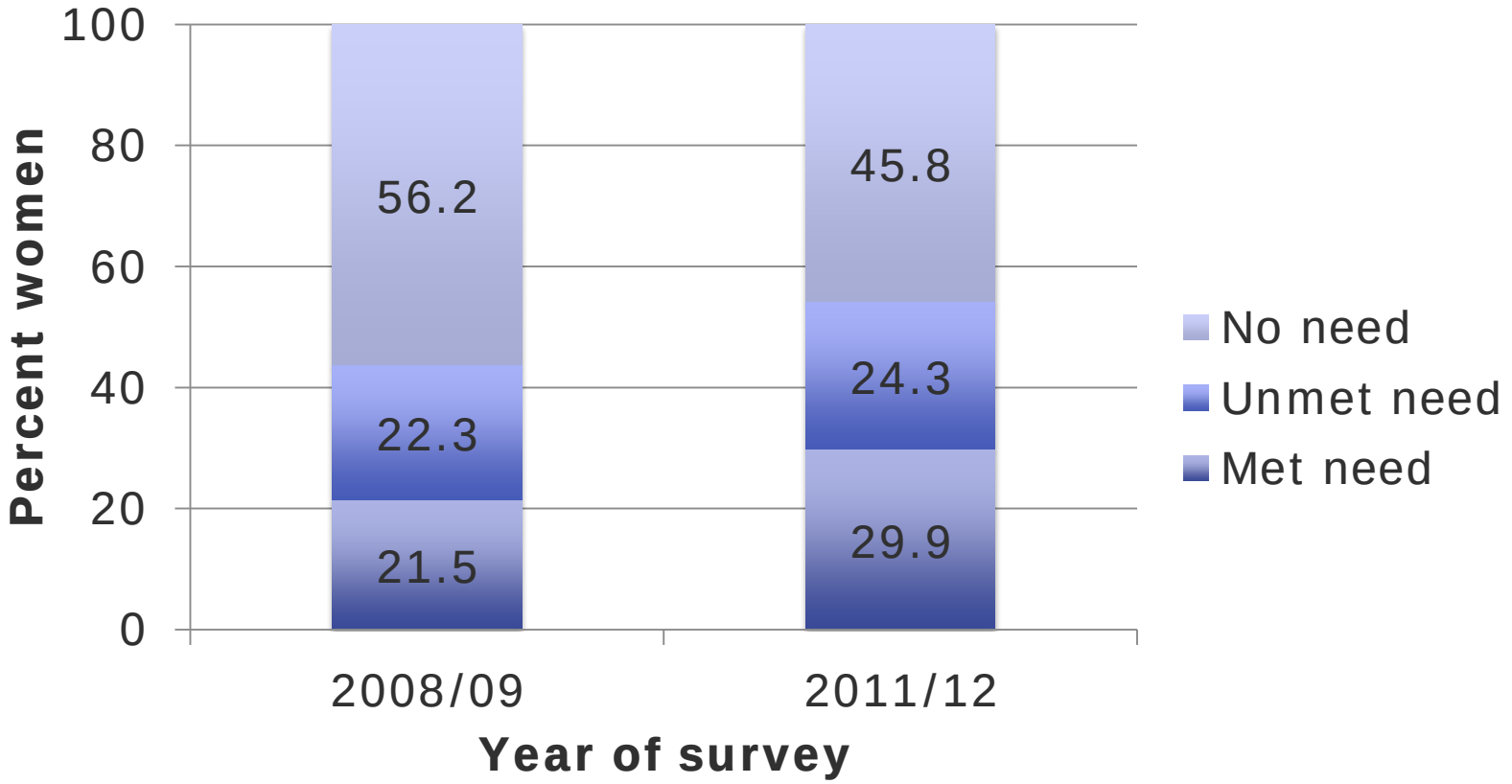
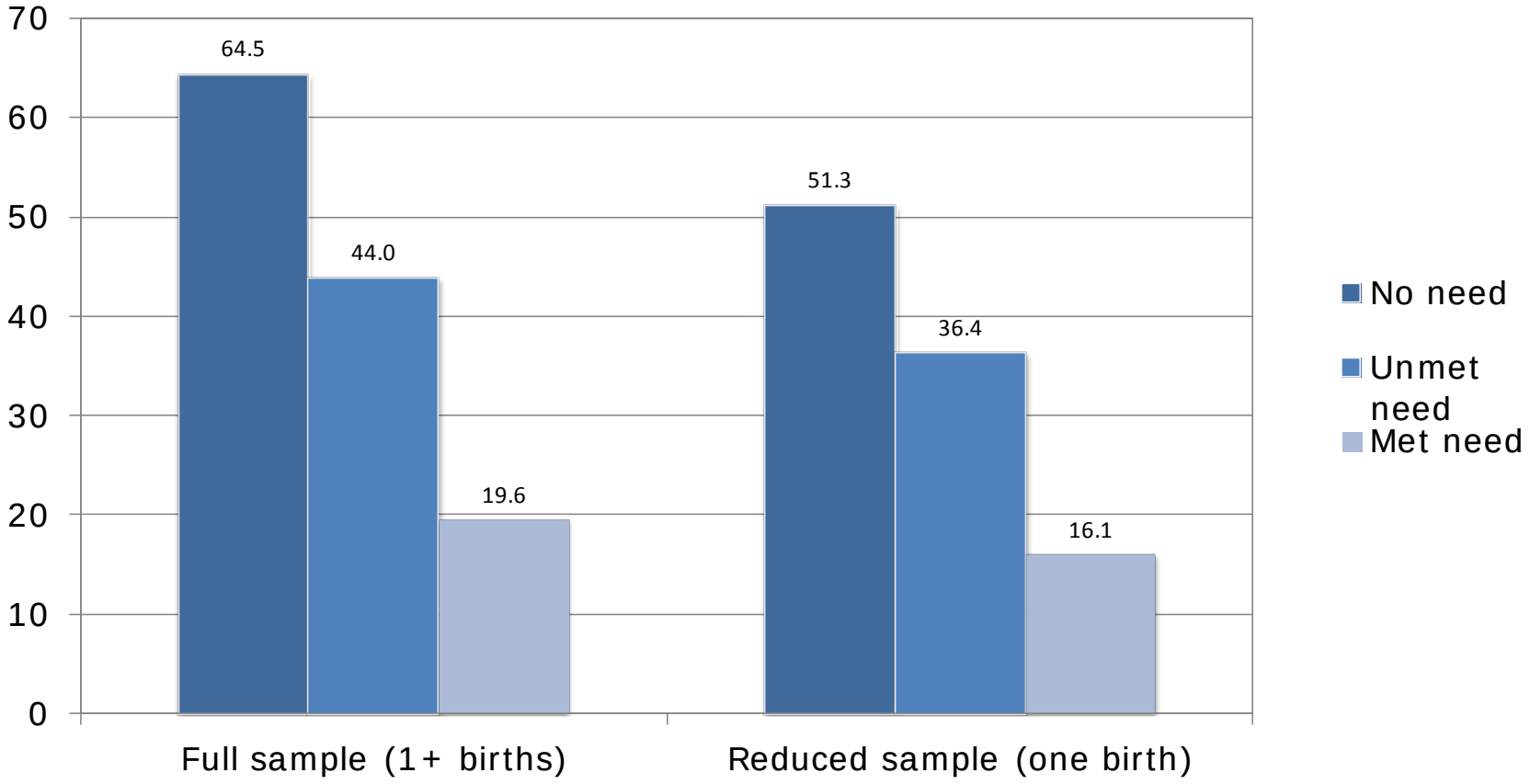
Met contraceptive need increased between 2008/09 and 2011/12



Contraceptive need status remained stable for majority of women (67%)

Contraceptive need in 2008/09	Contraceptive need in 2011/12			
	Unmet need	Met need	No need	Total
Unmet need	**11.1**	7.3	4.0	22.3
Met need	3.7	**15.7**	2.1	21.5
Category	9.6	6.9	**39.7**	56.2
No need	24.4	29.8	45.8	100.0

Contraceptive need valid in predicting subsequent fertility



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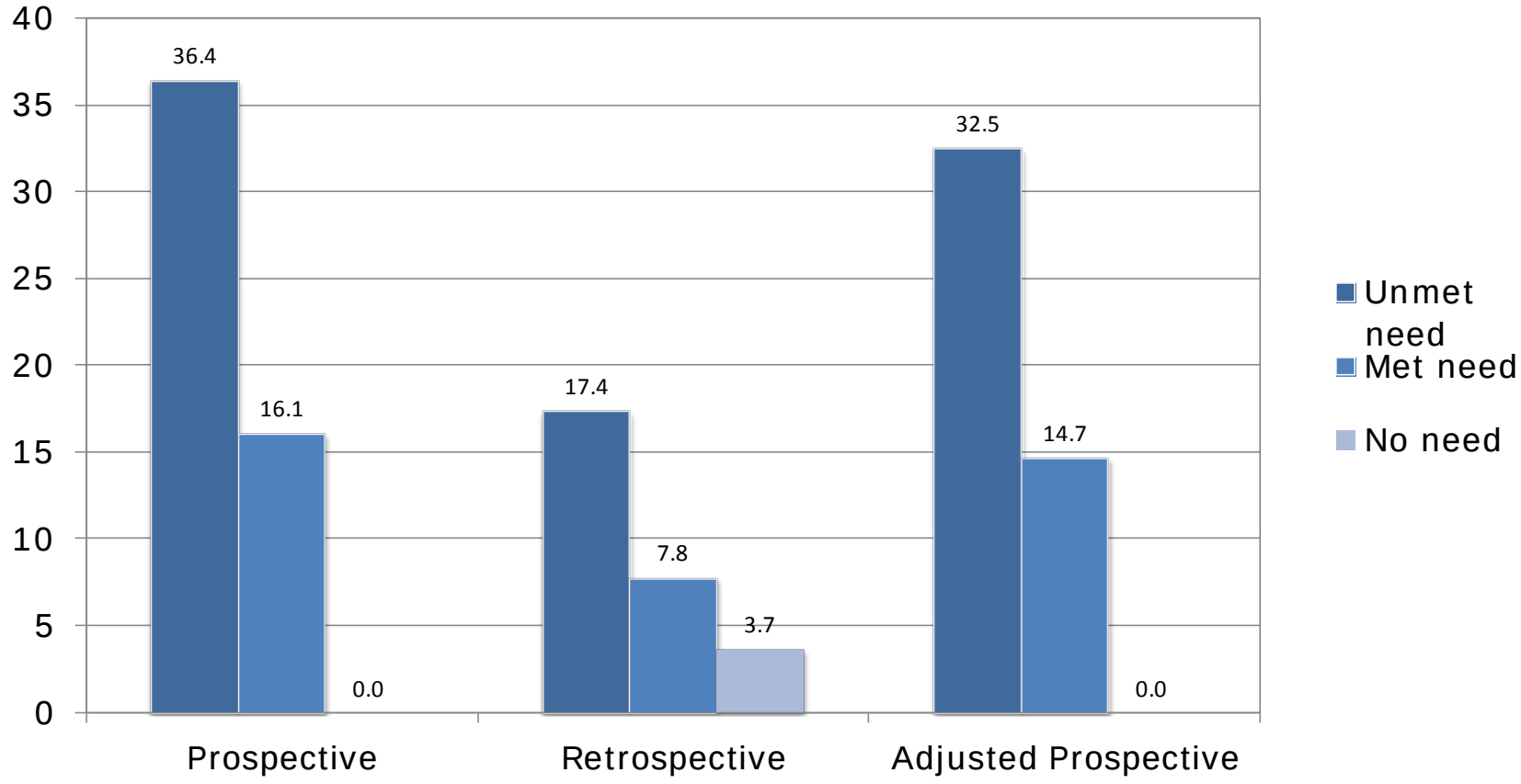
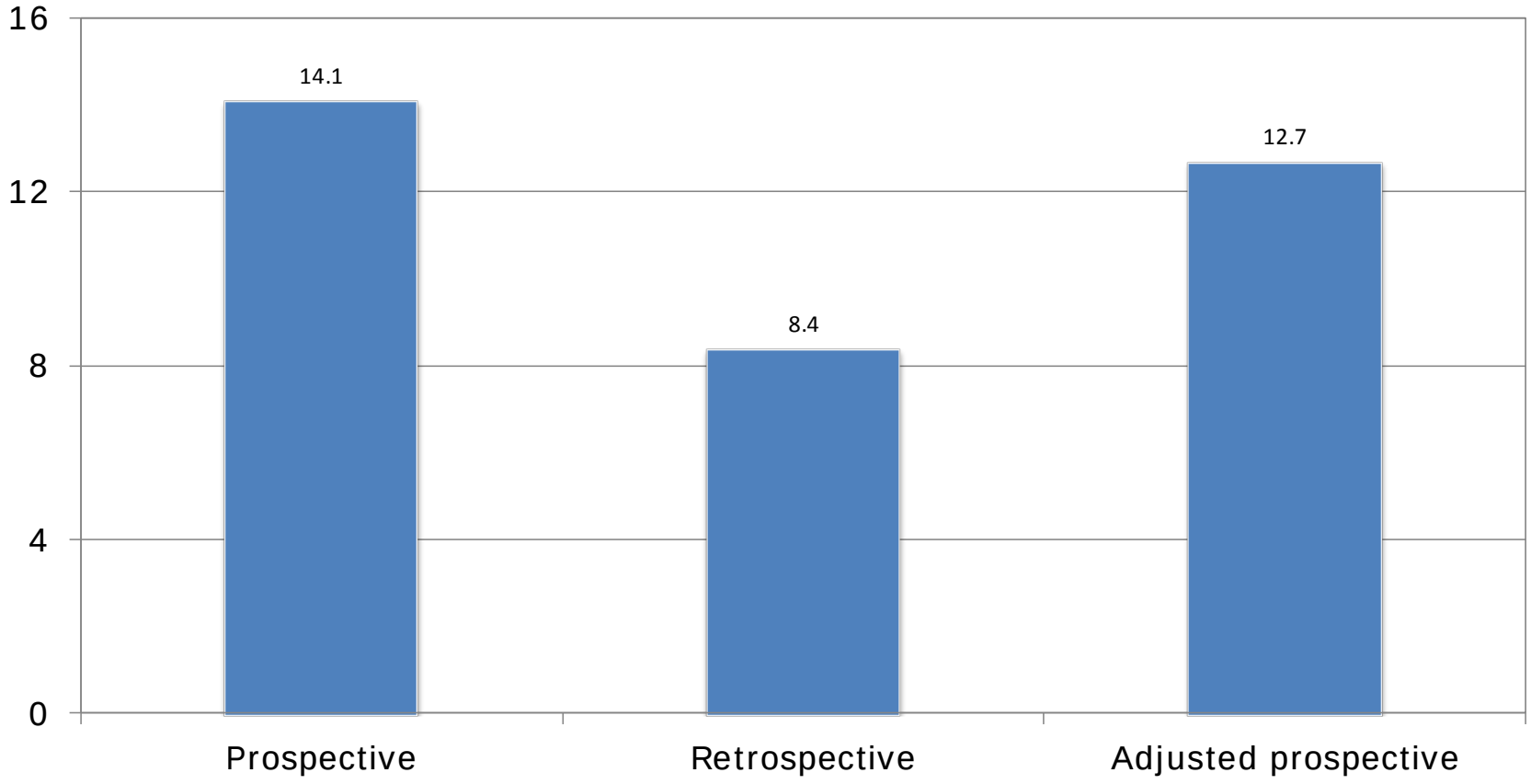


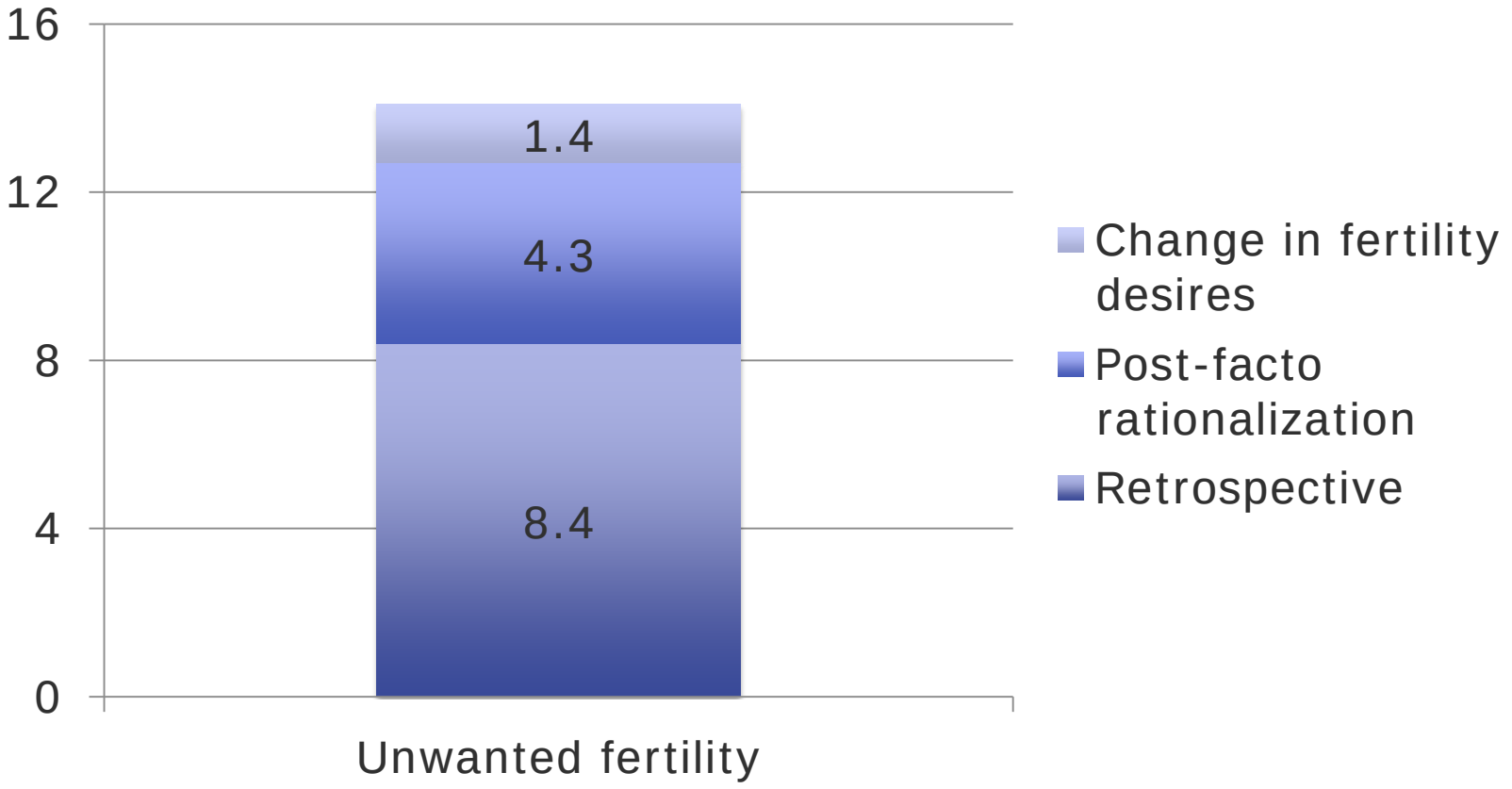
Unwanted fertility estimates



Classification of birth remain same for 79% of births

Classification of birth between surveys	Retrospective classification of last birth before 2011/12		
Adjusted Prospective	Unwanted	Wanted	Total
Unwanted	18.1	**16.6**	34.6
Wanted	4.9	60.4	65.4
Total	22.9	77.1	100.0
N	288	967	1255

Estimated effect of two biases on unwanted fertility



Reducing unwanted fertility

- Overall unwanted fertility:
  - R = Unmet need ($p_1 * r_1$)+ met need ($p_2 * r_2$)+ No need ($p_3 * r_3$)
    = (.251*32.48) + (.309*14.75) + (.440*0.0)
    = 8.1+4.6+0.0 = 12.7

  - Unwanted fertility can be reduced by focusing on both strategies simultaneously:
    - reducing unmet need
    - supporting women with met need to reduce and ultimately eliminate their unwanted fertility

Implied unwanted fertility under two scenarios if a choice has to be made

- Unmet need eliminated:
  - What would be the unwanted fertility among women with unmet need (r_1):
    - unlikely to reduce to zero
    - more likely to mimic the behavior of those with met need now, i.e., $r_1 = r_2$
  - $R_1 = p_1*r_2 + p_2*r_2 + p_3*r_3 = (.251*14.75) + (.309*14.75) + (.440*0.0) = 3.7 + 4.6 + 0.0 = 8.3$
- Unwanted fertility among those with met need eliminated:
  - $r_2 = 0$
  - $R_2 = p_1*r_1 + p_3*r_3 = (.251*32.8) = 8.1$
- Equally effective in reducing unwanted fertility in Pakistan

Comparison of two strategies in other countries

- Elimination of unmet need superior in Taiwan and Egypt
- Elimination of unwanted fertility among those with met need superior in Morocco and Peru
- Equally effective in Pakistan
- Outcome seems to depend upon the relative magnitude of unwanted fertility among women with currently met need
  - Method mix
  - Switching patterns

Implications for reducing unwanted fertility

- Focus on reducing unmet need in countries with method mix tilted toward LA&PMs
  - India with permanent methods
  - Taiwan and Egypt with IUDs
- Focus on women with met need in countries with method mix tilted toward short acting traditional and modern methods
  - Peru and Morocco

Supporting women with met need is important in all countries

- Will reduce subsequent unmet need
  - 17% of women with met need in Pakistan and 20% in Egypt moved to unmet need subsequently
- Will reduce overall unwanted fertility
  - Contribution of women with met need to unwanted fertility ranged from 54% in Peru and 46% in Morocco to 36% in Pakistan and 30% in Egypt and Taiwan
- Elimination of unmet need will not eliminate unwanted fertility
  - Reduce from 5.9% to 3.4% in Egypt
  - Reduce from 12.7% to 8.3% in Pakistan
  - Further reduction will require supporting women with met need

Supporting women with met need to achieve their reproductive intentions through sustained use of contraception

- By improving quality of care & content of CPI
  - Help clients to initially select a method appropriate to her needs & circumstances
  - Encourage clients to switch and facilitate switching whenever the method selected originally does not remain suitable

Reduce the *gap* between discontinuation of the original method and initiation of the same or a different method

Mind the Gap