

## 2 Measures of Attitudes

Researchers have now accumulated perhaps five decades of experience in the measurement of reproductive attitudes and intentions (Lightbourne and MacDonald, 1982; Lightbourne, 1985; Bhushan and Hill, 1995). There is little question that the subject remains the "soft" area of measurement in demographic research. The main conclusion of the methodological research that has been conducted is that the reliability of the various measures of preference is comparatively low at the individual level but high at the aggregate level. This generalization was reaffirmed in the 1986

DHS experimental study in the Dominican Republic, in which reinterviews were conducted some 10-12 weeks after the initial interview (Westoff, Goldman and Moreno, 1990). In other research, the predictive validity of preferences was established by demonstrating the strong relationship between reproductive preferences and the contraceptive prevalence rate across a large number of countries (Westoff, 1990). The evidence is mounting that despite low individual reliability, measures of reproductive attitudes are very useful for demographic research.