

# Where Are the Weekend Babies?

By

AbdelKarim Breika

14/July/2019

I was checking the data on birth rates in the US when I stumbled upon an interesting observation. It started by asking myself a question; “What day in the week has the most births?”. So I downloaded the datasets for the births in the US from 1978 to 1999 and I grouped them into a table “Weekdays Vs Number of Births” and I found something very interesting.

Checkout figure 1

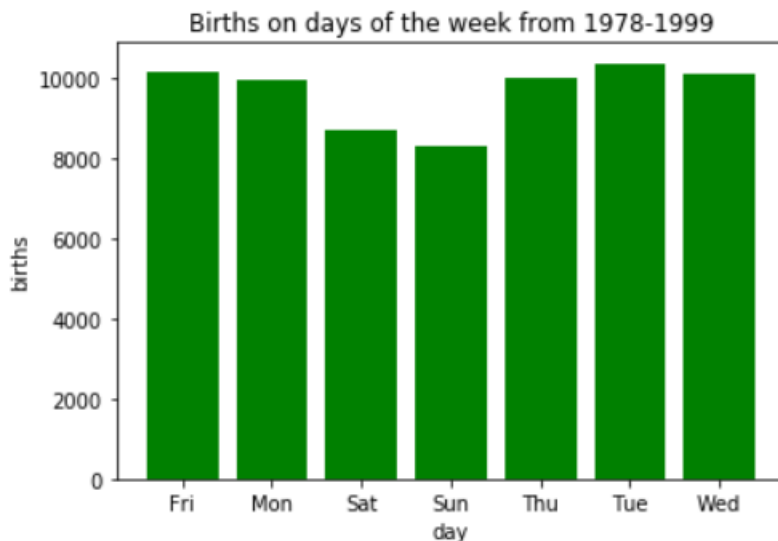


Figure 1

You will notice that the number of births on weekdays are relatively similar, but on weekends the number goes down significantly (Even less on Sundays). I thought that was very strange since it's not like women decide when they will deliver, neither can they hold the baby in for another day just so they can enjoy an extra day of peace. I studied a few more datasets and found similar results, less babies on the weekends then on any other days of the week. After I made sure of the results I asked the question.

Why are less babies born on weekend then on weekdays?

This was the first time I had made an insight from the studying of data and I was curious to get to the end of it.

After doing a quick google search I found my answer. On the United States National Library of Medicine website, I found an article titled *"Where are the Sunday babies? II. Declining weekend birth rates in Switzerland."* In it, the author states that after studying birth dates from almost 3 million babies born between 1969 and 2005 and analyzing them for the weekday of birth. He found that on average 3,728 fewer babies are born on weekends than could be expected from normal distribution.

He concludes that the increasing avoidance of births during weekends is discussed as being a consequence of increasing numbers of caesarean sections and elective labor induction, which in Switzerland reach 29.2 and 20.5%, respectively, in 2004. This hypothesis is supported by the observation that both primary and secondary caesarean sections are significantly correlated with weekend birth avoidance rates.

It is therefore likely that financial aspects of hospitals, (nurses and doctor get double pay on weekends) are the main factor determining the avoidance of weekend births by increasing the numbers of caesarean sections.

The articles explanation concluded my search and helped me reach my conclusion.

The reason why the number of births on weekends are much less than on weekdays is because hospitals WANT TO SAVE MONEY. I had been hoping for a more intriguing explanation for this phenomenon but I was not really surprised by the results. Isn't money the reason for a lot of things that happen in our world today.

*Karim*

## References

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17891531>