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RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS, GENDER ORIENTATION, AND CHILDBEARING DECISION-MAKING IN GHANA; THE CASE OF URBAN COUPLES[1]

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Obaa twa bomni a, etwere barima dan mu - Even when a woman makes a drum, it leans against the man's house. Akan proverb.

After three decades of population and family planning effort in sub-Saharan Africa[2], much of the continent continues to sustain high fertility, although declines have begun to be evidenced in countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe, and, most recently, Ghana. Results from the most recent round of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)[3] give Total Fertility Rates (TFR)[4] ranging from 4.3 (Zimbabwe, 1994) to 6.9 (Burkina Faso, 1993). Although high fertility in and of itself should not necessarily be a cause for concern, there exists a seeming paradox in that high fertility exists alongside reports that women of childbearing age want fewer children than they are having (DHS 1988-1998; Ward 1993)[5]. Furthermore, despite these reported desires, and the promotion of family planning programs, contraceptive use remains surprisingly low, reinforcing the argument that women may indeed have an "unmet need" for contraception (Bongaarts 1991). Simply put, "unmet need" includes all fecund (not pregnant or amenorrheic) women who are currently in union, who are not using contraception and who either want to postpone their next birth for two or more years, or want to cease childbearing altogether. The 1998 DHS for Ghana indicates that 36.4 percent of births were "mistimed" or "unwanted", yet rates of contraceptive use remain low -- 18 percent for all women aged 15-49 in the country, and 22 percent for married women in the same age group[6]. To wit, there exists a contradiction between women's stated fertility preferences and their behaviour, in terms of childbearing and contraceptive use. This paradox seems especially curious given the noted "autonomy" of West African women (Manuh and Adomako 1992; Oppong 1970), and, drawing on data from a survey among couples in Ghana, forms the focus of inquiry of this paper. I begin by briefly contextualising issues related to fertility in Ghana. The article then goes on to present two theoretical perspectives which are relevant for analyses of reproductive behaviour, and then proceeds to describe the conceptual framework for the study. The third section of the paper describes the data and methods, and

in the final section I present and discuss the findings related to the relative "wantedness" of the last child for wives and husbands, and make suggestions for further research and policy design.

Fertility in Ghana

Several writers have argued that traditional gender relations in Ghana were complementary rather than competitive, and generally provided the sexes with sufficient space to maintain appreciable levels of autonomy, even when male dominance was generally accepted (Bortei Doku 1992; Fortes 1969; Tufuor and Donkor 1969). Other studies suggest that many of the changes in women's situations in Ghana have come with colonialism and a "modern" economy, thereby altering gender relations and introducing new forms of subordination and dependence for women (Oppong and Okali 1976; Bortei-Doku 1992; Boserup 1970; Clark 1994).

Traditionally, children brought prestige to the lineage and were considered as important economic assets. The birth of children is an important aspect of the marriage, ensuring the continuity of the lineage and "proof" of fertility. Among the Akan the woman's family actually thank her husband for giving them children, and among patrilineal groups a husband will bestow special public honor on his wife at the time of the "outdooring" of a baby[7]. Prolific childbearing is honored, and mothers of twins, triplets, and a tenth child are held in special esteem (Sarpong 1977). Fertility is so important that most ethnic groups have special ceremonies to commemorate a girl's "entry into womanhood"[8]. Fortes (1970) observes that there is a deeply-ingrained idea that "normal" men and women should continue to bear children throughout their reproductive years. Hence, when couples remarry upon the death of a spouse or after a divorce, subsequent marriages are likely to produce (additional) offspring (Anarfi and Fayorsey 1995).

Childless individuals, on the other hand, are scorned and despised, and in a society where children show great deference to adults, the children may refuse to go on errands for them (Sarpong 1977). Among the Akan an impotent (and, hence, a childless man) is given the name *kote krawa*, or inadequate penis, while an infertile woman is referred to as *boni*, a term used to describe brackish water in which no fish can thrive. Sarpong (ibid.) also indicates that because the survival of the matrilineage depends on its female members, childlessness in a woman is viewed as the ultimate betrayal[9]. Bearing and raising children is said to be an Asante woman's most important contribution to her lineage since they provide assurance of its continuity.

Finally, the desire for children makes childlessness an important reason for divorce, although husbands are more likely to seek an additional wife or have children outside the marriage than to choose this option. Ghana practices a dual legal system -- using customary law in many instances, especially in matters pertaining to marriage, the family, and land, as well as

jurisprudence inherited from the colonial era[10]. Thus although marriage under the ordinance (former English law) must be monogamous[11], since almost all marriages are preceded by customary procedures, which permit polygyny, most marriages are potentially polygynous. This has implications for the security of the wife, especially if she "delays" childbearing. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many marriages become polygamous as a result of the "infertility" of the first wife, or, among some patrilineages, her "inability" to bear sons.

Post-partum abstinence was traditionally practiced in order to achieve spacing of births and women typically went to live with their mothers for periods up to two years until the baby was weaned. The practice was in order to ensure the survival and health of the baby. Women who resumed sexual relations with their husbands "too soon" after the birth of a baby were teased as feeling insecure in their marriages -- i.e. they were afraid that their husbands would take another wife during their period of abstinence. Older females were the ones mainly responsible for ensuring that this sort of "family planning" was practiced. They would offer advice about herbs and sexual practices which could ensure birth spacing. Traditionally husbands had a limited role, if any, in reproductive decision-making.

Marital Power: Structural Factors or Culturally-Defined Roles?

The manifestation of power within the marital dyad is evidenced by the ability to influence decision-making and behaviour according to one's wishes -- i.e. the ability to advance one's objective position even when this may be detrimental to the other partner (England and Kilbourne 1990). Relying on such a definition of power permits us to distinguish between *having* power and *exercising* it. We thereby acknowledge that an individual who possesses power has the option of choosing to exercise it or not. In a (marital) dyad one can assess whether individuals exercise their power or not, by examining the relationship between what they and their partners consider as their ability to influence behaviour, and their actual behaviours. The discourse which seeks to explain women's fertility behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa takes two broad perspectives, 1) a structuralist perspective, and 2) a cultural-ideological perspective.

The Structural Argument: Resource Contributions and Marital Power

While the literature on marriage and the family is replete with studies of power differences between spouses in the area of decision-making in general, since gender differences are not what demographers traditionally sought to explain, the input of feminist discourse in fertility studies has been minimal (Watkins 1993). Previous research on reproductive behaviour did not adequately assess the relationship between spousal differences in access to resources and decision-making power. Thus, neglected in the fertility discourse is the possibility that

women may have less power in reproductive decision-making because they have fewer resources than men do. This is relevant to examine given indications that, for many women, especially in urban areas, partner selection is predicated on the man's ability to support the woman financially (Adomako Ampofo 1997). Within such a context, a woman's economic dependency can be expected to reduce her power in decision-making, including reproductive decision making, relative to her male partner.

Simply put, the structuralist perspective looks at how the distribution of resources, especially women's access to education and employment outside the home, affects their status, and hence their decision-making power. Explanations within this group include modernisation, marginalisation (Bulatao and Lee 1983; Caldwell 1980, Easterlin 1983), feminist (Chafetz 1984; Oropesa 1997; Watkins et al. 1995), and resource/exchange theories (England and Kilbourne 1990; Scanzoni 1992), which all argue that women's position improves via education and wage employment. Wage employment, so the argument goes, results in increases in women's incomes, a higher value placed by women on their time, and hence changes in their value systems. These effects work together to lower women's fertility preferences, while their economic independence from men helps them to effect these (new) preferences. However, while many of the studies in this genre make important contributions to the discourse on marital power by incorporating the effects of spouses' resource contributions, they rarely address the effects of cultural expectations for the sexes about the distribution of marital power, on reproductive decision-making.

The Cultural Argument: Gender Orientation and Marital Power

The cultural-ideological perspective is best reflected in a growing body of work, referred to as the "male role" literature, which suggests, contrary to structuralist perspectives, that the effect of variables such as female education and employment are muted by the inclusion of male variables. These works indicate that efforts aimed at lowering fertility and increasing contraceptive use among women have been less successful than expected, not because women's behaviour is inconsistent (with their stated preferences), nor because women are irrational, but because family planning efforts have failed to include the culturally dominant role of males in the equation (Dodoo 1997; Dodoo and Seal 1994; Ezeh 1993). Men have a lot of influence in reproductive decision-making, it is argued (Dodoo 1998; Isiugo-Abanihe 1994) and basically retain pronatalist attitudes (Fayorsey 1989; Kannae and Pendleton 1994). Furthermore, women have been found to defer to men when it comes to reproductive matters (Biddlecom and Tagoe-Darko 1997; Piotrow et al. 1993; Watkins et al. 1995) so that in instances of discrepant preferences, outcomes can be expected to favour those of the male. In fact, "unmet need" is considerably lower when based on couple preferences (when male

preferences are included) rather than the woman's alone (Bankole and Ezeh 1997; Dodoo and van Landewijk 1997).

The culturally dominant role of men, and women's acquiescence to men's preferences in the reproductive realm, can be viewed as related to individuals' *gender orientations.*[12] An individual's gender orientation prescribes particular roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations for women and men. When this orientation is egalitarian the individual has similar expectations for women and men, and grants them equal rights: when the orientation is male-dominant the individual typically has different expectations for women and men, accords men more rights, and generally approves of, or accepts male dominance[13]. If the latter, the individual may not only legitimise male advantage in the reproductive arena, but may also depress the effects of structural resources by influencing behaviour in particular (culturally acceptable) ways. In other words, a particular gender orientation may reduce an individual woman's sense of entitlement to determine the couple's fertility regime, *despite her structural equality with her husband.* While a gender *orientation* is difficult to measure directly, it can be captured by assessing individuals' attitudes to issues surrounding appropriate female and male roles.

Conceptual Framework

Despite the theoretical and ideological differences reflected in the structuralist and cultural-ideological perspectives on fertility behaviour, read together the literature reveals that women's reproductive behaviour is informed by both women and men's preferences, resources, and attributes, as well as their notions about appropriate gender roles. The current study moves from a purely rational-choice framework which emphasises individual behaviour -- i.e., one which assumes that a partner in a reproductive dyad acts in isolation, unaffected by the attributes and orientations of the other — to a framework which incorporates the input of both spouses as well as the effects of structural resources and gender orientations.

I expect the balance of power to be related both to inequalities in the structural resources of the couple, as well as their individual gender orientations: however, I expect gender orientation to provide us with a better explanatory factor for discrepancies between women's (fertility) preferences and their behaviour.

Fig. 1 shows the relationship among the variables in the study, indicating how I expect both resource contributions and gender orientations to affect power between spouses, and ultimately, reproductive decision making. I hypothesise that a large gap between spouses in structural resources such as educational attainment, occupational status, and financial contributions, *rather than resource contributions per se*, directly reduces the power of the

partner who has fewer resources or makes fewer contributions. This would mean that such individuals are less likely to achieve their reproductive preferences in cases of discrepant spousal preferences.

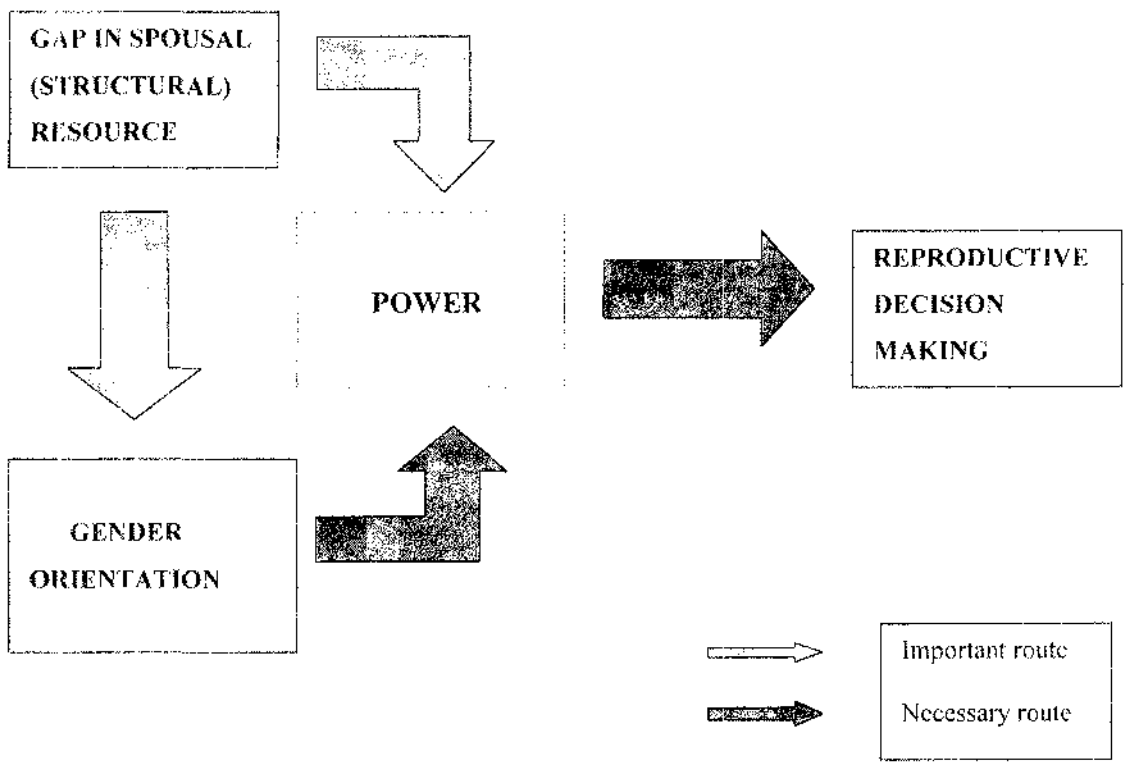

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

I also hypothesise that a wife or husband may have an egalitarian or male-dominant gender orientation, irrespective of the level of education, occupational status, or financial contributions she or he makes, and I expect that it is this gender orientation which is ultimately influential in determining the balance of power between spouses. For example, a woman may have more (or fewer) children than desired simply because her partner wants (or does not want any) more children, and she believes that a man's preferences should hold sway. A woman may have children in order to secure a relationship because she believes that having children is an important role of women in marriage and that failure to bear children is an acceptable reason for her husband to divorce her or marry a second wife. Women who hold these views may cut across socio-economic groups. Furthermore, even if a woman considers that decision-making in general, and reproductive decision-making in particular, should be egalitarian, if her spouse has a male-dominant orientation, she is less likely to be able to effect her preferences than if the situation were reversed.

Data and Methods

The gap in the discourse on fertility behaviour exists partly because the large fertility data sources used for reproductive behaviour analyses do not elicit information on gender relations or decision-making power. The large demographic surveys (mainly DHS) used for fertility research in sub-Saharan Africa were not designed to collect data on women's status measures or gender politics between partners. Thus, while the recent work on the "male role" seeks to show that men generally want more children than their partners, and that they have the power to affect their preferences, even here the emphasis has generally not been on the factors that influence *women's* reproductive behaviour[14]. The few studies which have attempted to assess the effects of women's relative positions have had to glean measures of women's status mainly from educational/occupational variables for example, while assessing gender orientations has been ignored, possibly because appropriate measures were non-existent. In this study I rely on data that fills two important gaps by asking specific questions about resource contributions and decision-making, and by providing more direct measures of gender orientations. While one can ask an individual direct questions about her or his gender orientation, there are good reasons why this may not draw reliable responses. First, the concept is difficult to define. Second, for a variety of cultural reasons, people may have difficulty acknowledging, or denying, particular positions. Since gender orientation is a key concept in the study, it is measured less directly -- via assessments of inequalities in specific social characteristics, and the gendered allocation of expenditure and areas of decision making. Further, most of the early studies typically collected information on reproductive attitudes and behaviour from female respondents only. This model was based in part on the assumption that the ones who do the actual childbearing are more knowledgeable about their past (and future) fertility behaviour than their male partners. It was also felt that since the woman is the child-bearer, her attitudes about proscriptive fertility-related events were likely to be more cogent predictors of future behaviour (Mott and Mott 1985). The model implicitly assumes that women generally take decisions alone. Hence, continued childbearing, in the face of reported desires to stop, led demographers to describe African women as inconsistent, irrational, or simply ignorant for having "unwanted" or "mistimed" children (see discussions in Casterline et al. 1996), and yet when men's preferences are included in analyses, many children cease to be "unwanted" (Bankole and Ezeh 1997). Hence, in this study I look at the preferences and behaviour of individual men and women in relation to those of their partners.

Study Population

The current analysis relies on data collected through a cross-sectional household survey among 155 Junior Staff of the University of Ghana and their spouses. The study was carried out in the Staff village of the University of Ghana, and the final sample comprised 125 men

(husbands) and 140 women (wives), and contained 110 dyads. The survey instrument is modelled along the lines of the 1993 GDHS as far as background and family planning questions are concerned. However, additionally, I included a series of questions on family decision-making, financial support, and access to resources not contained in the GDHS. The interviews were conducted at home, separately for men and women, and on average lasted between 30 and 40 minutes[15].

Methods

My dependent variable in the current analysis has to do with the "wantedness" of the most recent child born (i.e., the last one) -- whether it was wanted then, not wanted then, or not wanted at all[16]. I acknowledge that reports of the extent of "unwantedness" of the last child may be under-reported (Bongaarts 1991) because rationalisation occurs (Bankole and Westoff 1997). However, I consider that this provides an important indicator of reproductive decision making, since it refers to a child who has actually been born, and not to a hypothetical situation. Moreover, precisely because the partner in the dyad who did not want the child is likely to rationalise a birth as wanted even when it may not have been (i.e., matching her or his preferences with her or his partner's) I am more likely to err on the side of *understating* the extent of asymmetry between couples[17]. Among the couples, I examine how differences in desire for a child affected behaviour, i.e., I identify characteristics of spouses where fe/male wishes were actualised. I have two major sets of independent variables. The first set seeks to capture the effects of structural resources. I include two specific measures of personal resources (education and employment); whether a husband provides "chop (housekeeping) money"; and who makes major provisions regarding specific areas of household expenditure. The second set of independent variables includes decision-making measures of gender orientation. I ask questions about which spouse has the main (financial) responsibility for specific household expenditures -- household food, children's school fees, children's school food; who should/does take decisions in specific areas (regarding household feeding, children's schooling, the purchase of major equipment, and women's income-earning options).

Findings and Discussion

In this section I present the relationships between particular structural and "gender orientation" variables and the "wantedness" of the last child, looking specifically at which partner had their way in instances of stated discrepant reproductive preferences. In other words, when one spouse said s/he wanted a child (at the time the last child was conceived/born) and the other did not want one then (wait) or at all (stop), I look at which spouse, wife or husband, achieved her or his wishes (was advantaged), and the relationship

between this "advantage" and the structural/gender orientation variables. Looking at the intersection of cases when one spouse wanted to wait/stop and the other wanted a child then, gives us a picture on the husband versus wife advantageous outcomes. I begin, however, by presenting some background data on the sample.

Background Characteristics

Table 1 describes the entire sample according to selected background characteristics and makes comparisons with GDHS data[18]. Unlike the GDHS respondents, who are mostly younger than or equal to 34 years of age, my sample is much older; the mean age for women and men respectively being 40 and 47. In other words, most of the individuals in my sample are outside the considered ages of reproduction. Therefore, past reproductive outcomes are more salient, for the sample as a whole, than are considerations about future births. It is thus particularly pertinent for the analyses to focus on relationships between preferences related to the *last* child and selected independent variables. In terms of religion, the sample is not very different from the GDHS sample -- most respondents are Christian; however, compared to the GDHS Muslims are under represented. While Akan (ethnic) representation closely reflects that of the GDHS, making up almost half of the entire sample, both Gas and Ewes are over represented. However, these three groups, the Akans, Ewes, and the "indigenous" Gas of Accra, are the most common ethnic groups in urban centers in southern Ghana (Quarcoopome 1993; Wellington 1998) so it is not surprising that they should form the majority in my sample.

Most respondents live with their spouses, though more men (94%) indicate this than do women (86%). Most respondents are in their first marriage, however, the incidence is higher for women (86%) than for men (75%) [Table1]. Given the cultural importance attached to fertility it is not surprising that very few respondents have no children (3% of women, and 5% of men). The mean number of children in the sample is 4.0 for men, and almost 3.5 for women: lower than the *national* average, but almost equal to the average for the highly urbanized Greater Accra Region, according to the 1993 GDHS [Table 1]. However, it should also be pointed out that a considerable number of men (18.5 %) and women (11%) have six or more children. The mean number of children for wives and husbands in the sub-sample is very close, 3.6 and 3.7 for wives and husbands respectively. The range for wives and husbands differs somewhat more, however, being 6 for wives but 11 for husbands.

Most of the University of Ghana employees resident at the staff village, where the study was carried out, are male — 82.4 percent of male respondents, but only 33 percent of female respondents, are university employees. Additionally, while five percent of the women surveyed are not working for pay all the men do [Table 1].

Age

Age differences between spouses are important because the larger the gap, which is usually in favor of husbands, the greater the likelihood of power imbalance (in favor of the husband), especially in a culture which lays great store by "respect" for the elderly. For the entire survey sample, as is to be expected, men are generally older than their wives (for 93.6% of couples; not shown). The mean difference in age between spouses is about 7 years in favor of husbands and in one case as much as 23 years. In only 5.5 percent of cases are wives older than their husbands. If age is a resource, then husbands contribute more of this to marriage than wives.

Education

The data on education reflect the national situation in which men have higher educational levels compared to women. Seventy-three percent of men in the sample have secondary or tertiary education while only 49 percent of women do (not shown here). Further, while 8 percent of women (and wives) have had no formal education, less than one percent of men (and husbands) have had none. Among paired spouses, in 56 percent of cases the husbands have higher educational attainment than their wives, while wives do better than their husband's on this structural variable among only 7 percent of couples. In 36 percent of cases spouses have the same level of educational attainment.

Occupation

According to structural theories which emphasize the role of resource contributions on the power balance between spouses, examining relative occupational areas is important because these differences suggest differences in financial contributions and status. The question on occupation asked of university employees was "what is your occupation in the university?", to which they would respond with both a type of work (occupation) and a level (rank), say, a librarian at level J1. I then used the university's ranking system to allocate individuals to senior or junior positions.[19] For non-university workers (i.e spouses of university workers) respondents were asked, "what is your occupation and grade?" I assigned these respondents to senior or junior positions as best as I could with reference to the university categories. Almost three times as many men as women in the sample are in senior positions. Among paired spouses five times as many husbands as wives are in senior positions. While all the men are working for pay, five percent of women, and over 6 percent of wives are not working for pay [not shown]. Not surprisingly, given the nature of employment in the formal sector in

Ghana, many women and wives fall mainly in the "self-employed" category [49% of women and 54% of wives respectively]. While this may certainly afford them some autonomy in that they control their workspace, most self-employed women are not in high-earning occupations; 77.5 percent are engaged in small-scale trading, 10 percent in sewing, and 3 percent in farming [not shown]. Overall, almost 33 percent of husbands are in higher occupational categories than their wives are, 54 percent of wives are in the same category as their husbands, and 0.9 percent of wives are in more senior positions than their husbands are. Overall husbands possess more occupational resources than their wives do. Since income contributions to the marriage are dependent on an individual's level of employment, the data on occupation lend support to the hypothesis that husbands contribute more resources to the marriage.

Resource Contributions

Gendered Expenditure Patterns

The survey asks questions about a series of items of household expenditure to determine relative spousal contributions[20]. Respondents were asked, "who would you say generally provides financially for five items of expenditure, namely food at home, children's food for school, children's clothes, children's school fees, utilities, and hospital bills. Respondents were permitted to indicate more than one person for each item of expenditure and then were asked to name the person who provided the most financial support for that item. Most households, while they have to some extent adopted the "Western" notion of a nuclear family with a male "breadwinner" and a female "housewife", are in reality too poor to enjoy such a neat distinction. All but five percent of the women in the entire sample are working for pay and the notion of an actively working wife is hard to expunge. Couples tend to share financial responsibilities within the household while maintaining a relatively safe distance from each other's expenditures. The assignment of responsibilities for various items of expenditure is shown in Table 2 and indicates that financial obligations are gendered, some more so than others.

Husbands' financial responsibilities generally include the payment of school fees, utilities, and hospital bills [Table 2] and, giving their wives "chop money" to feed the household (not shown). Wives are responsible for providing children with school uniforms, food for school[21], and house clothes. However, the lines of distinction are not very clear-cut. While majority of women/wives and men/husbands agree that husbands are responsible for providing money for food in the home [almost 50% of wives and 53% of husbands; Table 2], a substantial proportion also acknowledge that the wife is the major financial provider [37.3

% of wives, and 32.7 % of husbands]. A similar pattern of the husband being the main provider emerges for the provision of children's school food and clothes. Two items of expenditure have sharper gender distinctions and these are the payment of children's school fees and hospital bills -- men and women, and husbands and wives, agree that husbands make the major contributions. Eighty-four percent of wives and 83 percent of husbands say that husbands are the ones mainly responsible for the payment of school fees [Table 2], and 74.5 percent of wives and 88 percent of husbands say husbands are responsible for hospital bills [Table 2].

Further analysis on "chop money" was carried out (not shown here). The question asked of wives was "does your husband give you chop money?" and that asked of husbands was "do you give your wife chop money?"[22]. Over ninety-two percent of wives/women say that they receive chop money regularly, a further 3 percent say they receive it sometimes, and 84.5 percent of couples agree that husbands give chop money. Comparing findings on contributions for food at home with husbands' payment of chop money throws more light on the issue of providing for the family's sustenance. The fact that about 37 percent of women/ wives say they are the ones who have financial responsibility for the provision of food in the home [Table 2] suggests that women's financial contributions in this area can be considerable, and are probably underrated by both women and men. Indeed, the food budget accounts for the major share of women's expenditure and 86 percent of wives indicate that they spend most of their own money on food [not shown].

"Wantedness" of the Last Child

The survey data on individual and couple desires regarding the last child provide us with a "real" outcome situation in which to analyse behaviours. Assessing the discrepancy between husbands' and wives' stated preferences regarding an actual outcome (child) provides some indication of who had more power with reference to that particular outcome/decision. The findings are presented in Table 3.

While 66.4 percent of paired spouses agree that they both wanted the last child, Table 3 also shows that more men/husbands than women/wives wanted the last child, confirming what the literature tells us about men being more pronatalist than women. Fewer husbands did not want the last child at all, or did not want it at the time (19.7%) than wives (25.2%). Further, there are twice as many instances in which couples had the child when husbands wanted it, but wives did not i.e. "husband advantageous" outcomes (13.9%), as there are instances in which couples had the child when the wife wanted it but husbands did not, i.e.

"wife advantageous" outcomes (6.5 %). This would seem to suggest that on the whole reproductive decision-making is indeed male dominated.

"Wantedness" of the Last Child and Decision Making: The Structural Argument: Effects of Age Differences on the "Wantedness" of the Last Child

In none of the marriages in which the wife is older than her husband does she have a child she did not want when her husband wanted one [not shown]. We can surmise, however, that given social norms about men marrying younger women, men who marry older women (and women who marry younger men) and who thus defy these norms, are more likely to uphold egalitarian gender orientations. The survey data do not show a clear pattern of husbands' power across the different ages of spouses. For the entire sample more years do not necessarily translate into more power [not shown]. In other words, there is no consistent relationship between age and who has her or his way in terms of reproductive outcomes. What may matter more is the *age gap* between spouses[23].

Effects of Education on the "Wantedness" of the Last Child

Analysis on the effects of wives' and husbands' educational levels (not shown here) on the "wantedness" of the last child show that most couples in each category of education both wanted the last child. None of the wives who have no education had a child they did not want to have when their husbands wanted the last child. Across all levels of wives' education wives who did not want their last child while their husbands did are relatively fewer among women with secondary and tertiary education than other categories. For all couples, in cases where the husband achieved his reproductive preferences (and the wife did not) the majority of wives have primary education (61.5%), followed by commercial/vocational (23%) and finally secondary (7.7%) and tertiary (7.7%) education (not shown here). We can argue then that the less education a wife has the more likely she will be to find herself in a situation where her husband's reproductive preferences are met at the expense of her own. The findings for outcomes in which the wife achieved her reproductive preference and the husband did not (when wives wanted the child but husbands wanted to wait or stop) show no clear patterns.

Among couples where husbands reproductive preferences where met when their wives' were not, husbands' education does not show a pattern across educational levels. However, among all couples, those where husbands have tertiary education are more likely to fall in this category than for any other level of husbands' education suggesting that husbands' education increases their (husbands') advantage.

More importantly, according to my hypotheses, looking further at the relationship between "wantedness" of the last child and the educational gap between spouses certain issues emerge which are shown in Table 4. Husbands are more likely to have their way among couples who have the same level of education (15.8%). On the other hand, there are no couples in which the husband had his way among those in which the wife has more education. Further, for the majority (54%) of all couples in which the husband had his way, taken together, husbands have more education than wives. This lends support to the argument that it may be the educational gap, rather than levels of educational attainment per se, which are associated with power differentials.

Effects of Occupation on the "Wantedness" of the Last Child

Analysis of data on the relationship between "wantedness" of the last child and wives' and husbands' occupations shows that across occupation categories there are relatively more couples in which the husband achieved his preferences (and the wife did not) when both wives and husbands hold junior positions (not shown here). For all couples in this category as a whole, however, the majority is to be found among couples where wives are self-employed (53.8%) and where husbands hold junior positions (69.2%). While the findings for husbands confirm structural arguments, one would expect self-employed wives to have greater autonomy Probably, the impact of self-employment is reduced by the fact that most of these self-employed wives are in low-paying occupations such as petty trading. Nonetheless, among couples in which the wife achieved her preferences (and her husband did not), by far the largest proportion of wives is self-employed (71.4%) and the largest proportion of husbands is in senior positions (85.7%). Lower resource contributions of both husbands and wives are associated with husbands' achieving their preferences. The findings are inconclusive for couples in which wives achieved their preferences -- husbands' senior positions affect wives' advantaged outcomes while wives' own senior positions do not.

Further analysis on the relationship between the "wantedness" of the last child and the occupational *gap* between spouses does not, however, provide support for structural arguments [Table 5]. There are no couples in which the husband achieved his preferences among dyads where the wife has a more senior position than her husband. However among 61.5 percent of husband-advantageous dyads couples have the *same* level of occupation. Dyads in which spouses have the *same* positions have a larger proportion in which husbands' preferences were met and wives' were not (13.8%) than couples where the husband has a *senior* position (8.6%). On the other hand, among wife-advantageous outcomes, there are more couples among whom husbands are in senior positions as well as being in more senior

positions than their wives. In other words, the more senior a husband's occupational position and the *greater* the gap between a husband's and wife's position, the more likely that the couple will experience an outcome in the wife's favor. Both of these outcomes run counter to structural arguments.

Financial Contributions

The clear gendered division of financial responsibilities has already been discussed [Table 2]. Table 6a-c presents a cross-tabulation of the three items of expenditure that reveal the clearest gender differentiation (household food, chop money, and school fees) with the "wantedness" of the last child[24].

At first glance we see that irrespective of who is said to take decisions on an item of expenditure, the majority of couples agree that the last child was wanted. Among the husband-advantaged couples, when we look at wives' responses about the major financial provider (Table 6a) there is a slightly larger proportion among dyads where wives say the husband is the major provider (13.5%) than dyads where wives say they are (12.5%). However, the opposite is true for husbands' responses -- relatively more husbands achieved their preferences (when wives did not) among couples where husbands say wives are the major financial providers for household food (11.2%) than among couples where the husbands say they are the major providers (10.5%). Surprisingly, more husbands had their way with respect to the last child among couples where husbands say both they and their wives are financially responsible for providing for household food (16.6%).

Further analysis also shows that husband-advantage outcomes are also more likely among couples where wives say husbands are responsible for household food (53.8%) than among couples where the wives say they are responsible (38.4%). For husband responses husband-advantage outcomes are more likely among husbands who say they are responsible (46.2%) than for other categories of persons responsible, including wives (30.7%). For all dyads in which husbands had their way taken together, wives and husbands responses are not at odds and together show that a couple is more likely to fall in this category when both wives and husbands say husbands are responsible for providing for household food. In other words couples are more likely to fall in the category where the husband has his way when husbands are the major financial providers for household feeding than when wives are, lending support to structural arguments.

We can look at the role of household expenditures further by assessing the relationship between reproductive outcome categories and the payment of chop money [Table 6b]. Among wives who say that their husbands give them chop money 12 percent fall in the

husband-advantage category, while almost twice that proportion of wives who say they do not receive chop money are in this category (20.0%). Yet for 92 percent of dyads in which husbands experienced their preferences wives say they receive chop money, and for 84 percent of dyads husbands say they give their wives chop money. Clearly there is an important relationship between chop money payments and husband-advantage in reproductive decision making.

Table 6c presents a cross-tabulation of the "wantedness" of the last child on wives' and husbands' responses about the major financial provider for children's school fees. The findings show that husband-advantage outcomes are strongest when wives say husbands are the main persons responsible for school fees (12.5%) than when wives say they are (10.0%). Among couples in this category as a whole, among 91.6 percent of dyads wives say husbands are the main persons who pay school fees, and for 73.3 percent husbands say they are the main persons who pay school fees.

For one hundred percent of couples in which wives achieved their preferences wives say husbands are responsible for children's school fees and husbands say they are responsible. In other words husbands' contributions are more important than wives' when it comes to wife-advantage outcomes. So if husbands' financial provisions affect both wife as well as husband-advantage this suggests that as women close the gap in resource contributions between themselves and their husbands they are not necessarily likely to increase their reproductive decision-making clout. At best the findings provide mixed support for structural arguments. Educational, occupational and financial resource contributions are associated with reproductive outcomes to some extent. While educational gaps between spouses in favour of husbands are associated with less decision-making power for wives, the same is not true for occupational gaps. Further, husband-advantage is less likely the more senior a husband's occupation (position), but is unrelated to a wife's position. On the other hand, where a woman is responsible for the provision of money for food, or the payment of school fees (accepted male roles) she is less likely to fall into a male-advantageous reproductive outcome category. What is not clear from these findings is whether these resources are empowering in themselves or whether they affect individuals' gender orientations. The findings are not unequivocal because some wives who contribute fewer resources have more power to effect reproductive outcomes, while others who contribute more resources have less power to do so. Further, couples in the male-advantageous reproductive outcome category include those in which couples make similar resource contributions, as well as those in which the husband makes greater contributions. I would argue, therefore, that the relationship between structural factors (resource contributions) and reproductive decision-makinghas more to do with the gap, (or perhaps a perceived gap) in spousal resource contributions than

resource contributions per se. Clearly, the data suggest that there are other factors at work when it comes to reproductive decision making, and next I will examine whether these factors may be related to the gender orientations of the individuals in the marital dyad.

The Cultural Argument - Gender Orientation

As discussed earlier, an individual's gender orientation refers to the extent to which they have internalized, and continue to legitimate, particular expectations for females and males. When this orientation is egalitarian, the individual has similar expectations for women and men, and believes they should be granted equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities. When the orientation is male (or female) dominant, the individual typically has different expectations for women and men, accords men (women) more rights, and generally approves of, or accepts, male (female) dominance. The theoretical perspective from which the role of gender orientation in reproductive decision-making emerges is a cultural one. This perspective argues that there is a cultural basis for the observed differences in women's fertility preferences and their reproductive behaviour, to wit, that men have a lot of influence in reproductive decision-making, and that women defer to men when it comes to reproductive matters *in spite of the structural resources they bring to their relationships.* Gender orientations are assessed via a number of variables; I look at issues such as polygyny, bridewealth payments, children born outside the marriage, and gendered decision-making[25].

I begin by describing issues that reflect gendered social inequalities related to marriage and childbearing between spouses — whether the husband has other wives, and whether the husband has children with women other than his wife[26].

The Effects of Children Born Outside the Marriage

At the conceptualization stage of this study I felt that the extent to which men had children outside their marriage (either before or during) would be indicative of male-dominance. I also felt that if women brought children into a marriage this would work as a "negative" resource in marriages to men with male-dominant orientations (i.e., it would reduce wives' power).

The data on whether a spouse has children with someone other than her or his spouse are useful on two counts. 1) They provide some evidence, albeit qualified, of the relative ease with which wo/men who have children can (re)marry; if having children does not count as an obstacle for women then this may be a reflection of egalitarian orientations. 2) A woman who has children prior to her marriage may feel grateful to her husband for marrying her, and thus indebted to him, suggesting male-dominant orientations. 3) In the case of men who have children with women other than their wives during their current marriages, they provide some

indication of the extent to which extra-marital relationships and births are accepted by wives. Wives and husbands who see nothing unacceptable about the phenomenon are more likely to hold to male-dominant orientations.

The analysis indicates that almost three times as many men (21.6 percent) enter their marriages with children from previous relationships as do women (7.8 percent). Further, although none of the women indicate that they have had extra-marital births, 8 percent of men do (and 36 % of all extra-marital births for men occurred *during* their current marriages).

Thirty-three percent of women and 32 percent of wives, and 30 percent of men and husbands acknowledge that the husband has children with women other than his spouse. Further almost 30 percent of paired spouses agree that the husband has other children, while 8 percent disagree whether he has other children or not. Among the paired couples, 29 percent agree that the husband has pre- and extra-marital children.

As far as the trivariate analyses are concerned husbands' having children outside marriage does not show a clear relationship with reproductive outcomes. Nonetheless among the paired spouses, those in which the wives say their husbands have children born to other women are more likely (20%) to fall in the husband-advantage category than couples where wives say the husband has no children born outside the marriage (9%). For the majority of paired spouses in the husband-advantage category wives say that husbands have extra-marital children (54%). The findings thus suggest some relationship between husband-advantage and husbands having extra-marital children.

Decision-making

Decision-making outcomes among the sample allow us to see the gendered nature of decision making, which in turn may reflect individuals' gender orientations. Table 7 describes the way couples delineate areas of decision making. The areas described show a bias towards husbands being responsible for decision-makingin the areas of purchasing major goods, and children's schooling. Husbands also have some responsibility for a traditionally "female" domain - food purchases. However, the area of decision-making about wives' work is more contested.

Spouses generally agree that husbands take the major decisions when it comes to purchasing major household items. Eighty-two percent of wives say that the decision about purchasing major goods is taken by their husbands, and 79 percent of husbands say the same. Among paired spouses 68.2 percent of couples agree that this is the husbands' domain while only 3 percent say the wife takes this decision. Couples also generally agree that wives take most of the decisions in the areas of the family's food menu, although there is less agreement in this area (54.5 % agree). Decisions about children's schooling are also husband-dominated

with 56 percent of paired couples agreeing that husbands take the decision, while only 3 percent say the wife does. These two areas of decision-making follow traditional patterns — the wife is responsible for taking care of the food, and when it comes to major expenditures and children's education the husband will take the decision. However, there is more agreement about the husbands' domains than the wives'; more respondents are acknowledging husbands in an accepted male role (decision-making about major goods and children's education) than they are acknowledging wives in theirs (decision-making about household food). Another way to look at it is to argue that perhaps husbands are not only involved in "male" areas of decision making, but also in "female" areas (in this case regarding food to eat). Either way, whether individuals are really taking more or fewer decisions in particular gendered roles, or only saying that they are, this is still generally a reflection of a particular orientation — a male-dominant one.

The major area of contention is with decisions about the wife taking up a new income-earning activity. While 45.5 percent of wives say they take this decision, 73.6 of husbands say it is theirs to take, and only 26 percent of paired spouses agree that this is a husband's area of decision-making. What is particularly interesting about the findings for the three decision-making areas is the low proportions of paired spouses who report that decision-making in any of these areas is joint (both spouses) — less than 1 percent for decisions about food, none regarding major goods, 4 percent for decisions about the children's schooling, and 4.5 percent for decisions about the wife taking up a new income-earning venture. Spouses generally stick to particular (gendered) areas of decision-making in their marriages.

The trivariate analyses on the variables discussed above are presented in Tables 8a-d. At first glance, we see, again, that for each person said to be responsible for a particular decision, the majority agree that the last child was wanted. What is more revealing, and important for the analysis, are the discrepant response categories when one spouse wanted the child and the other did not since these give some indication of relative fe/male power.

Looking at wives' responses about decision-making related to household food [Table 8a] 11 percent of couples where the wife says she is the decision maker fall into the husband-advantage category, while 16 percent of couples where the wife says the husband is the decision maker fall into that category. For husbands' responses, 23 percent of couples where the husband says he is responsible fall into the husband-advantage category while only 8 percent of couples where the husband says the wife is responsible do. However, further analysis of couples in the husband-advantage category as a whole, shows that in 75 percent of all cases the wife says she takes decisions about food, and in 40 percent of cases the husband says the wife takes decisions about food. In other words, when a wife has decision-making power in a traditionally female-designated area, this is still associated with husband-

advantage in the reproductive area. However, the same is also true among couples in the wife-advantage category — 86 percent of wives and 100 percent of husbands say wives take decisions about household food.

Further, among couples in the husband-advantage category, the majority of spouses agree that husbands are the major decision makers when it comes to children's schooling (84.6 % of wives say so as do 54 % of husbands). This is a decision-making area that is viewed as a man's area thus this effect is not surprising. A similar pattern as for decisions about children's schooling emerges for decisions about major goods to buy among couples in the husband-advantage category but not for those in the wife-advantage category [Table 7.c]. Further, while 77 percent of couples in which the wife says the husband is the major decision maker, and 85 percent of couples in which husbands say the same, are in the husband-advantage category, couples in the wife-advantage category also accord these decisions to husbands (86% of wives and 71% of husbands says so).

Finally, Table 7.d shows a less clear pattern when it comes to the relationship between decision-making about wives income earning ventures and reproductive outcomes. Among couples in the husband-advantage category 46 percent of wives say the decision is taken by husbands, while 77 percent of husbands say so. When husbands say that they take the decision, couples are more likely to be in the wife-advantage category than when wives say so. Couples are also more likely to fall in the wife-advantage category when wives say they take decisions about their work (57%); and in fact none of the husbands say so.

While the findings are similar for the decision-making variables, on the whole for the four decision-making areas discussed, couples are more likely to fall in the husband-advantage reproductive outcome category when decisions are made by husbands, especially in "female" areas (about food) or areas which affect women's lives (their work). At the same time, when reproductive outcomes favor wives, decisions are generally taken by wives in "female" areas, but still taken by husbands in "male" areas. This suggests that male-dominant gender orientations are related to male-advantage in reproductive outcomes. It also suggests that husbands may dominate in particular decision-making areas but still choose not to exercise power in reproductive matters.

Table 9 is a cross-tabulation of wives' and husbands' responses about the "wantedness" of the last child by their responses about who *should* take decisions about contraceptive methods. None of the wives who say their husbands should decide fall in the husband-advantage category, while 21.4 percent of wives who say they (wives) should decide fall in this category. None of the husbands who say wives should decide fall in the husband-advantage category while 13.0 percent of husbands who say they (husbands) should decide, and 10.8 percent of husbands who say both should, fall in this category. When we further

analyze wives' responses among couples in the husband-advantage category we see that the majority say a health professional should decide (46.2%). The majority of husbands' responses indicate that husbands should decide (69.2%). When husbands say they should decide on a method, couples are more likely to fall in the husband-advantage category than when husbands ascribe this decision to others. Wives, on the other hand, are more likely to fall into this category if they say a health professional should decide on a method. I can only speculate that wives who are ready to leave the decision about which method to use to someone other than themselves may feel a sense of inadequacy when it comes to issues of family planning. A woman who feels ready to take control of her reproductive behaviour is more likely to have informed herself about methods, or to feel that the decision about a method should be hers (or hers and her husband's).

Conclusions

Are structural factors important in explaining relative spousal power in reproductive decision making? The findings presented here suggest that to some extent they may be. Financial contributions in specific areas — namely for household food, school fees, and chop money — appear to be associated with reproductive decision-making [outcomes]. On the other hand, structural factors as a whole do not play as much of a role as the gap in resource contributions between spouses, especially in terms of spouses' ages and their educational levels. The failure to establish a consistent relationship between reproductive outcomes and occupational gaps, while there is an effect of financial contributions, suggests that we need to look further for explanations of power differences between spouses. Further, expenditure patterns are themselves gendered, suggesting that these patterns may themselves reflect gender orientations.

Does gender orientation matter? The decision-making data show that it does. When husbands are inclined, or ideologically attached to positions that accord men greater responsibility for decision-making and financial provision in the home, couples are more likely to fall into the husband-advantage reproductive outcome groups. Wives in this category either share their husbands' orientations, or outcomes are associated more with husbands' orientations than with wives'. At the same time, wives' advantage is related more to gender orientation than structural variables.

On the whole the data show that gender orientations do matter, and that they can override the effects of structural factors. Indeed, the data provide limited support for the hypothesis that the gap in structural resources is a better predictor of power outcomes than structural resources per se. Further, the findings also show that husbands' gender orientations matter more than wives' do, again providing support for the cultural argument. It appears that

structural factors are not a sufficient condition for wife-advantage, while gender orientations are certainly very important.

What are the theoretical implications that emerge from these findings? First, the data suggest the value for fertility studies to work from more than one single theoretical perspective. While the data suggest a more limited role of structural factors in reproductive decision making, they do in fact suggest that resource contributions matter and cannot be discarded in research on reproductive behaviour. Financial contributions matter more than education or occupation. This suggests that status variables are less important, than "real" quantifiable ones that translate into effects on standard of living.

While we may expect structural factors to affect gender orientation such that the more educat on a wo/man has, the more likely s/he will be to have an egalitarian gender orientation, this is something that cannot be measured by the cross-sectional data survey data[27].

While these findings begin to capture some of the factors that influence reproductive decision making, they should be interpreted as suggestive rather than as conclusive because the sample size as a whole, as well as on individual variables, does not permit detailed statistical analyses of the theoretical questions. The findings are not generalizable to Ghana as a whole; however, they can suggest processes that underpin gender orientations and reproductive outcomes. Survey questions regarding expenditure and decision making, while they show a relationship between the provision of chop money, for example, and (reproductive) decision making, do not capture the whole picture either.

The cross-sectional nature of the study makes it difficult to assess conclusively whether gender orientation precedes reproductive behaviour, as it most likely does, or whether particular life (partner?) choices influence gender orientation. For example, do individuals enter marriage with particular gender orientations and then seek to influence reproductive behaviour according to these orientations? On the other hand, if one partner is able to convince (or coerce) her or his spouse to a particular behaviour, does the "convinced" (or coerced) partner eventually revise her or his orientation to match the other's?

The data are also limited in the extent to which the effects of the theoretical perspectives can be separated out. For example while a husband's provision of chop money may be an indicator of his resource contributions (structural perspective) it can also be read as an indicator of a particular gender orientation; i.e. male-dominant orientations more readily support the phenomenon of chop money. This is a dilemma that is not easily resolved with survey data, however, I suggest some ways in which this might be accomplished - Broadening our understanding of the relevance of the social context for demographic purposes again brings issues of social, including gender inequality, into fertility studies.

The findings only begin to suggest what goes into forming individuals' gender orientations and these preliminary findings call for much more research. In order to understand the complex interrelationships between women's and men's activities and demographic variables, I can only emphasize the value of taking an interdisciplinary approach. Gender systems at the macro level, which influence gender orientations at the individual level, are a central stratifying feature of everyday life, and without analytically incorporating these phenomena into fertility models, a full understanding of reproductive decision-making will be compromised.

The findings do not suggest easy policy interventions. However, family planning programs clearly need to take into account women and men's perceptions of masculinity, femininity, and appropriate gender roles. Programs cannot simply begin to target contraceptive methods at men and expect changes in their decision-making patterns and their reproductive behaviour. In fact, simply targeting family planning programs at men without taking into account existing gender relations, and how these are affected by gender orientations, may only reinforce male dominance. It might be useful for community efforts to involve women and men, and husbands and wives in something akin to "collaborative discourse" to interpret the fears and concerns of the sexes related to family planning and reproductive behaviour. As individuals and spouses begin to recognize the fears, concerns, and ways of overcoming of other individuals they may begin to feel themselves empowered to defy, or at least to challenge and question male dominant gender orientations, and seek ways to bring about a more egalitarian form of family planning. Obviously gender orientation cannot be legislated, so from a policy perspective, curriculum efforts related to issues of gender equity need to be strengthened from the early years of schooling, when children are most open. The Program of Action adopted at Cairo (ICPD) was the contract outlining the terms of a new alliance between demographers and feminists. The acknowledgment that redressing gender inequalities is needed for lasting fertility reduction received political support. This article has shown that beyond recognizing the importance of gender relations for *fertility reduction*, gender relations are important for *reproductive behaviour* as seen from a wider perspective. It is true that when women have more children than they want to have as a result of male dominance this has direct health and population-related (hence "development") consequences. However, when women are obliged to have fewer children than they want to have this can also have health and fertility-related consequences as a result of unwanted abortions. From a feminist perspective, both of these outcomes also have implications for women's human rights in the reproductive areas of woman's lives. Hopefully future research can move from a narrow fertility-reduction focus to look at the social conditions under which choices are made.

Table 1: **Descriptive Statistics for selected Background Characteristics by all Women and Men Surveyed and comparison with GDHS where applicable**

Characteristic			*GDHS 1993*	
	Women % N=140	**Men %** N=125	**Women %** N=4562	**Men %** N=1302
Age*				
≤ 34	23.6	3 2	70.6	59.4
35-39	25.0	8.8	12.7	13.1
40-44	22.1	24.0	9.3	8.3
45-49	18.0	29.0	7.4	6.7
≥ 50	11.3	31.4	0.0	12.5
Mean Age (Sd)	40.31 (7.69)	46.63 (6.69)		
Religion				
Catholic	9.3	22.4	18.0	16.7
Main line Christianα	47.1	42.4	54.1[2]	47.5[2]
Charismatic/Indepnd.α	32.1	28.0		
Islam	0.7	0.0	11.7	17.1
None	1.4	2.4	11.8	12.7
Other	3.6	4.0	4.4	0.1
Not stated	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Traditional	0.0	0.8	0.0	5.9
Ethnicity				
All Akan	48.6	42.4	49.6	44.3
Ga/Adangbe	18.6	20.8	8.0	8.8
Ewe	27.9	28.0	14.9	16.6
All Othersβ	5.7	8.8	25.3	26.7
Living Arrangement				
% living with spouseδ	86.4	94.4		
% in first marriage	85.7	75.2	- NA -	
% ever had children	97.1	95.2		
No. of Childrenω				
0-3	55.9	46.2	53.6	--
4-5	33.1	35.3	24.3	--
≥ 6	11.0	18.5	26.2	--
Mean # of children (Sd)	3.45 (1.6)	4.06 (1.9)	5.4	--
Mean # of children Greater Accra			3.6	
Work Place				
Legon workers	32.9	82.4		
Non-Legon spouses	62.1	17.6	- NA -	
Unemployed	5.0	0.0		

*GDHS sample includes 17.6% 15-19 year olds, 77.6% of whom count as 'never married'.
αMainline=Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican and Baptist.
αOther=Spiritual and Christian sects such as Jehovah's Witnesses.
[2] The GDHS does not distinguish between denominations.
βMy sample Other=Dagbani (0.6) Guan (0.6), Grussi (2.5).
GDHS= Mole-Dagbani (15.6), Grussin (3.5), Gruma (2.3), Hausa (0.7); 16.9, 1.8, 1.6, 1.2
δThe remainder of husbands/wives live outside Accra either in the same region (5.0/1.6%), another region (5.7/0.8%) or abroad (2.9%); data is missing on this item for 3.2% of men.
ω For GDHS this refers to currently married women.

Table 2: **Household Expenditure Patterns for all Women and Men and Couples (Wives and Husbands)**

Household Expenditure			Couples	
	Women[3]	Men[3]	Wives[3]	Husbands[3]
Main Provider	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)	% (N)
Food at home	**N=140**	**N=125**	**N=110**	
Self	40.7 (57)	56.0 (70)	37.3 (41)	52.7 (58)
Spouse	45.7 (64)	29.6 (37)	49.1 (54)	32.7 (36)
Ex-wife	-	1.6 (2)	-	1.8 (2)
Both	-	10.4 (13)	-	10.9 (12)
Other[2]	12.1 (17)	-	11.8 (13)	-
Missing	1.4 (2)	1.9 (3)	1.8 (2)	1.8 (2)
Food for school (Kids)	**N=136**	**N=125**	**N=107**	
Self	51.5 (70)	47.2 (59)	47.7 (51)	47.6 (51)
Spouse	32.4 (44)	36.0 (45)	33.6 (36)	39.7 (41)
Ex-wife	-	1.6 (2)	-	1.8 (2)
Both	-	9.6 (12)	-	9.1 (10)
Other	13.1 (18)	-	16.7 (18)	-
Missing	2.9 (4)	5.6 (7)	1.9 (2)	2.7 (3)
Children's clothes	**N=139**	**N=125**	**N=110**	
Self	37.6 (59)	58.4 (73)	42.7 (47)	58.2 (64)
Spouse	33.1 (46)	20.8 (26)	32.7 (36)	22.7 (25)
Ex-wife	-	0.8 (1)	-	0.9 (1)
Both	-	18.4 (23)	-	16.4 (18)
Other[2]	22.9 (32)	-	22.7 (25)	-
Missing	1.3 (2)	1.6 (2)	1.8 (2)	1.8 (2)
Children's school fees	**N=136**	**N=125**	**N=107**	
Self	11.0 (15)	84.0 (105)	9.3 (10)	83.2 (89)
Spouse	81.6 (111)	3.2 (4)	84.1 (90)	3.7 (4)
Ex-wife	-	0.8 (1)	-	0.9 (1)
Both	-	7.2 (9)	-	8.4 (9)
Other[2]	6.6 (9)	1.6 (2)	5.4 (6)	0.9 (1)
Missing	0.7 (1)	2.5 (4)	0.9 (1)	2.8 (3)
Hospital Bills	**N=140**	**N=125**	**N=110**	
Self	21.4 (30)	21.6 (27)	16.4 (18)	13.6 (15)
Spouse	70.7 (99)	0.8 (1)	74.5 (82)	0.9 (1)
Ex-wife	-	-	-	
Both	-	7.2 (9)	-	8.2 (9)
Other[2]	5.0 (7)	68.0 (85)¨	5.4 (6)	74.5 (82)¨
Missing	2.9 (4)	2.4 (3)	3.6 (4)	2.7 (3)

[3] Some of the questions are not applicable for some respondents so the N for each variable varies.
[2] Other = senior fe/male and other family members, employer.
¨ Total amount here refers to Employers.

Table 3: **Wantedness of Last Child by All Women and Men and Couples (Wives and Husbands) Couples (N=107*)**

	Women % (N=135*)	Men % (N=121)*	Wives % (N)	Husbands % (N)
Wanted last child	72.1 (101)	78.5 (95)	72.9 (78)	80.4 (86)
Not want last child then	2.1 (3)	4.1 (5)	2.8 (3)	4.7 (5)
Not want last child at all	22.1 (31)	17.4 (21)	22.4 (24)	15.0 (16)
NR	3.2 (5)	0.0 (0)	1.9 (2)	0.0 (0)

Couple (Joint) Desire

Both wanted then	66.4 (71)
Both Did not Want then (Wait)	0.9 (1)
Both want no more (Stop)	10.3 (11)
Wife no more (Stop)/Husband not then (Wait)	1.8 (2)
Wife wanted then/Husband Not then (Wait)	1.8 (2)
Wife wanted then/Husband No More (Stop)	4.7 (5)
Wife Not then (Wait)/Husband wanted then	1.8 (2)
Wife No more (Stop)/Husband wanted then	10.3 (11)
Wife NR/Husband Wanted then	1.8 (2)

* Individuals/couples who have never had a child are excluded from the analysis.

Table 4: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Gap in Wives' and Husbands' Education (EDUGAP))**

	Wantedness of last Child									
	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Education Gap	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Zero	63.2	24	5.8	6	5.3	2	13.2	5	2.6	1
Husband More	67.2	41	11.5	7	8.2	5	11.5	7	1.6	1
Wife More	75.0	6	---		---		25.0	2	---	

Table 5: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Gap in Wives' and Husbands' Occupations (OCCUGAP))**

	Wantedness of last Child									
	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Occupation Gap	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Zero	70.7	41	13.8	8	1.7	1	12.1	7	1.7	1
Husband Senior	60.0	21	8.6	3	17.1	6	14.3	5	---	
Wife Senior	100.0	1	---		---		---		---	
Missing	61.5	8	15.4	2	---		15.4	2	7.7	1

Table 6a: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Wives' and Husbands' Responses About Major Financial Provider for Household Food**

	Wantedness of Last Child									
	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Yes	65.0	26	12.5	5	2.5	1	15.0	6	---	
No	71.2	37	13.5	7	5.7	3	9.6	5	---	
ometimes	53.3	8	6.6	1	20.0	3	20.0	3	---	
Husband's Responses										
Self	64.9	37	10.5	6	10.5	6	12.3	7	1.7	1
Wife	66.6	24	11.1	4	2.8	1	16.7	6	2.8	1
Other	2.7	1	2.7	1	---		---		---	
Both	75.0	9	16.6	1	---		8.3	1	---	

Table 6b: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Whether Husband Gives Wife Chop Money**

	Wantedness of Last Child									
	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Yes	66.0	66	12.0	12	6.0	6	14.0	14	2.0	2
No	80.0	4	20.0	1	---		---			
Sometimes	50.0	1	---		50.0	1	---		---	
Husband's Responses										
Yes	68.0	66	11.3	11	6.2	6	12.4	12	2.1	2
No	50.0	4	25.0	2	12.5	1	12.5	1	---	
Sometimes	----		---		50.0	1	--		50.0	1

Table 6c: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Wives' and Husbands' Responses About Major Financial Provider for Children's School Fees**

	Wantedness of Last Child									
	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	80.0	8	10.0	1	---		---		10.0	1
Husband	64.7	57	12.5	11	12.3	7	21.1	12	1.7	1
Other	50.0	3	---		---		33.3	2	16.6	1
Husband's Responses										
Self	66.3	61	11.9	11	7.6	7	11.9	11	2.2	2
Wife	50.0	2	---		---		50.0	2	---	
Other	100.0	2	---		---		---		---	
Both	66.6	6	22.2	2	---		11.1	1	---	

Table 7: **Household Decision-making Among Women and Men and Couples (Wives and Husbands)**

Decision-Making Area	Women % (N)	Men % (N)	Couples: Wives % (N)	Couples: Husbands % (N)
What food to buy – greatest say			**(N=110)**	
Self	78.6 (110)	23.2 (29)	74.5 (82)	21.8 (24)
Spouse	15.7 (22)	68.0 (85)	18.2 (20)	70.0 (77)
Self/Spouse	3.6 (5)	5.6 (7)	4.5 (5)	5.4 (6)
Senior Male	0.7 (1)	0.8 (1)	0.9 (1)	0.9 (1)
NR/DK	1.4 (2)	2.4 (3)	1.8 (2)	1.8 (2)
Both say husband			8.2 (9)	
Both say wife			54.5 (60)	
Both say both			0.9 (1)	
Wife says wife, husband says husband			12.7 (14)	
Wife says wife, husband says both			4.5 (5)	
Wife says both, husband says wife			3.6 (4)	
Wife says husband, husband says wife			10.0 (11)	
All other combinations			5.4 (6)	
Purchase major Goods	**(N=110)**			
Self	14.3 (20)	76.8 (96)	11.8 (13)	79.0 (87)
Spouse	77.1 (108)	6.4 (8)	81.8 (90)	6.3 (7)
Self/Spouse	7.1 (10)	16.0 (20)	4.5 (5)	14.5 (16)
NR	1.4 (2)	0.0	1.8 (2)	0.9 (1)
Both say husband			68.2 (75)	
Both say wife			2.7 (3)	
Both say both			0.0 (0)	
Wife says wife, husband says husband			0.0 (0)	
Wife says wife, husband says both			3.6 (4)	
Wife says both, husband says wife			0.0 (0)	
Wife says both, husband says husband			3.6 (4)	
Wife says husband, husband says wife			2.7 (3)	
Wife says husband, husband says both			11.0 (12)	
Either one NR			1.8 (2)	
School to send children to				
	(N=135)	**(N=123)**	**(N=105)**	
Self	20.7 (28)	70.7 (87)	17.1 (18)	73.0 (77)
Spouse	64.4 (87)	6.5 (8)	68.6 (72)	6.6 (7)
Self/Spouse	11.9 (16)	17.9 (22)	10.5 (11)	18.1 (19)
NR/DK	2.9 (4)	4.9 (6)	3.8 (4)	1.9 (2)
Both say husband			56.1 (59)	
Both say wife			2.8 (3)	
Both say both			3.8 (4)	
Wife says wife, husband says husband			12.3 (13)	
Wife says wife, husband says both			1.9 (2)	
Wife says both, husband says wife			1.9 (2)	
Wife says both, husband says husband			3.8 (4)	
Wife says husband, husband says wife			0.9 (1)	
Wife says husband, husband says both			10.4 (11)	
Either one NR/DK			5.7 (6)	

Table 7.5 continued

Wife/woman taking up new venture			**(N=110)**	
Self	47.9 (67)	72.8 (91)	45.5 (50)	73.6 (81)
Spouse	37.1 (52)	4.8 (6)	36.4 (40)	5.4 (6)
Self/Spouse	11.4 (16)	21.6 (27)	13.6 (15)	21.0 (23)
Senior Male	0.6 (1)	0.0	0.9 (1)	0.0 (0)
NR	3.6 (5)	0.0	3.6 (4)	0.0 (0)
Both say husband			26.0 (29)	
Both say wife			3.6 (4)	
Both say both			4.5 (5)	
Wife says wife, husband says husband			37.0 (41)	
Wife says wife, husband says both			4.5 (5)	
Wife says both, husband says wife			0.0 (0)	
Wife says both, husband says husband			8.2 (9)	
Wife says husband, husband says wife			0.9 (1)	
Wife says husband, husband says both			9.0 (10)	
Either one NR/DK			**5.4 (6)**	

Table 8a: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Major Decision Maker about Food to Buy**

Wantedness of Last Child

Decision Maker	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	67.5	54	11.3	9	7.5	6	11.3	9	3.1	2
Spouse	58.0	11	15.8	3	5.2	1	21.0	4	----	
Other*	50.0	1	----		----		50.0	2		
Both	80.0	4	----		----		20.0	1		
Husband's Responses										
Self	59.0	13	22.7	5	----		18.2	4	----	
Spouse	71.0	54	7.8	6	9.2	7	9.2	7	2.6	2
Other*	66.0	2	33.0	1	----		----		----	
Both	22.2	2	33.3	3	----		44.4	4	----	

*Senior female or male family members.

Table 8b: **Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Major Decision Maker about Children's Schooling**

Wantedness of Last Child

Decision Maker	Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	66.6	12	5.5	1	11.2	2	----		5.5	1
Spouse	68.1	49	15.3	11	4.2	3	11.2	8	1.4	1
Other*	75.0	3	25.0	1	----		----		----	
Both	45.5	5	----		18.2	2	36.4	4	20.0	1
Husband's Responses										
Self	71.0	54	9.2	7	6.5	5	11.8	9	1.3	1
Spouse	50.0	4	12.5	1	----		25.0		12.5	1
Other*	66.0	2	----		33.0	1	----		----	
Both	52.2	10	26.3	5	5.3	1	15.8	3	----	

*Senior female or male family members.

Table 8c: Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Major Decision Maker about Major Goods

Decision Maker	Wantedness of Last Child: Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	69.2	9	15.3	2	7.6	1	----		----	
Spouse	66.6	58	11.5	10	6.8	6	12.5	11	2.2	2
Other*	50.0	1	50.0	1	----		----		----	
Both	60.0	3	----		----		40.0	2	----	
Husband's Responses										
Self	67.0	57	13.0	11	6.0	5	10.7	9	2.3	9
Spouse	71.4	5	----		----		28.5	2	----	
Other*	----		----		----		----		----	
Both	56.0	9	12.5	2	12.5	2	19.0	3	----	

*Senior female or male family members.

Table 8d: Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Major Decision Maker about Wife taking up New Income-Earning Venture

Decision Maker	Wantedness of Last Child: Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	63.3	31	10.2	5	8.2	4	16.3	8	2.0	1
Spouse	72.0	28	15.4	6	2.5	1	10.3	4	2.5	1
Other*	60.0	3	20.0	1	20.0	1	----		----	
Both	64.3	9	7.1	1	7.1	1	14.3	2	7.1	1
Husband's Responses										
Self	66.6	52	12.8	10	6.4	5	14.1	11	----	
Spouse	80.0	4	----		----		20.0	1	----	
Other*	----		----		----		----		----	
Both	65.2	15	13.0	3	8.6	2	8.6	2	4.3	1

*Senior female or male family members.

Table 9: Wantedness of Last Child Among Couples by Who should Determine Contraceptive Method

Decision Maker	Wantedness of Last Child: Both then		Only Husband then		Only Wife then		Both not then		NR	
Wife's Responses	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Self	35.7	5	21.4	3	14.3	2	21.4	3	7.1	1
Spouse	71.4	5	----		----		28.6	2	----	
Both	70.8	34	8.3	4	8.3	4	10.4	5	----	
Health professional	68.6	24	17.1	6	2.9	1	11.4	4	7.1	1
Husband's Responses										
Self	66.7	46	13.0	9	8.7	6	8.7	6	2.9	2
Spouse	----		----		----		----		100.0	1
Both	67.5	25	10.8	4	2.7	1	18.9	7	----	

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Notes

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[2] The Ghana National Family Planning Programme(GNFPP), for example, was established in 1969, and with this Ghana became the first African country to develop a national population policy.

[3] The DHS are a series of surveys on, as the name indicates, demographic and health issues, which have been carried out in 50 countries, including 29 in sub-Saharan Africa.

[4] Fertility rate refers to the number of children that would be born per woman in her life time if she were to pass through her childbearing years bearing children according to a current schedule of age-specific fertility rates.

[5] The population debate has had strong political and emotional undertones, and I do not take the position that any government, agency, or individual can dictate the reproductive behaviour of any people. However, I do believe that individuals and families have the right to achieve the family size they desire. At the same time I agree with Hodgson and Watkins (1997) that abortion is more a symbolic issue for Northern feminists, especially American feminists, than it is for Southern feminists, hence while in this paper I examine women's options for spacing and stopping births, I do not focus on the issue of abortion.

[6] This refers to the following 'modern' methods -- the pill, IUD, diaphragm, foam, jelly, condom, female sterilization, and implants. The figures for all methods including traditional are 18.9 and 20.3 percent for all women and married women respectively

[7] New babies are usually "outdoored", presented to the families, about a week after they are born.

[8] Although these initiation ceremonies or nubility rites can be quite complex, Sarpong (1977) explains that they are not nearly as complicated as those recorded for certain East African societies.

[9] Sarpong (1977) suggests that because of the relationship between the survival of a woman's matrilineage, and her own survival, matrilineages keep a vigilant eye on the treatment of their women by their husbands.

[10] In 1958 the Native Authority Courts were officially abolished; however, certain customary laws have been incorporated into judicial laws. Furthermore, traditional courts still have limited jurisdiction in minor domestic issues and matters pertaining to land. While they can levy fines, they no longer have the power to arrest nor to imprison.

[11] Yeboah (1990) notes that only one bigamy case has succeeded in Ghana in this century, and that a judge was even reported to have said that the bigamy law was not meant to be enforced in this country (cited in Nukunya 1991).

[12] Thanks to Francis Dodoo for suggesting the term.

[13] While there is evidence of female autonomy among traditional Ghanaian societies, in these instances social organization was based on the complementary roles of the sexes. I know of no instance where general dominance of females over males was legitimized.

[14] Some notable exceptions include Thompson's work on couples in the US (1997) and Dodoo (1993; 1998) on Ghanaian and Kenyan couples.

[15] The study also included follow-up in-depth interviews with 11 couples; that data is not presented in the current analysis.

[16] The question goes, "at the time you [your wife] became pregnant with your last child, did you want the child then, did you want to have the child later, or would you have preferred [that your wife] not to get pregnant at all?"

[17] Once a child has been born, a spouse who did not want the child may have learned to "live with it" and, perhaps also because they were convinced to compromise their stand, may have come to count the child as wanted. Further, once a child has been born and has come to develop a relationship with its parent(s), it becomes more difficult to accord it the unqualified status "unwanted".

[18] I rely on the 1993 GDHS since this was the last survey before the data collection period.

[19] All Senior Staff, whatever their level, were allocated senior positions. Junior staff ranking levels, of which there are 31, were assigned to senior or junior positions according to the "status" of the position as well as options for promotion. Junior staff at level 1, for example faculty support staff such as research assistants, and those in supervisory positions, were included among the 'senior" category.

[20] Past studies indicate so much sensitivity to questions about actual amounts of income and expenditure that I decided to simply ask which were major items/areas of expenditure for individuals and who was responsible for providing for each item/area.

[21] Providing food for children to take to school includes providing non-perishable items for children in boarding (secondary) school each term, which can involve a considerable financial contribution.

[22] The concept of chop money, and all its sexual and political underpinnings, is discussed in detail elsewhere (Adomako Ampofo 2000). However, in a crude sense it can be described as the "housekeeping" money a husband gives his wife, and can be paid daily, weekly, monthly, and even over longer periods.

[23] This was confirmed among the in-depth interview sample (Adomako Ampofo 2000).

[24] Cost of utilities is almost always deducted from salary at source, and the university [at the time] paid hospital bills so these items, while included in the survey, are removed from the analysis.

[25] The in-depth interviews also looked at the resolution of disagreements, gendered role expectations, and norms surrounding childbearing and adoption (Adomako Ampofo 2000).

[26] I intended assessing the effects of Bridewealth payments. However most couples agree (96%) that Bridewealth has been paid, and therefore that the marriages have been formalized according to customary requirements, therefore there is insufficient variation on this variable to merit trivariate analyses.

[27] Analysis of the in-depth interview data suggests a direct relationship between gender orientation and reproductive decision-making (Adomako Ampofo 2000).