

Marital Agreement in Fertility Goals

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the processes of family formation and change that facilitate or inhibit marital agreement about having children: mate selection, shared marital experiences, and mutual influence of wife and husband. A model is developed to represent the simultaneous effects of these processes on fertility agreement, and is tested with survey data from young married couples without children. The findings indicate that mutual influence is the most important source of agreement in fertility goals, but that religious homogamy and similarity of partners' sibship size also contribute to agreement. While educational homogamy is also a source of agreement, partners having similar occupations may be more likely to disagree about children, since occupational prestige increases husbands' fertility goals, but not those of wives. Other important sources of agreement are direct effects of wife's family of origin on the husband's goals, suggesting that husbands are to some extent "absorbed" into the kinship networks of their wives, thereby experiencing direct socialization by in-laws for fertility goals.

In modern societies, fertility is increasingly determined by individual goals for the number and timing of children (Bulatao, 1981; Bumpass, 1973; Lee, 1980). If we want to understand why births do or do not occur, we must learn a lot more about the formation and attainment of fertility goals. To understand marital fertility, in particular, we must also come to grips with the "couple" problem, i.e., the fact that fertility goals are INDIVIDUAL cognitive phenomena, while fertility outcomes are shared by the COUPLE.

It is certainly easier -- for couples and for demographers -- when there is agreement about fertility goals. Couples can then cooperate to attain shared goals; and demographers can treat individual goals (analytically if not theoretically) as a "couple" phenomenon. In fact, a number of studies at different times and places have found considerable marital agreement about having children (Beckman and Bardsley, 1981; Coombs and Chang, 1981; Coombs and Fernandez, 1978; Czajka, 1979; Hill et al., 1959; Muhsam and Kiser, 1956; Westoff et al., 1957; Westoff et al., 1961; Yaukey et al., 1967). On the other hand, we know that many couples disagree about fertility goals, and that it is not simply a matter of bad luck; that is, couples who agree have different characteristics and experiences than those who disagree (Coombs and Chang, 1981; Czajka, 1979).

The "couple problem" in fertility theory can be divided into two parts. First, we need to find out how fertility agreement comes about; for those couples who agree, we are then in a position to examine the processes through which their shared goal is attained. Second, we need to understand the processes through which remaining disagreements are resolved. In this paper, I deal with the first part

of the couple problem. Following an analytic strategy developed by Czajka (1979), I test alternative models of couple agreement with survey data from young couples in Wisconsin who have not yet had children. The results of these analyses indicate how the structure of marriage and kinship in modern society both facilitates and hinders the development of agreement about having children.

#### Sources of Marital Fertility Agreement

Since fertility is a critical component of family and kinship systems, the structure and processes of marriage ought to facilitate agreements between wife and husband about fertility goals. In modern "companionate" marriages, the daily interaction and exchange of information, affection and assistance between wife and husband is certainly a major source of agreement. When partners initially differ in their desires for children, one or the other or both may change her/his goals as a result of new information or concern for her/his partner's well-being. Among young couples, Beckman (1978) reported that discussion of fertility goals was directly associated with agreement; Coombs and Fernandez (1978) found, on the other hand, that communication was inversely associated with agreement. Two processes may be at work here; disagreement may stimulate discussion, while discussion fosters disagreement. In any event, mutual influence of partners' goals are clearly a primary source of agreement.

There are, in addition, less visible structural forces at work to facilitate marital agreement. Shared goals may also develop through homophily, the sharing of life experiences. That is, a great deal of agreement may come about simply because wives and husbands live joint

lives, sharing the social and economic conditions of their community and household. Indeed, most theories of fertility assume that the shared conditions of married life are experienced in the same way by wives and husbands, and therefore cause them to have the same desires for children. For example, both wives and husbands experience the constraints of wife's age and her associated reproductive capacity; both may learn from the experience of the first child what are the real costs and benefits of children; and both partners may experience the opportunities for alternative activities provided by urban vs. rural life. On the other hand, wives may perceive the constraints and risks of births at later ages as more costly than do their husbands; they may experience both greater joys and greater sorrows in childrearing than do their husbands; and, as Coombs and Fernandez (1978) argued, the occupational opportunities afforded to wives by urban residence may shift downward their fertility goals, but not those of their husbands. Each of these latter effects could create disagreement rather than agreement in fertility goals.

Moving backward (chronologically) and outward (in the kinship system), the system of mate selection may be a source of agreement about having children. There is no evidence that agreement results from explicit discussions during courtship (Hill et al., 1976), though some critical choices (e.g., whether or not to have any children) may be a condition for marriage. Fertility agreement is more likely to be a by-product of value consensus associated with homogamy, marriage of persons from the same economic, social or cultural categories (Adams, 1979).

Religious and ethnic homogamy are most likely to facilitate agreement about having children. Almost every contributor to a recent book on ethnicity and family life identified values or specific beliefs associated with ethnic cultures as sources of variations in fertility attitudes or behavior (Mindel and Habenstein, 1981). To the extent that wife and husband share religious/ethnic identity and associated values or beliefs, they are more likely to share fertility goals (Westoff et al., 1961).

Socioeconomic homogamy may also facilitate fertility agreement, insofar as socioeconomic status is a source of values or preferences relating to children and to alternative activities. However, socioeconomic homogamy may also affect the organization of marital roles in such a way as to cause disagreement. For example, if wife and husband have equal opportunities for activities that are incompatible with childrearing, competition arises between the opportunities of wife and of husband, some of which must be foregone in order to raise children. Many years ago, Parsons (1949) argued that the sexual division of labor was functional for the nuclear family precisely because it prevented this form of marital competition. As traditional sex roles erode, socioeconomic homogamy could become an important source of disagreement rather than agreement in fertility goals. As noted above, this is the argument made by Coombs and Fernandez (1978) to explain their finding that urban couples were more likely to disagree than rural couples.



Selection of a mate from a similar family of origin or type of community may also facilitate agreement about having children. In particular, sibship size or parents' marital disruption are potential sources of attitudes and beliefs about family life; partners with similar experiences of parents or siblings should be more likely to share fertility goals. Also, to the extent that wife and husband grew up in similar types of communities, they may be more or less likely to share attitudes and beliefs about having children that are associated with community type.

#### Models of Fertility Agreement

Figure 1 illustrates a causal model of fertility goals with which each source of agreement may be represented (see Czajka, 1979). It specifies two dependent variables, wife's fertility goal and husband's fertility goal. Each partner's goal is a function of the other partner's goal, shared marital experiences, and individual or family socialization experiences. The model represents two forms of homogamy, those based on experiences in the family of origin and those based on the individual social and economic experiences of young adults. Recognizing the primacy of young adults in the mate selection process, this model specifies that individual socialization experiences mediate some portion of the effects of family socialization on fertility goals. Thus, the potential disagreements associated with family heterogamy may be overcome by the effects of individual homogamy. [For convenience, potential direct effects of family background are not illustrated.]

[Figure 1 about here]

Under the assumption that the underlying distribution of fertility goals and preferences is the same for women and men, the effects of homogamy on agreement are represented by equal effects of corresponding socialization experiences on fertility goals. For example, if Catholicism has the same effect on women's and men's fertility goals, then religious homogamy increases fertility agreement. On the other hand, if education has different effects for women and for men (Cochrane and Bean, 1976; Czajka, 1979), educational homogamy will decrease agreement. The effects of shared marital experiences on fertility agreement are represented by equal or different effects of a given experience on fertility goals of wives and of husbands. Finally, mutual influence is represented by the direct reciprocal effects of partners' goals. Note that this specification estimates and "controls" for the interpersonal influences in estimating effects of social structure on partners' goals, but does not attempt to directly model the various processes involved.

Two studies have been conducted of wives' and husbands' fertility goals using models of this form (Beckman et al., 1983; Czajka, 1979). Both reported that Catholicism increased wives' family size goals, but had no effect on husbands' goals. Education had negative effects on fertility goals for both partners, but Czajka found that occupation had negative effects for wives, positive effects for husbands, consistent with the hypothesis about competing careers. Czajka also reported that sibship size had positive effects on fertility goals for wives', but not for husbands.

Each of these analyses is unsatisfactory in one respect or another for drawing conclusions about the effects of mate selection, marital experience and/or mutual influence on fertility agreement. Beckman and her colleagues did not test the equality of structural effects for wife and for husband. Further, their models include additional endogenous variables such as sex-role attitudes and motivation for parenthood which could mask the effects of homogamy or shared marital experience on agreement. Since Czajka's sample included less than 100 couples who had not yet had children, his measure of fertility "goals" included past behavior; desired family size included reported desires for children already born. Finally, both analyses utilized single-item measures of fertility goals, which means that estimates of structural effects may be seriously attenuated by measurement error.

The analyses reported below follow the logic of Czajka's analysis with three important modifications. First, measures of fertility goals are "pure" since the analysis is limited to young married couples without children. Second, random measurement error is accounted for by using two indicators of each partner's goal. Third, mediated models of partners' goals are estimated in order to examine the processes through which family socialization experiences affect, directly and indirectly, marital fertility agreement.

#### Data and Methods

Models of couple agreement were estimated with data from the Wisconsin Social Role Study, conducted in the winter of 1972-73 to examine social role definitions and fertility orientations among young

adults (Cautley and Borgatta, 1975). The survey respondents were a representative sample of Wisconsin residents age 15 through 29. The spouses of married respondents also participated in the survey. [1]

Wives and husbands independently completed written questionnaires at home, in the presence of an interviewer. The survey instrument included structured responses on fertility desires, expectations, benefits and costs of children, and fertility norms, as well as more general attitudes and social and economic background and status.

Causal models of partners' fertility goals were estimated for couples with no children (N=248), so that goals do not include past fertility outcomes. Each partner's family size goal was measured by two indicators: (1) Desired Family Size ("How many children would you like to have?") from "none" to "six or more" [2]; (2) Large Family Desire ("Even if I have to skimp, it is important for me to have a real family of THREE or more children") from 1 = "definitely disagree" to 7 = "definitely agree" [3].

Each respondent also provided data on family socialization experiences (father's occupation and education, mother's education and work experience, family religion, number of siblings) and individual socialization (education, occupation, religion). Among those variables comprising shared marital circumstances, data were collected only on wife's age and residence (community size).

Joreskog's (1973; 1977) methods for the analysis of covariance structures were used to estimate and test alternative models of wife's and husband's fertility goals. The LISREL VI program (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1983) was used to generate parameter estimates and

goodness-of-fit statistics. The program produces estimates of measurement parameters, including indicator coefficients (effects of latent variables on indicators) and residual ("error") variances for the measures of family size desires. It also estimates variances and covariances (or residual covariances) for latent variables, and structural effects.

A model's goodness-of-fit is indicated by a small likelihood statistic ( $L^2$ ) in comparison to the model's degrees of freedom. The likelihood statistic is distributed as chi-square, with degrees of freedom equal to the number of observed moments less the number of independently estimated parameters. The likelihood statistic can also be used to compare the relative fit of different models under certain conditions. Joreskog and Sorbom (1983) discuss goodness-of-fit statistics in more detail, as well as other considerations in assessing the fit of a model. The plausibility of parameter estimates (e.g., correlations or path coefficients within theoretical bounds of -1 to 1) and the distributions of the residual variances and covariances (difference between estimated and observed matrices) are important indicators of good or bad fit.

Each latent variable must be "normalized" to estimate its unobserved variance; in the models presented here, the indicator coefficients (or "loadings") of Desired Family Size were fixed at 1. Measurement analyses of several indicators of fertility desires demonstrated not only that these two indicators measured a single latent variable, but also that the indicator coefficients for wife's and husband's Large Family Desire were equal. This constraint was specified for all models, and allows for meaningful comparisons of

structural parameters for wives and for husbands (Williams and Thomson, 1985). Each independent variable was specified to be perfectly measured (i.e., having no disturbance variance).[4]

#### Analyses and Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for all of the indicators used to estimate models of couple agreement. [5] First, reduced

[Table 1 about here]

form versions of the model illustrated by Figure 1 were estimated. The baseline model (R1) specifies parallel and equal effects of all independent variables on each partner's family size desires. No direct "cross-over" effects of one partner's experiences on the other's goals are specified; the only variables affecting both partners' desires are those representing shared marital experiences, i.e., wife's age and couple's residence.

As shown in Table 2, this model is not rejected ( $L^2 = 91.3$ ,  $df = 71$ ,  $p = .053$ ). However, modification indices produced by the LISREL program suggested possible misspecifications:

[Table 2 about here]

First, that occupation does not have equal effects on goals for wife and for husband; second, that there are direct "cross-over" effects of wife's father's (or mother's) education, wife's sibship size, and husband's mother's employment on partner's fertility goals. Model R2 releases the equality constraint on occupation effects. Because Model R2 is "nested" in R1, we can test the improvement in fit by subtracting the smaller likelihood statistic from the larger; the difference is distributed as chi-square with degrees of freedom equal

to the difference between the respective degrees of freedom. As shown in Table 2, the contrast between Models R2 and R1 is statistically significant; that is, R2 "fits" the observed covariances better. Further improvements in fit were obtained by estimating the cross-over effects of wife's sibship size, wife's father's education, and husband's mother's employment. [6] The structural effects estimated from the best reduced form model (R6) are presented in Table 3.

[Table 3 about here]

Based on these reduced form estimates, we conclude as hypothesized that the most important source of marital agreement is mutual influence of partners' desires. The effect of each partner's goal on the other's is positive and large, and they are equal. In addition, the shared marital experiences of wife's age and residence are forces for agreement, since they have the same effects on each partner's goal. On the other hand, occupational homogamy may inhibit agreement, since husband's occupation INCREASES his desires for children, while wife's occupation has no effect (or at most a small negative effect) on her desires. Thus, the dual-professional couple and/or the traditional blue-collar couple are at greatest risk of disagreement; in the former case, husbands may want more children than wives, and in the latter, vice-versa.

The reduced-form model suggests that some effects of partner's family of origin have direct effects on desires. The findings for the wife's family effects on the husband are consistent with evidence that American kinship is matrifocal; that is, the strong mother-daughter tie results in greater "absorption" of sons-in-law than of daughters-in-law. It is interesting to note that the cross-over

effects of parental education/occupation are sex-linked, from mother-in-law to daughter-in-law and from father-in-law to son-in-law.

These findings may also be due to the fact that adult socialization experiences mediate those from one's family of origin, and that the process is different for men and for women. The next step, therefore, was to specify mediated forms of the model of agreement in family size desires. The mediated form also "removes" the high collinearity between current and childhood religion by specifying current religion as a mediating variable; it is therefore more likely to demonstrate significant effects of religion on fertility goals and, hopefully, the effect of religious homogamy on fertility agreement.

The baseline mediated model (M1) specifies that the effects of childhood religion are entirely mediated by own AND partner's current religion; the latter effect represents religious conversions prior to marriages of Catholics and Protestants. The model further specifies that effects of parental education/occupation are mediated by respondent's education and occupation, and the couple's residence; that sibship size has both direct and indirect (through respondent's education and occupation) effects; that wife's age is exogenous [7]; and that, except for occupation, all parallel structural effects are equal for wives and for husbands. This model is illustrated by Figure 2.

[Figure 2 about here]



The baseline mediated model does not reproduce the observed covariances very well, as shown in Table 4 ( $L^2 = 193.2$ , 155 df,  $p = .020$ ). The most likely specification errors in this model are those which could produce the cross-over effects

[ Table 4 about here ]

in the final reduced-form model, R5. Three possibilities were investigated. First, the cross-over effects may simply be compensating for the error of specifying equal effects of family socialization experiences on adult socialization experiences, particularly those involving the cross-over variables. For example, if sibship size has larger effects for wives than for husbands, but the effects are constrained to be equal, then "extra" covariance between wife's sibship and her fertility goal could show up as a direct effect through husband's goal. [8] A second possibility is that some family effects are mediated by partner's characteristics; for example, the education of a woman's father may have direct effects on the education of her husband if she uses her father as a model in mate choice. Finally, the cross-over effects may in fact exist, representing direct socialization by in-laws.

Model M2 frees the equality constraints on effects of the three "cross-over" socialization experiences on partners' education and occupation, and on the couple's residence. As shown in Table 4, this model does not significantly improve on Model M1 ( $L^2 = 8.4$ , df = 8,  $p > .05$ ). Model M3 specifies indirect effects of the three "cross-over" socialization experiences on the partner's education and occupation. That is, wife's father's education and sibship size are specified to affect husband's education and

occupation; husband's mother's work is specified to affect wife's education and occupation. While this is an improvement over Model M1, it is rejected in absolute terms ( $L^2 = 178.8$ ,  $df = 149$ ,  $p = .049$ ). Only Model M4, which specifies the three direct "cross-over" effects, provides a significant improvement in fit over the baseline model and is also not rejected absolutely ( $L^2 = 177.3$ ,  $df = 152$ ,  $p = .078$ ).

Thus, the cross-over effects of family socialization on spouse's desires that were found in the reduced-form models seem to exist; they are not accounted for by inequalities or cross-overs in the effects of family socialization on individual socialization experience or marital circumstances.

Although Model M4 provides the clearest test of hypotheses about the effects of family and individual socialization experiences on fertility goals, it is not entirely satisfactory as a representation of the observed covariances among those experiences and partners' goals. Beginning again with the baseline model, I used information provided by modification indices, normalized residuals, and t-tests of structural parameters to find a model that was theoretically reasonable and provided a better fit to the data.

The first step in this process was Model M5, which released the following constraints on the baseline model:

1. "Free" effects of wife's, husband's mother's education on wife's age;

2. "Free" cross-over effects: mother's education on spouse's occupation ("free") and education (equal);
3. Equality constraints released: mother's education effects on residence and occupation; mother's work on education.

Since Model M1 is "nested" in Model M5, we can directly test the improvement in fit. As shown in Table 4, Model M5 does represent the observed covariances better than Model M1 (Contrast  $L^2 = 35.9$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and provides an acceptable fit to the observations ( $p = .285$ ). However, it's a pretty clumsy model, so the next step was to ADD several constraints to Model M5, in the interests of parsimony. Model M6 constrained to be zero those structural effects that were not statistically significant for BOTH wife and husband:

1. Father's education on wife's age, respondent's occupation and education;
2. Father's occupation on wife's age and residence;
3. Mother's work on wife's age, residence, and respondent's occupation.

This model provides a good fit to the observations ( $p = .367$ ) and is not significantly different from Model M5 (Contrast  $L^2 = 2.0$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p > .05$ ). It cannot be directly compared to Model M1 because neither is nested in the other.

At this point, it appears that cross-over effects of family socialization experiences on individual and marital experiences may account for those direct cross-over effects estimated in previous models. However, as a final check, Model M7 releases the two direct effects of wife's father's education and sibship size on husband's fertility desires [9]. And, indeed, this model fits significantly better than Model M6 (Contrast  $L^2 = 12.8$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The direct influence of the wife's family on her husband's fertility goals is again supported.

Table 5 gives the structural parameter estimates for Model M6.

[Table 5 about here]

The simplest story they tell has to do with religion. Intrafaith marriage does facilitate fertility agreement, but conversions at marriage (effects of partner's family religion on spouse's current religion) may avoid to some extent potential disagreements arising from different family religious experiences. Sibship experience is also an important factor in agreement, though again the direct effect of wife's sibship size on husband's fertility goals points to the way in which couples with different sibship experiences may come to agree about their own family size goals.

The effects of homogamy in family socioeconomic status are complicated by (a) the different effects of wife's and husband's occupation on fertility desires; and (b) the different effects of parental occupation and education on wife's age and on each partner's education and occupation. Some of these differences may cancel one another out, so that, overall, socioeconomic homogamy becomes a source of fertility agreement. For example, the husband's mother's education

increases the wife's age (presumably representing age at marriage, see footnote 7) and decreases size of community of residence; the wife's mother's education has no such effects. However, these two effects of husband's socioeconomic background may cancel out in terms of effects on fertility desires, since wife's age negatively affects the desires of wife and husband, while rural residence has positive effects.

Couples whose mothers have similar educational attainment and whose fathers have equally prestigious occupations may be more likely to agree because they are also more likely to share individual educational experiences. On the other hand, these shared family experiences also lead to similar occupations, which are a potential source of disagreement in fertility desires. In any event, the complex effects of socioeconomic homogamy on fertility agreement may very well be overshadowed by those of religious homogamy, shared sibship experience, and the competition between wife's and husband's occupational roles.

#### Discussion and Conclusions

The models specified and estimated in this paper are useful in several respects. First, they enable us to simultaneously specify structural and interpersonal sources of agreement in fertility (or, indeed, any marital) goals. Of course, what the models really do is to "control" for mutual influence in estimating structural sources of agreement or disagreement, since no direct measures of communication, empathy, respect or other interactional processes are included in the model. But, the control means that our estimates of effects of family, individual and marital experiences on each partner's goals do

NOT incorporate the mutual direct effects of each partner's goals on those of the other. They are "pure" estimates of structural sources of agreement.

Second, the models provide a simple representation of a dyadic process at the "individual" level of analysis. As usual in fertility models, structural effects are estimated for individuals, but the equality constraints on structural parameters have meaning for the dyad. It is important to note that the implications of such equalities for couple agreement or disagreement depend on the assumption that the underlying distributions of fertility goals are the same for women and for men. Suppose, for example, that men on average preferred fewer children than women; for the dual-professional couple, the effect of husband's occupation on fertility goals might cause his goals to be as high as his wife's goals, i.e., might lead to greater agreement for these couples than for those in which the wife has a "secondary" occupation.

Before discussing the dyadic properties of these models, I want to point out that the "individual" findings are reasonably consistent with prior theory and research on the determinants of (women's) fertility goals, behavior and outcomes. As expected, wife's age and respondent's education have negative effects on fertility desires, while Catholics and those living in rural areas desire more children. Husband's occupation, controlling for education, represents the "income effect", increasing his desires for children (and indirectly those of his wife). The fact that wife's occupation has NO significant effects on fertility desires may be explained in terms of the competing income benefits and opportunity costs of women's work.

The effect of sibship size on fertility goals is consistent with research on siblings and intended or completed family size (Bumpass, 1975; Clarridge, 1983; Kantner and Potter, 1954). This analysis demonstrates that sibling experience is a major influence on the intergenerational transmission of fertility goals. The weaker effects of sibship size on actual fertility may be explained, first, in terms of experiences or processes inhibiting the translation of goals into appropriate behaviors and corresponding outcomes. As partners gain marital experience, agreement becomes more a function of those experiences than of family experiences. Second, while sibling experience may strongly influence each partner's goals, couple fertility behavior and outcomes are influenced by two potentially different sibling experiences, as discussed further below.

Moving to the dyadic level of analysis, the results support hypotheses that shared marital experience and religious homogamy facilitate marital fertility agreement. In addition, the "value" component of socioeconomic homogamy (through education) is a source of agreement, as are common sibling experiences. The mediated model illustrates, however, ways in which family heterogamy may be compensated for by adult socialization experiences. For example, religious conversions at marriage are a source of agreement in fertility goals, and some of the differences in effects of family socialization on adult socialization experiences "even out" in their effects on fertility goals.

An important finding is that occupational attainment has different effects on fertility goals of wives than on those of husbands. These effects are evidence of role competition in modern marriages. When the "taste" factors associated with economic status are controlled (via education), men do seem to respond to an "income" effect in wanting larger families. Women, on the other hand, experience both income (positive) and opportunity cost effects of occupational attainment; the net result is that there are no significant differences between the fertility goals of professional women and those of housewives. As mentioned above, this does not bode well for fertility agreement among dual-professional couples nor among blue-collar couples in which the wife is not employed. Scanzoni's (1980) "senior/junior partner" couples are the most likely to agree on fertility goals.

The direct effects of wife's family experiences on husband's fertility goals suggest that the original model of marital agreement must be modified to allow for a direct kin network effect. This isn't too surprising in view of the reported pressure that comes from potential grandparents, aunts and uncles for young couples to have the right number of children at the right time (e.g., Fried and Udry, 1980; Veevers, 1980). The largest effect, for wife's sibship size, may explain why larger effects on fertility outcomes are estimated for wives' than for husbands' sibship sizes (Bumpass, 1975; Kantner and Potter, 1954). In general, the effects of wife's family socialization on husband's fertility goals supports the notion that in modern societies fertility decisions fall within women's "sphere of influence."



## NOTES

1. A multistage cluster probability sample of households was drawn to be representative of the state of Wisconsin. Each household was screened for eligible respondents (age 15 through 29). If more than one eligible person lived in the household, one person was randomly selected to participate in the survey. The response rate among eligible persons was 90 percent. The response rate for spouses of respondents was 81 percent. The statewide sample consisted of 823 young married couples.
2. A few respondents gave alternative responses such as "two or three" and were coded at the midpoint of their responses.
3. No neutral point was offered to the respondents. A few respondents checked spaces between two response categories and were assigned a score midway between that for the two categories. Nonresponses were coded by the original investigators at the midpoint of the scale (= 4).
4. The models presented here are mean-independent; only variances and covariances among indicators enter into the analysis.
5. The full covariance matrix is available from the author on request.

6. In alternative specifications, the effects of each partner's experiences on her/his own desires were allowed to differ, rather than "cross over." These changes did not uniformly improve the model's fit.
7. Note that, in these data, age may serve as a proxy variable for age at marriage, since those who married earlier participated in the married couple survey, while those who would marry later did not. (Unfortunately, no data were collected on age at marriage or marital duration.) Thus, we might expect family socialization experiences to have direct effects on age (at marriage). On the other hand, such effects may be accounted for by effects on respondent's and partner's education. As noted later in the text, the "best" model did include effects of mother's education on wife's age.
8. This possibility is least likely, since reduced-form models releasing the equality constraint on the total effect of these experiences on desires did not account for the cross-over effects.
9. In a series of sequential model comparisons, the direct effect of husband's mother's work on wife's fertility goal did not significantly improve model fit.

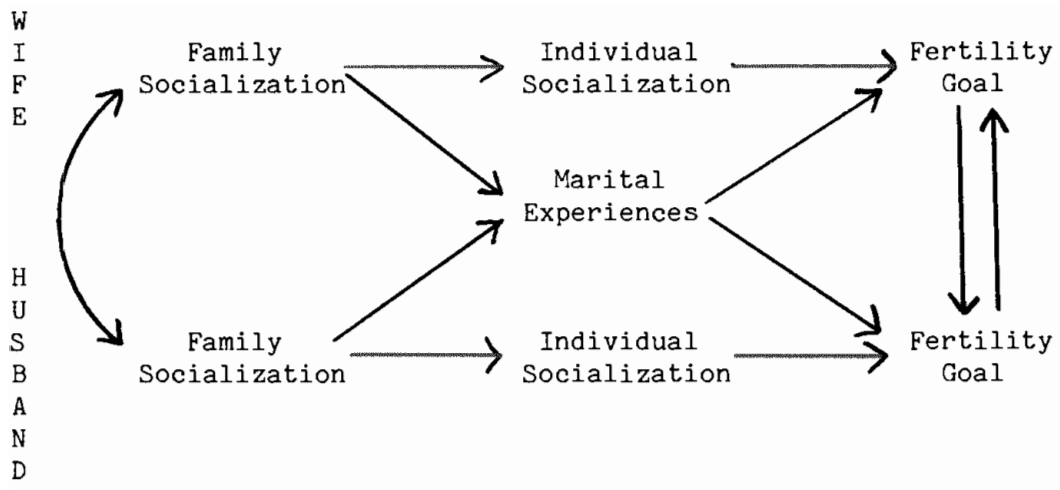


Figure 1. Sources of Marital Agreement on Fertility Goals

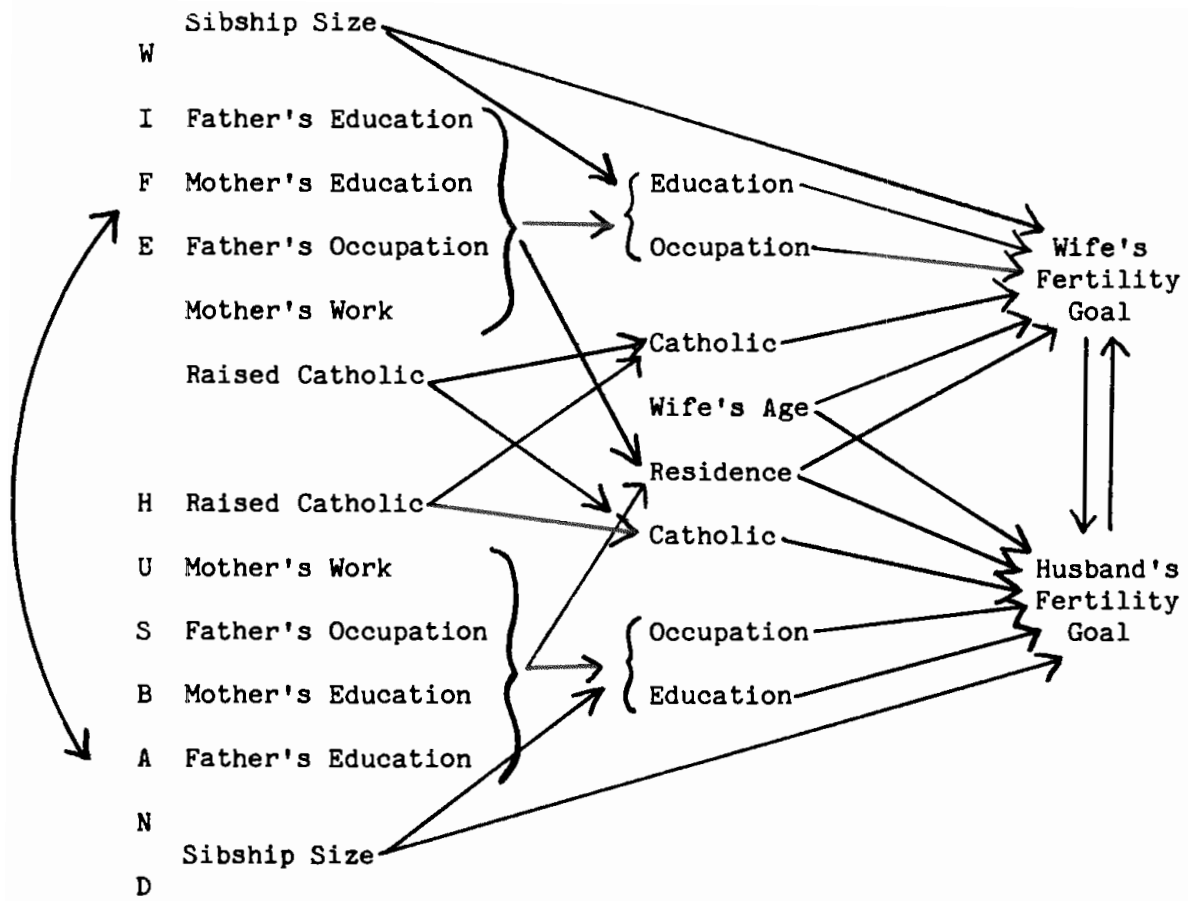


Figure 2. Baseline Mediated Model of Couple Fertility Agreement

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, Couples with No Children (N = 248)

	Husband		Wife		Range
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Desired Family Size	1.99	1.14	2.13	1.07	0-6
Desire Three or More (Definitely disagree... ...definitely agree)	2.34	1.61	2.28	1.74	1-7
Wife's Age (Years)	-	-	23.09	2.78	17-31
Residence (Urban...Rural)	-	-	2.58	1.45	1-6
Education (Years)	14.52	2.37	14.01	2.16	8-20
Occupation (a)	5.68	2.72	5.04	3.31	0-10
Catholic (No/Yes)	.32	.47	.38	.49	0,1
Father's Education (Years)	11.54	3.33	11.53	3.03	8-20
Mother's Education (Years)	11.86	2.76	11.73	2.62	8-20
Father's Occupation (a)	4.75	2.61	4.58	2.73	1-9
Mother's Work Status (b)	1.64	.74	1.64	.76	1-3
Raised Catholic (No/Yes)	.43	.49	.42	.49	0,1
Number of Siblings	3.19	2.44	3.21	2.29	0-12

(a) 0 = not employed, 1 = farm laborer, .... 10 = large proprietor  
 (b) 1 = not employed, 2 = part-time employed, 3 = full-time employed

Table 2. Goodness-of-fit Statistics for Reduced Form Models of Couple Agreement in Family Size Desires

Model	Likelihood Statistic	DF	Contrast	Likelihood Statistic	DF
R1 Equal, parallel structural effects	91.3	71	--	--	--
R2 Occupation effects unconstrained	83.6	70	R2 vs. R1	7.7*	1
R3 R2 with cross-over effects: wife's siblings	75.7	69	R3 vs. R2	7.9*	1
R4 R3 with cross-over effects: wife's father's education	71.5	68	R4 vs. R3	4.2*	1
R5 R4 with cross-over effects: husband's mother's employment	67.2	67	R5 vs. R4	4.3*	1

\*p < .05

Table 3. Structural Parameter Estimates, Best Reduced Form Model,  
 Couple Agreement in Family Size Desires

Independent Variable	Family Size Desires	
	Husband	Wife
Partner's Desire (a)	.40* (.06)	.40* (.06)
Wife's Age	-.05* (.02)	-.05* (.02)
Residence	.04 (.03)	.04 (.03)
Occupation	.07* (.03)	-.03 (.02)
Education	-.04 (.02)	-.04 (.02)
Catholic	.21 (.13)	.21 (.13)
Father's Education (Husb)	.01 (.02)	--
(Wife)	-.05* (.02)	.01 (.02)
Mother's Education	-.00	-.00
Father's Occupation	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
Mother's Work (Husb)	.09 (.06)	-.18* (.09)
(Wife)	--	.09 (.06)
Raised Catholic	-.04 (.13)	-.04 (.13)
Sibship Size (Husb)	.07* (.02)	--
(Wife)	.08* (.03)	.07* (.02)
R squared	.63	.54

(a) Except for occupation, all parallel structural effects constrained to be equal for wife and for husband. Metric coefficients; standard errors in parentheses

\*  $p < .05$  (one-tailed t-test)

Table 4. Goodness-of-fit Statistics for Mediated Form Models of Couple Agreement in Family Size Desires

Model	Likelihood Statistic	DF	Contrast	Likelihood Statistic	DF
M1 Baseline (a)	193.2*	155	--	---	--
M2 M1 with "free" indirect effects (b)	184.8*	147	M2 vs. M1	8.4	8
M3 M1 with cross-over indirect effects (b)	178.8*	149	M3 vs. M1	14.4*	6
M4 M1 with cross-over direct effects (b)	177.3	152	M4 vs. M1	15.9*	3
M5 M1 with selected "free" indirect effects (c)	157.3	148	M5 vs. M1	35.9*	7
M6 M5 with selected indirect effects constrained to zero (d)	159.3	154	M6 vs. M5	2.0	6
M7 M6 with direct cross-over effects (e)	146.5	152	M7 vs. M6	12.8*	2

(a) See Figure 2

(b) Exogenous variables for which effects specified are wife's father's education, wife's sibship size and husband's mother's work

(c) Mother's education affects wife's age ("free") and spouse's education and occupation (constrained to be equal); effects of mother's education on community size and occupation and of mother's work on education "free".

(d) Effects of father's education on education and occupation; effects of father's occupation on community size and education; effects of mother's work on community size and occupation; effects of sibship size on occupation.

(e) wife's father's education and sibship size

\*p < .05



Table 5. Structural Parameter Estimates, Best Mediated Model,  
Couple Agreement in Family Size Desires

Independent Variable	Family Size Desires		Wife's		Occupation		Education		Catholic	
	Husb	Wife	Age	Resid	Husb	Wife	Husb	Wife	Husb	Wife
Partner's Desire (a)	.40* (.06)	.40* (.06)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Wife's Age	-.05* (.02)	-.05* (.02)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Residence	.04 (.03)	.04 (.03)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Occupation	Husb .07* (.03)	--	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Wife --	-.03 (.02)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Education	Husb -.04 (.02)	--	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Wife --	-.04 (.02)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Catholic	Husb .18* (.09)	--	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Wife --	.18* (.09)	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--
Father Ed	Husb --	--	---	-.11* (.02)	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Wife -.05* (.02)	--	---	-.11* (.02)	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mother Ed	Husb --	--	.16* (.06)	.10* (.04)	-.02 (.06)	.20* (.05)	.15* (.04)	.14* (.03)	--	--
	Wife --	--	.07 (.06)	-.01 (.04)	.20* (.05)	.19* (.07)	.14* (.03)	.15* (.04)	--	--
Father Occ	Husb --	--	---	---	.16* (.05)	--	.14* (.03)	--	--	--
	Wife --	--	---	---	--	.16* (.05)	--	.14* (.03)	--	--
Mother Work	Husb --	--	---	---	--	--	-.25* (.15)	--	--	--
	Wife --	--	---	---	--	--	--	-.03 (.13)	--	--
Raised Cath	Husb --	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	.63* (.03)	.24* (.03)
	Wife --	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	.24* (.03)	.63* (.03)
Sibship	Husb .06* (.02)	--	---	--	--	--	-.09* (.03)	--	--	--
	Wife .08* (.03)	.06* (.02)	---	--	--	--	--	-.09* (.03)	--	--
R squared	.61	.51	---	.03	.12	.07	.10	.15	.55	.57

(a) Metric coefficients; standard errors in parentheses

\* p < .05 (one-tailed t-test)

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