

MASTER'S THESIS

Fertility preferences of wives and husbands in Hong Kong: spousal agreement and women's status

Yu, Kam Lun

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**Fertility Preferences
of Wives and Husbands in Hong Kong
- Spousal Agreement and Women's Status**

YU Kam Lun

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Abstract

Conventionally, fertility surveys collect data from women only. Little attention has been paid to their spouses and it has long been thought that men wanted more children than women. In 1997, the Hong Kong KAP survey collected data from both women and their marital partners. When men and women were treated as two separate groups of respondents, their mean ideal family sizes were virtually the same, about 1.8 children. When men were matched to their spouses and marital pairs were examined, a different picture appeared. About one quarter of the wives wanted more children than their partners, another quarter wanted fewer children than their partners, and only half of the couples shared a congruent family size preference. Different social groups did not exhibit a preference on family size. However, the relative status of women within the conjugal bond did exert an influence on their choice.

Table of Contents

	Page
Declaration	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Charts	vi
List of Tables	vii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Purpose of this thesis	3
1.3 Outline of this thesis	4
Chapter Two: Literature Review	6
2.1 Reasons for studying fertility preferences	6
2.2 Nature of fertility preferences	8
2.3 Ideal Family Size	10
2.3.1 Nature of Ideal Family Size	10
2.3.2 Determinants of Ideal Family Size	13
2.4 Intended Parity and Expected Family Size	18
2.5 Trend of fertility preferences in Hong Kong	24
2.6 The reasons for collecting data from women only in most fertility studies	41
2.7 Growth of interest in men's reproductive roles	43
Chapter Three: Framework of Analysis	53
3.1 Theoretical background	53
3.2 Dependent variables	54
3.3 Independent variables	55
3.4 Unit of analysis: One-Sex Model vs Two-Sex Model	57
3.5 Hypotheses	57
Chapter Four: Data and Method	58
4.1 Data Source	58
4.2 Comparison of sample data and census data	59
4.3 Measure	60

4.3.2 Women Status and Spousal Relative Status	62
4.4 Technique for analysis	65
 Chapter Five: Results	 66
5.1 Characteristics of the respondents	66
5.2 Ideal Family Size	77
5.2.1 One-sex model	77
5.2.1.1 Ideal family size of respondents with regard to selected characteristics, bivariate analyses	82
5.2.1.2 Factors influencing ideal family size, multivariate analysis	88
5.2.2 Two-sex model	92
5.3 Expected parity	98
5.3.1 One-sex model	98
5.3.1.1 Expected parity by selected characteristics of respondents, bivariate analysis	102
5.3.1.2 Factors influencing expected parity, multivariate analysis	108
5.3.2 Two-sex model	112
 Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusion	 118
6.1 One-sex model vs Two-sex model	118
6.2 Women's status and fertility preference	119
6.3 The social context of Hong Kong: A regime of very low fertility rate	122
6.4 Limitation of this project	123
6.5 Further research	124
 Bibliography	 126
Curriculum Vitae	133