

POLYGYNY AND FERTILITY DIFFERENTIALS AMONG
THE YORUBA OF WESTERN NIGERIA

By

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DECLARATION

Unless otherwise stated all the work in
this subthesis is all my own work.

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ABSTRACT

Many factors affect the fertility level of women, and the type of marital union of a woman is one of these factors. The sub-thesis investigates the fertility differentials among women in monogamous unions and women in polygynous unions. It makes use of two data sets collected among the Yoruba women of Western Nigeria. The first survey was conducted in Ibadan and the second survey was conducted in Ibadan and Western Nigeria. Both surveys were conducted in 1973.

The analysis of the two data sets indicates that the educational level, religion and age of a woman are some of the factors that affect her chance of entering into either a polygynous or a monogamous union. Some factors like age, occupation and education helped raise the fertility levels of women in polygynous unions. But some other factors like length of abstinence, and marital mobility affected the fertility level of women in polygynous unions negatively. In general, women in polygynous unions had a higher fertility level compared to women in monogamous unions, mostly because they had higher ages. But after standardizing for the age differences and taking into account the difference in other variables, like education, occupation, and abstinence period the women in the two groups show similar fertility levels. Polygyny is very widely accepted by the society and about half of all the women were in such a union. Most of the women who are not in polygynous unions still have a high chance of entering such a union. Because of this many of the characteristics including the fertility behavior of the women was found to be very similar to each other.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1: OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Polygyny, which means the marriage of one man to more than one wife simultaneously is widely practiced in many societies (Macdonald, 1980:96). Most studies that investigate the effect of polygyny on fertility of women indicate lower fertility for women in polygynous unions compared to women in monogamous unions, while some studies indicate the same level, and others a higher fertility level for women in polygynous marriages. This thesis will examine in detail the demographic characteristics of Yoruba women in the two types of unions, and identify the nature and causes of any differentials.

1.2: ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis comprises six Chapters. The first Chapter serves as an introduction, while Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature with special emphasis on Africa. Chapter 3 investigates the practice of polygyny and the characteristics of women in polygynous unions among the Yoruba, and the fourth Chapter looks into differentials in the levels of fertility between wives of polygynists and wives of monogamists. The last Chapter summarizes and draws conclusions from the previous Chapters.

NIGERIA

THE TWELVE STATES STRUCTURE, 1973

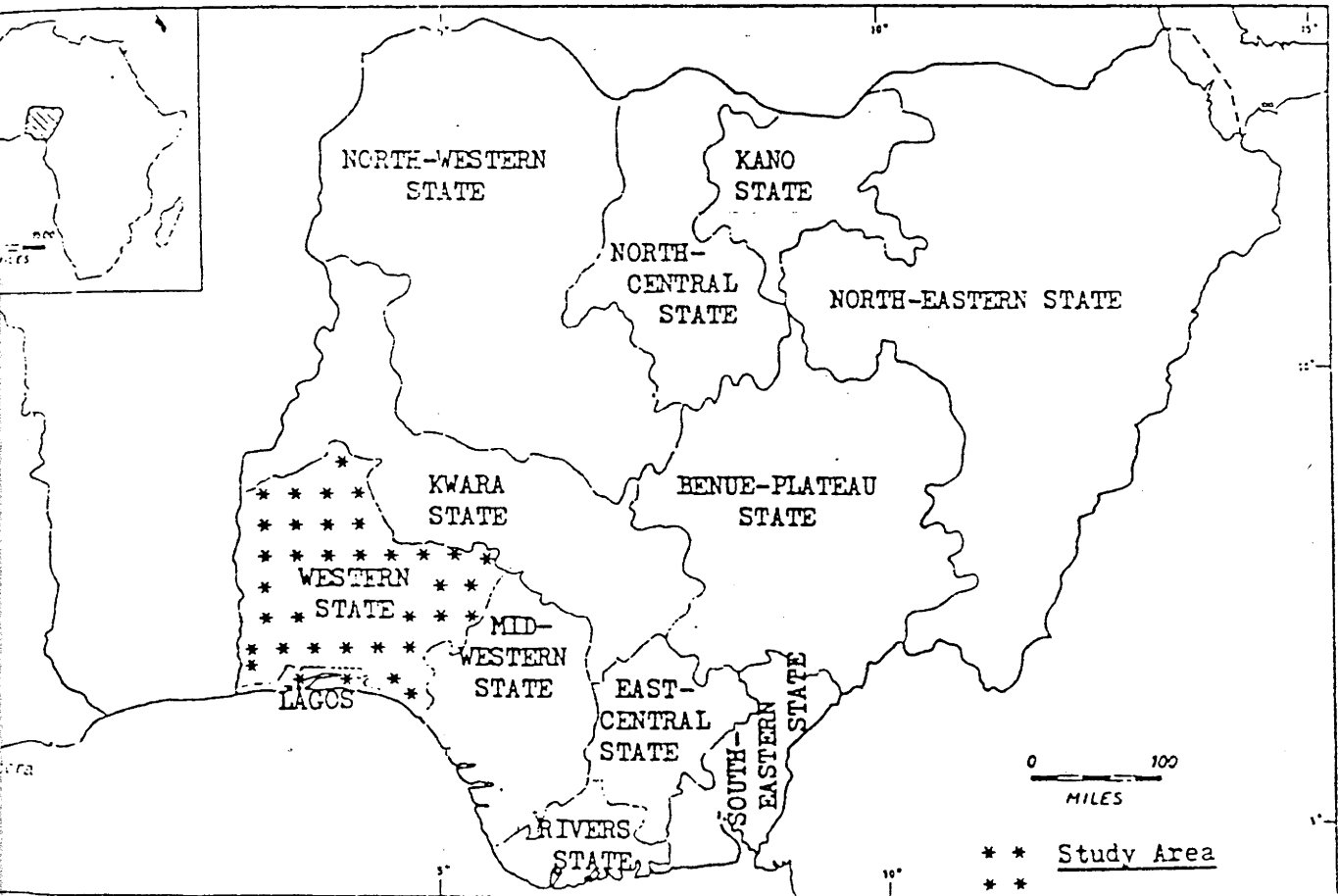


FIGURE 1

1.3: SOURCES OF DATA

The data that will be used for the thesis come from the first two surveys of the Nigerian Segment of The Changing African Family Project (CAFN I and CAFN II). The first Survey was conducted in Ibadan, which had a total population size of 750,000 at the time of the survey. The survey was carried out from May to June of 1973 and concentrated on investigating the beginnings of family limitation.

The second Survey covered Lagos and Western State, which has since been divided into Ogun, Ondo, and Oyo States. The population in these States numbered approximately 11 million in the 1963 Census. This survey concentrated on The Value of Children and covered areas that were both urban and rural and was conducted from June to July of 1973.

1.4: SAMPLING AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

CAFN I: At the time of the survey there was no list of houses and no system of numbering houses in Ibadan. The streets of the city were few and had no pre-determined pattern. However a 1:10,000 aerial map of the city was available and this was used in the sample selection. The city was covered by approximately 250 of these maps and grid lines were used to divide the city into blocks and to randomly select a block from each map. In the more crowded parts of the city a quarter of a block from each quarter of the map was selected. All Yoruba women aged 15-59 years in each selected block were

interviewed (Okediji et al, 1976).

CAFN II: There were seven provinces in Western and Lagos States. Populated centers within each province were stratified according to their size in the 1963 census. Each center and province was then allocated interviews proportional to its size, with an intended total of 3,000 interviews (1500 male and 1500 female) for the whole survey. For the larger centers maps were already available and for the smaller areas complete mapping was undertaken. The blocks within each center were then stratified according to size and random selection of blocks made. Eligible persons in the selected blocks were then listed and final random selection of persons was made (Mezue, 1982:12).

For centers of intermediate size (ie.towns of 20,000-50,000) which were too large to be mapped completely, a new method - the "cake slice" approach - was used. A tower or a big house near the center with a complete view of all parts of the town was selected. One direction was randomly chosen and four slices of the town selected for mapping. The first slice, along the selected direction, the second opposite to it and the other two at right angles to these. The width of the slice depended on the size of the town. Sample selection then proceeded as in the above case (Okediji et al, 1976). The sample size used in this survey was very small compared to CAFN I, and the 1963 population which was used as weight included non Yorubas, which may have introduced some bias in the selection (Lucas,1976:5).

1.5: DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE POPULATION

In the CAFN I Survey a total of 6606 women who were aged 15-59 were interviewed. The interview covered both married and single women. All women were asked to report the number of wives of their husband, including themselves. Of those 3184 women reported that their husband had only one wife and 2690 reported that their husband had more than one wife, and 732 reported that they were not married. Out of the 5874 women who reported that they were in some type of union, 5331 were married women, 509 were in a de facto relationship and 34 were girlfriends. The de facto wives and the girlfriends will be considered with the other wives in the current analysis and also referred to as wives. Of these wives 540 reported that they never had a live birth. These consisted of 366 wives of monogamists and 174 wives of polygynists. This reduces the number of fertile women in monogamous unions to 2818 and the number of the fertile wives in polygynous unions to 2515.

CAFN II covered 1499 women and 1497 men aged 17 years and over. Interviews were conducted for both married and unmarried women. All the women interviewed in this survey were also asked to report their husband's number of wives including themselves. Of the 1499 women 601 reported that their husband had only one wife, 633 reported that their husband had more than one wife and 249 did not have a partner. Fifteen women who did not answer this question will not be considered during the analysis of women in unions because it could not be determined whether they were married or not married. Of the women in unions, 76 reported that they had never had a live birth and 11 refused to respond to the question on the number of children they had ever had. It could

not be determined whether these 11 women had ever had a child or not. The number of childless women in monogamous unions was 50, and the number of childless women in polygynous unions was 26. The total number of fertile wives available for analysis thus becomes 1148 with 548 of them in monogamous unions and 600 in polygynous unions. Two of these women did not report their ages and since most of the analysis will look at age standardized values, these two women will also be excluded in those instances. Thus there would be 1146 fertile wives with 548 in monogamous unions and 598 in polygynous unions.

1.6: LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

Because the two surveys were conducted for a purpose other than the topic of the present thesis, there are some limitations to the use of the data. The thesis makes use of both surveys, but CAFN I is used in most of the analysis because of its large sample size, because it was very representative of the area where the survey was conducted, and because it was heavily supervised. CAFN II is used for some questions that were not asked in CAFN I. These questions were; rank of wife, number of times married, ideal number of children, and age at marriage. Both the surveys interviewed only Yorubas, but the characteristics of the women in both samples cannot be expected to be the same since they covered different areas. CAFN II in particular covered both urban and rural areas, which makes the comparison of the information collected in the two surveys less precise even though the Yoruba have traditionally been a highly urbanized people.

One of the major drawbacks of the use of this type of survey for the

analysis of the fertility behaviour by type of union is that the type of union of the women may have changed during her fertile period. A woman who is currently in a polygynous union may have spent a period of time in a monogamous union. This may be either because she was an only wife before her husband took another wife, or because she was in another monogamous union before she married her present polygynist husband. Similarly, a woman who is in a monogamous union may previously have been in a polygynous union. Because of this some of the children of a woman who is at present in one type of union may have actually been born in another type of union. This problem could have been avoided only if a complete marital history of each woman was collected, identifying each birth with the type of union. In this thesis all the children of a woman are assumed to have been born in her current type of union.

Abstinence: The information on duration of abstinence did not identify the age of the women at the time of their abstinence period, and only the age of the women at the time of interview is available for analysis.

Duration of Marriage: Information on duration of marriage and age at first marriage was not collected during the CAFN I survey. Age at marriage was asked in the CAFN II survey, but only two thirds of the women reported their age at the time of marriage in exact years. One third of the women identified their age at marriage only as below 20 years or above 20 years.

Rank of Wife and Number of Times Married: These questions, which are very useful in looking into the difference in the fertility level between wives in different types of unions, were asked only in CAFN II and not in CAFN I.

1.7: THE YORUBA PEOPLE

The Yoruba people occupy the Western parts of Nigeria. They mostly live in the Ogun, Ondo, and Oyo States (formerly known as Western State); and Lagos, and Kwara. The 1963 census of Nigeria estimates the Yoruba to be 11.3 million (Lucas, 1973:5). The Yoruba are also found in the nearby countries of Benin and Togo where they numbered an estimated 400,000 in 1973 (Eades, 1980:2). This makes the Yoruba one of the largest ethnic groups in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Yoruba are not an entirely homogeneous group. There are many cultural groups within the Yoruba, each with their own dialect and different customs. At present the Oyo dialect is accepted as the major one and is used in the media and as a medium of instruction in schools. Because of this and an increased social and geographical mobility, the cultural uniformity of the Yoruba is increasing (Eades, 1980:4; Fadipe, 1970).

1.8: ECONOMY OF THE YORUBA

The Yoruba are highly urbanized people. The 1963 census indicated that two fifths of the population of Western and Lagos States were living in urban areas, the two largest urban centers being Lagos and Ibadan (Caldwell, 1976a:197). The Yoruba are also highly educated. They have been supplying Nigeria with a large portion of its educated elite for many generations.

There are many farmers among the urban residents. These farmers commute from the cities when there is any work to be done on their farms. In the rural areas too, many farmers live in 'rural towns'. These rural towns sometimes grow to a very large size, but still retain their rural character. Farming is still the major occupation in the rural areas. The major cash crop is cocoa. Yorubaland produces almost the entire national cocoa crop which is one of the major export earners for Nigeria (Bascom, 1973:23). Farming is partly done by women. The men do the major heavy duties like clearing and tilling the land, sowing the fields and harvesting. The women grow vegetables in small plots and help in harvesting and transporting produce (Fadipe, 1970:147; Eades, 1980).

Children help their parents with their work. Traditionally, young boys are given a small plot of land which they farm independently. The boys keep what they get from the plot to themselves. This encourages them to learn to farm. When the boys get married they receive sufficient land to enable them to support themselves and their families (Fadipe, 1970:149).

Women are more involved in trading and in preparing and selling food items. Almost all the trade in locally produced goods is controlled by women. Men may take part in trading with imported goods. Daughters may help their mothers in selling goods and also preparing food and other goods for sale. Husbands have a responsibility to enable their wives to pursue a career. If the wife decides to be a trader the husband should supply the capital. Usually husbands do not part with their money before they are assured of the fertility and loyalty of the wives.

Having children does not strongly affect the work status of women, although young mothers with very young children may be restricted if they

cannot find a childminder. As the children grow older they are more of a help than a burden. They help take care of younger children and also help to sell items in the streets and markets (Ware, 1977:13).

Profits from the work of the wife remain her own property. The husband has the responsibility for providing the house, some of the staple food and clothing, and for educating the children. Wives may help in providing other food items, covering some of the children's expenses, and buying their own clothes (Eades, 1980:68; Olusanya, 1971:174; Lloyd, 1968:68).

When a young man marries, he lives close to his relatives and his mother supplies them with food. After a few months the young wife starts to cook for herself. They also share their work and their pleasures with relatives and neighbours. The culture and customs of the people are such that the relationship of each family to other families is very close and they live as one big community. For this reason the relationship between family members is discouraged from developing to such a level that its members may ignore the community. These customs are encouraged through post natal abstinence, terminal abstinence and most ceremonies (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1976b; 1977:193; Okediji and Okediji, 1976: 151).

1.9: MARRIAGE AMONG THE YORUBA

As in most cultures in tropical Africa, marriage among the Yoruba is almost universal. Traditionally most men marry by the age of 30 and most women by the age of 25. Only severe physiological obstacles like lunacy, leprosy and epilepsy, or very severe financial difficulties accompanied by a lack of any surviving relatives may keep the Yoruba man or woman from getting married (Fadipe, 1970:69; Caldwell and Caldwell, 1983:2). The major push for marriage is the need to have children. The desire to have a helpmate in the house is also very important. The society also puts strong pressure on young people to get married. The structure of the household economy and the division of labour among the different household members has an influence on marriage. Also, the social status of a person who is married is higher than the social status of one who is not. Different types of marriages are practiced among the Yoruba. According to Fadipe (1970:67-68),

Marriage to which the mutual consent of the relatives of the principal parties is necessary together with payment of 'bride price'; marriage in which the bride is made a free gift by her father to the husband; and marriage by mutual consent of the principal parties which neither assumes the consent of parents nor involves the payment of bride price; and the levirate are the four forms practised by the traditional Yoruba.

Not all these forms are practiced at the present time. Even at the time of his writing (in the 1930s) only Muslims practiced all the above forms while Christians only practiced marriage through the consent of the relatives and informal marriages through the agreement of the couple involved. Arranged marriages were practiced only in very traditional families.

As in all traditional societies, all the relatives of the couple are very much involved in the selection of the partner, the arrangement of bride price

and the marriage ceremony. The activities of the couple before and after marriage also falls under the supervision of their families and relatives. The society makes sure that its interests are protected and its authority obeyed. The authority of the relatives extends even after the death of the husband of a woman. The woman may be given to any member of the extended family of the man or made to pay back a price if she wants to marry someone else (Fadipe, 1970:70).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: INTRODUCTION

Polygyny is socially accepted and widely practiced in many societies, particularly in Africa. Murdock (1957:686) in constructing the World Ethnographic Atlas, closely studied the cultures of 565 ethnic groups, which were representative of all the cultures in all continents. From these studies he found that polygyny was widely practiced in 228 cultures and practiced to a limited extent in 190. Polygyny was very commonly practiced in North America, South America, and the Pacific. It was practiced to a lesser extent in Europe, Asia and around the Mediterranean. The levirate is also common in many polygynous societies. Polyandry, the marriage of one wife to more than one husband, is no longer practiced widely and is now mostly of anthropological importance.

2.2: CULTURAL SUPPORTS FOR POLYGYNY

The culture of many groups of people is very strongly supportive of polygyny. Many of these cultures have not reached a very complex social structure (Osmond,1965). They consider the more wives a man has, the higher his social status. Many wives are also a sign of the amount of wealth of a

not reached a very complex social structure (Osmond, 1965). They consider the more wives a man has, the higher his social status. Many wives are also a sign of the amount of wealth of a person (Brown, 1981:323). Ukaegbu (1977:399) observed that in some villages in Eastern Nigeria the ideal number of wives per polygynist was larger than the actual number. The polygynists had an average of 2.8 wives per person and yet their ideal number of wives was found to be four. Many wives also mean many children, and children make a great contribution in the work of the household, and are a source of support at old age and also a source of honour for the father. Additional wives also mean additional hands for work at home, in farms and in business.

In societies where women are highly involved in economic activity, husbands get more financial benefits from additional wives. The other wives of a polygynist also benefit because others share the work at home, take care of the husband and the children, and help in trading (Ware, 1979; Ekechi, 1976:331). In societies where women are commonly involved in economic activities, polygyny can be a liberating force and enables women to be more actively employed (Brown, 1981:323). Polygyny also provides women with more independence and in many instances a better style of life (Pool, 1972; Ware, 1979).

One other factor that supports the existence of polygyny is the sexual taboo during the menstruation period and sexual abstinence after birth. Husbands whose wives are abstaining have to go without sex, take a mistress, or marry a second wife. Among the Yoruba, the taking of an additional wife by the husband instead of a mistress is favoured by many wives because mistresses cost a lot to maintain and do not provide any financial support for the family (Ware, 1979:189).

2.3: DEMOGRAPHIC SUPPORTS FOR POLYGyny

A major feature that makes polygyny feasible is the delayed age at marriage of men. For example among the Yoruba, men marry seven to eight years later than women (Ware, 1979:186). In societies which have a rapidly growing population and a fairly high mortality rate each successive age group has fewer persons than the previous age group. There is also differential mortality between the sexes, with women suffering lower mortality in all age groups. This leaves surplus women for polygynous marriages (Van De Walle, 1968:218). Widows are also commonly absorbed into polygynous marriages.

Some strongly polygynous societies 'import' women from other parts. Lorimer (1954:99) quotes a study of a Southern Nigerian village by Charles and Forde which found a sex ratio of the adult population (aged 18 and over) of 172 women per hundred men. Obviously such occurrences are not possible on a large scale (Van De Walle, 1968:217).

2.4: MAGNITUDE OF THE PRACTICE OF POLYGyny

Measures of polygyny which are commonly used and were adopted by Van De Walle (1968:195) are:

1. Incidence: proportion of polygynists among married men measured as number of polygynists per 100 married men.
2. Intensity: average number of wives per polygynist.
3. General index: the number of married women per 100 married men.

All these measures, particularly the general index, are affected greatly by migration.

Van De Walle (1968:214-215) presented the magnitude of the practice of polygyny in many areas in Africa. Some of these were:

TABLE: 2.1

LEVELS OF THE PRACTICE OF POLYGyny IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

	Incidence (Polygynists per 100 married men)	Intensity (Wives per 100 polygynists)	General Index (Married women per 100 married men)
	<u>P</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
Congo	17	225	121
Dahomy	31	235*	142
Guinea	38	251	158
Guinea- Konkoure	40	254	162
Mali-Central Niger Delta	23	215	127
Niger	22	210	125
Senegal	27	237*	137
Tanganika	21	226	127
Western Nigeria- (CAFN II)	40	264	165

*Computed from P and M values using the relation $M=1+P(W-1)$

Dorjahn studied 155 societies in Sub-Saharan Africa and found that on the average 35% of all married men were in polygynous unions. The intensity of polygyny for 84 of these societies was 264 wives per 100 polygynist husbands. The general index of polygyny in 131 of these cultures was found to be 154 wives per 100 married men (Dorjahn, 1959).

Ardener (1962:32) observed that among the Bakweri women in Western Cameroon, 30% of the women in unions were the wives of a polygynous husbands once in their lives. A survey conducted by Pool (1972:247) showed that in rural Ghana 45% of unions were polygynous with 28% in urban Ghana. Lucas (1974:10) observed that 16% of married men in Mbioto village in South East Nigeria had more than one wife. Ohadike (1968:387) in a 1964 survey of the Lagos Territory also found that 31% of married women were in polygynous unions. Ukaegbu (1977:398-399) observed an incidence of polygyny of 16% and an intensity of 274 wives per 100 polygynists in Ngwa Igbo of Eastern Nigeria. He also observed that polygyny was more common in the Western parts of Nigeria than the Eastern parts. Olusanya (1971:168) found that 33% of married women in Ife, 28% in Oyo and 43% in rural Western Nigeria were polygynously married.

The intensity of polygyny in a society is closely related to its incidence in the society. Dorjahn (1959) in his investigation of polygyny in Africa, observed that areas where polygyny is highly practised also have high intensity. Van De Walle (1968:215) also observed the same relation in the Congo. He found a correlation of 0.86 between incidence and intensity of polygyny in different districts of the Congo. He also observed a negative correlation of -0.45 between the number of married women per hundred married men and the proportion widowed and divorced among women aged 15-45.

2.5: CHARACTERISTICS OF WIVES OF POLYGYNISTS

Male polygynists tend to be older than the general population. This is because marriages require a bride-price and usually only the rich who tend to be older can afford it. In many polygynous societies (eg. the Yoruba, the Temne), relatives and parents help in raising the bride-price for the first marriage but no longer feel obliged to provide for further marriages. The high age of the male polygynists also implies a high mean age for their wives, because the first wife reaches a high age by the time her husband marries polygynously.

Education has a negative effect on women marrying into polygynous unions, but its effect on men is not very clear. In many small African towns male school teachers, physicians, and government officials tend to marry polygynously (Brown, 1981:323).

Male polygynists often take wives who are much younger than themselves, some of whom may be as young as their daughters. Girls sometimes do not have a choice in whom they may marry. Some marriages take place in spite of the objections of young girls when the family wants to pay back a previous favour or keep a promise they had given (example, Lloyd, 1968:70). Because of this, in polygynous societies there is a very wide difference between the mean ages at marriage of males and females. Societies that do not practice polygyny have less difference between the mean ages at marriage of men and women. The higher the practice of polygyny in a society the higher this difference (example, Van De Walle, 1968:219-220). In highly polygynous societies there are a lesser proportion of widowed or divorced women aged 15-49 since they are quickly absorbed into polygynous unions (Van De Walle, 1968:221; Okediji, 1966:159).

2.6: POLYGYNY AND RELIGION

The Koran allows a man to marry as many as four wives at a time. Even though it stresses that he should not marry polygynously unless he can treat all his wives equally, it does not seem to be a strong deterrent because Muslims tend to be highly polygynous. The traditional religions of Africa accept the practice of polygyny and because of this traditionalists also tend to be highly polygynous (see, for example, Ware, 1979:187).

Christianity is generally against the practice of polygyny. It has been a major reason for the reduction in the practice of polygyny, but in many cultures it has not been able to control the practice (Ohadike, 1968:382). When the Christian missionaries arrived in Africa they attacked polygyny very strongly. The first reason was that Christianity did not accept polygyny. The other reason was that polygynists were very traditional and were most difficult to convert to the new religion (Ekechi, 1976:334). The missionaries fought polygyny very strongly and the polygynists resisted change. In most instances only monogamists were admitted to the Church. New polygynist converts were required to divorce all but one wife and promise not to marry another. Since polygyny developed in these cultures to fulfill certain social, economic, and sexual conditions, the change from polygyny to monogamy could not be carried out smoothly. The issue of polygyny was so important to the Africans that it was one of the reasons why movements to 'Africanize' Christianity started and new African churches were founded. The Yoruba Independent African Church founded in 1882, The Harris Movement in Ivory Coast (1941-16), and The Braid Movement in the Niger (1915), all accepted polygyny and polygynists were welcomed to the Church (Ekechi, 1976,344).

2.7: LEGAL ASPECTS OF POLYGYNY

Polygyny is not recognised by law in some African countries, eg. Congo, Zaire (Welch, 1981:192; Brown, 1981:322), but the social push for polygyny is so high that many people still marry polygynously. In the Congo it became illegal to contract polygynous unions since 1951 (Van De Walle, 1968:194). In Nigeria a woman married in a "court" ceremony cannot be a second legal wife but many unofficial "outside" wives are commonly recognized, and since only 7% of marriages are contracted in court its effect on the occurrence of polygyny in the whole society is small (Ware, 1979:188).

Polygyny is reported less frequently in urban areas than rural areas. Its occurrence is certainly more common in rural areas. However, Brown (1981: 322) suspects that in countries where its incidence is illegal it is often under-reported more frequently in urban areas than in rural areas for legal reasons.

2.8: POLYGYNY AND FERTILITY

In societies where polygyny is practised, children are valued very highly. Many surveys in Africa show that the ideal family size of the respondents is larger than the average size of family they attain (Ware, 1975). One of the main purposes of polygyny is also to maximize the number of children of the man who marries polygynously. The number of children a polygynist father has mostly increases as he takes more wives.

The effect of polygyny on the number of children per woman is not very

clear. Nag(1968:97) tried to examine the effect of polygyny on fertility by taking a society as a unit. He compared societies that practice a high degree of polygyny with those that do not and observed no significant difference in fertility level between the societies. Muhsam (1956:16) tried to investigate the effect of reduced sexual intercourse on fertility. For this purpose he compared the fertility of women in polygynous unions and the fertility of women in monogamous unions. He observed that women in polygynous unions had a lower number of children than those in monogamous unions due to their reduced frequency of sexual intercourse. Olusanya (1971:172) argued against this hypothesis claiming that a polygynist would need to have more than the common number of wives for his reduced sexual intercourse to have any effect on the fertility of his wives. Dorjahn (1959) studied the fertility of 23 cultures in Africa and observed that in only five were wives of polygynists as fertile or more fertile than wives of monogamists. The reasons for the reduced fertility of women who are married polygynously, he observed, could be a higher instability of marriage and a high incidence of venereal disease among wives of polygynists. Polygynists have a high frequency of extra-marital relations with a strong chance of contracting diseases and the husband easily spreads them among the wives. In many parts of Africa venereal diseases are a frequent cause of infertility.

It is observed that in many surveys polygynous unions have more childless women because a childless father would generally marry a second wife to get a child. This may give a reduced fertility for polygynous unions (Brown,1981:325). The Demographic Handbook for Africa (1971) listed seven countries where polygynous unions produce less children. Moreover, fertility in all these countries declined as the number of wives of the husband

increased. The countries for which data were presented were Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali (Central Niger Delta), Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo and Gabon.

Other studies also indicated a reduced fertility for polygynous unions. Page (1975:51) observed that in Central Niger Delta, Upper Volta, Guinea, and Zaire the fertility level of women in polygynous unions was lower than those in monogamous unions.

Ryna and Bouquet (1975: 577) also reported a negative relation between polygyny and fertility in Chad. Ukaegbu (1977:397) hypothesized that polygyny reduced fertility through the intermediary of a comparatively wider age differential between spouses in polygynous unions. He compared the fertility pattern of women by wife-order in polygyny in rural Eastern Nigeria and found the same effect on the fertility pattern by age difference.

Some studies have indicated that polygyny has no effect on fertility. Pool (1972:249) found that there is no difference among Ghanaian women who were in polygynous and monogamous unions. Podlewski (1975:554) also did not observe any relation between polygyny and fertility among the women in Cameroon. Chajnacka (1980:96) also did not observe any difference in the fertility levels of the women in some villages in Oyo and Kwara States of Nigeria.

Other studies in Nigeria indicated higher fertility for polygynous unions over monogamous unions. Olusanya (1971:346) in a survey of Ife and Oyo found that the mean children ever born to polygynously married women was higher than the mean number of children born to monogamously married women. Sembajwe

(1979:346) also concluded that polygyny does not depress fertility among the Yoruba. Arowolo (1981:130-131) mentions that polygyny favours the fertility of women among the Yoruba of Ibadan. Ohadike (1968) found that among the women in Lagos in 1964 wives of polygynists had an age adjusted mean number of children ever born of 4.2 while the wives of monogamists had a mean of only 3.9.

CHAPTER 3

POLYGYNY AMONG THE YORUBA

3.1: POLYGYNOUS MARRIAGES

In societies that practice polygyny, including the Yoruba, a man's number of wives is an indication of his wealth and his influence in his community. For most men getting an additional wife has priority over many other things. Polygyny has a very wide social support from the whole society including the women. Some women may not appreciate being an only wife because this lowers their husband's status and consequently also their own. A second wife also means that the first wife will be promoted to the rank of senior wife. Senior wives are respected and obeyed by other wives. In many instances the first wife encourages the husband to marry a second wife (Ekechi, 1976:331). She may even help in raising the bride-price for the new wife.

When a man marries polygynously, the senior wife or another wife will be appointed the guardian of the new wife. She will have the responsibility of making sure that the needs of the bride are satisfied and that she is well settled. During first marriages this duty is fulfilled by one of the husband's married relatives (Fadipe, 1970:90).

Ware(1979) found that 60% of Ibadan women would be pleased if their husbands took an additional wife. The more traditional wives and those who already had two or three co-wives were more welcoming than others. Three quarters of all wives preferred their husbands to take another wife instead of keeping a mistress, because keeping a mistress is a higher financial drain on

the husband. Traditionally, the wives of a Yoruba husband mostly lived in a big compound and each wife got her own quarters. Each wife was responsible for looking after her children and taking care of her quarters. The responsibility of looking after the husband fell on each wife on a rotational basis. The senior wife or the husband assigned each wife to this duty in turn (Ward, 1938: 127).

Wives help each other in their work. For example a wife may look after the child of another when she is trading in the market. One may be preparing food while another takes it to the market for sale. However, relations between co-wives are not always peaceful. Sometimes there is jealousy between the wives. This may be over the affection of the husband or his treatment of their children, particularly with respect to education. In Temne society, wives of the same husband were observed to sometimes accuse each other of practicing magic against each other's children (Dorjahn, 1958: 841). Calaway (1978: 166) describes a Yoruba woman who delivered her child by herself afraid of the jealousy of co-wives. Children are considered to be particularly vulnerable to evil intentions when they are very young.

3.2: INCIDENCE OF POLYGYNY

The Changing African Family Project I covered 6606 women aged 15-59. Of these 5874 were in unions. Some of these women were not married to the person they were living with. De facto unions are accepted by the society and have comparable although lower status to marriages. De facto wives could join either a polygynous or a monogamous household. De facto wives and women who

reported that they had a boyfriend with whom they had sexual relations will be considered as wives in the following analysis. Women in polygynous unions numbered 2690 or 46% of all women in unions.

TABLE 3.1: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN UNIONS BY NUMBER OF WIVES OF HUSBAND

No of wives of Husband	percent	Number of Wives
1	54	3184
2	24	1446
3	11	634
4	7	397
5(+)	4	213
Total	100	5874
2(+)	46	2690

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

This information was obtained from the responses of wives and not of husbands. More than one wife of a polygynist husband may have been interviewed separately and because of this the proportions refer to wives and not unions.

In the CAFN II survey there were 1234 women who were in unions. Among these 633 wives (51%) were in polygynous unions. The proportion of polygynously married wives is higher in the CAFN II survey because the survey

also covered rural areas which have a higher degree of polygyny. CAFN II also included 1497 male respondents and it was found that there were 40 polygynists per 100 married men, and that the polygynists had an average of 2.64 wives each. It was also observed that there were an average of 165 wives per 100 married men.

3.3: AGE

The number of women in polygynous unions rises with the age of the women. This is because most men marry polygynously when they are older, which implies that the first wives are also likely to be older when their husbands take additional wives. Men are required to pay bride-price, and for first marriages this is usually provided by the family and relatives, but for other marriages the husband has to provide it mostly by himself. Because of this polygynists tend to be older than monogamists. In cases where a brother or a relative dies leaving behind a wife, a young person may enter a polygynous union by inheriting the widow.

Among the wives in Ibadan aged below 25 years, one third are in polygynous unions while among those aged above 45, more than two thirds are in such unions. Polygyny has also been declining over the years, and some idea of this can be obtained from the fact that fewer women in polygynous unions are reported at younger ages.

TABLE 3.2: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY AGE GROUP

<u>Agegroup</u>	percent	Total wives
15 - 19	32.8	287
20 - 24	33.2	1487
25 - 29	41.3	1442
30 - 34	41.3	1156
35 - 39	53.2	547
40 - 44	62.4	482
45 - 49	67.1	243
50 - 54	68.6	175
55 - 59	70.9	55
Total	45.8	5874

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

3.4: RELIGION

Ibadan is predominantly Muslim, and Islam allows a man to have as many as four wives at a time. Because of this Muslims tend to be more polygynous than the the rest of the population. The traditional African religion permits the practice of polygynous unions. Since the followers of this religion are more traditional in their attitudes and have a higher mean age than the rest of the women, a higher proportion of them are married polygynously.

Even though Christianity does not approve of polygyny, many Christians among the Yoruba marry polygynously. Even among Catholics there are a high proportion of wives married polygynously. This is because even among the

followers of Christianity the old traditional beliefs are still very strong and the traditional gods still respected (ex. Ware, 1978:19). Polygyny too enjoys a high respect among most people of all religions.

TABLE 3.3: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY RELIGION

<u>Religion</u>	Percent	Standard dized* (%)	Total Wives
Moslem	56.3	56.1	3300
Catholic	29.1	30.1	371
Protestant-Major	32.1	32.2	1344
Protestant-Sects	27.8	26.4	162
Protestant-African	34.2	35.6	641
Traditional African	45.7	49.4	35
Others	52.4	#	21
Total	45.7	45.7	5874

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives
 # Size too small for standardization.
 'Others' include 16 women who reported that they have no religion and 5 who reported they have other religions.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

Muslims report the highest proportion of all wives in polygynous unions. Part of the explanation for this high proportion among Muslims lies in their low educational level compared to other groups. This will be shown in Table 3.5. The followers of the traditional religion report the next highest degree

of polygyny. Polygyny is practised widely among Christians too, although to a lesser extent compared to other groups. Both Catholics and other Christian groups have 27-34 percent of wives in polygynous unions. Among the Christians, followers of the African Christian Churches show the highest practice of polygyny.

3.5: EDUCATION

Education is one of the major factors which determines whether a woman enters a polygynous union or not. More educated wives usually want a closer relationship with their husbands and children. The idea of the husband taking another wife is not very acceptable to most of them.

The level of polygyny falls as the educational level of women increases. Of illiterate wives more than half are in polygynous unions while of those who completed secondary education only 10% are in such unions. Since the younger women are also more educated, standardizing by age slightly reduces the difference in the proportion who practice polygyny.

TABLE 3.4: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY HIGHEST EDUCATION

<u>Education</u>	Proportion (%)	Standardized* (%)	Total Wives
No Schooling, Illiterate	57.8	55.6	3169
Koranic Only	54.3	**	46
No School Literate	52.3	49.7	176
Primary Incomplete	43.6	43.9	456
Primary Complete	35.0	40.9	1058
Secondary Incomplete	24.8	26.2	561
Secondary Complete	9.0	10.1	189
Training Beyond Secondary	7.4	**	198
University	3.4#	**	29
Total	45.8	45.8	5872

Notes: *Standardized using the age distribution of all wives

Cell frequency too small for useful comparison

** Size too small for standardization.

Two cases who did not report on their educational level have been omitted

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

TABLE 3.5: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY HIGHEST EDUCATION AND RELIGION

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Illiterate#</u>	<u>Some primary*</u>	<u>Some Secondary</u>
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Muslim	60.9 (2431)	46.5 (697)	31.4 (172)
Catholics	48.8 (84)	28.5 (151)	17.7 (136)
Protestant- Major	47.1 (393)	36.8 (495)	14.3 (455)
Protestant- Sects	47.8 (46)	26.0 (77)	7.7 (39)
Protestant- African	48.5 (233)	33.5 (254)	13.6 (154)
Traditional- African	53.4 (15)	36.4 (11)	37.5 (8)
others	53.8 (13)	60.0 (5)	** (3)
Total	57.7 (3215) (1690)	39.1 (967)	17.7 (5872)

Notes: # Illiterate includes those who cannot read or write and those who had only Koranic education.

* Primary includes those who are self taught.

** cases less than 10

Two cases who did not report on their educational level have been omitted.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

Muslims in each educational group are more often polygynously married than the followers of other religions in the same educational category. This is expected to remain true even if the data are controlled for age. In all

religious groups the illiterate show the highest proportion of wives in polygynous unions.

The effect of education was observed to be least among Muslims. The proportion of women in polygynous unions decreased from 61% for those who were illiterate to 44% for those with primary education and remained high at 31% for those with secondary education.

3.6:OWN OCCUPATION

TABLE 3.6: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY OWN OCCUPATION

<u>Occupation</u>	Percent	Standard dized* (%)	Total Wives
House Work	37.8	42.2	1253
Paid work	47.8	42.7	113
At Home			
Trader	54.5	52.7	3411
Un Skilled	46.5	39.9	114
Skilled	35.5	39.6	532
White Collar	12.2	11.4	362
Professional	12.5	**	56
Others	30.3	**	33
Total	45.8	45.8	5874

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives
 ** cases too small for standardization.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE.

The level of polygyny among women in different types of occupations was very variable. A low proportion of women in high status occupational groups were polygynously married. Only 12% of wives in the professional and white collar category were in such unions. A high proportion of women who did only house work or were employed in unskilled and skilled work were in polygynous marriages, while the traders group had the highest proportion of women in polygynous unions.

3.7: OCCUPATION OF FATHER

Most polygynists are very traditionally inclined and a girl born in such a household has a greater chance of entering a polygynous union than one born to a non-polygynous union.

The likelihood of a woman marrying into a polygynous household is closely related to the occupational category of her father. Daughters of professionals are least likely to enter into a polygynous union, with only 21% in such a union. Daughters of farmers and workers in rural areas practice polygyny most. The occupation of a father also determines the amount of education he will offer his daughter and education has a strong influence on the type of union a woman joins. Fathers in the professional and managerial groups offer their daughters the highest level of education. Half their daughters had some secondary education, and of these the proportion married polygynously was 13%. But among daughters of professionals and managerials who were illiterate 54% were in polygynous unions. Rural workers (farmers and unskilled workers) have

a greater proportion of daughters who marry polygynously and again education provides part of the explanation. This group of men have the least educated wives, with only 67% having some primary education.

TABLE 3.7: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY OCCUPATION OF FATHER

<u>Occupation of father</u>	Percent	Standard dized* (%)	Total Wives
Professional	17.1	20.8	82
Managerial	32.2	31.8	255
White Collar	31.0	31.5	468
Skilled	47.0	47.7	927
Petty Trader	46.1	47.6	688
Unskilled Urban	45.4	45.1	174
Unskilled Rural	57.4	58.8	61
Small Farmer	48.1	47.4	1228
Large Farmer	49.8	48.7	1939
Total	45.8	45.8	5822

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives
52 cases of non response have been excluded.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

3.8: OCCUPATION OF SPOUSE

The occupation of a man has a strong influence on whether he decides to marry polygynously or not. Men who are in the high status occupational groups are mostly well educated and desire to offer their children a high education. They also favour a very close relationship with their wife and their children, and because of this they are often monogamously married. But farmers and those employed in unskilled or low skilled jobs may gain a great benefit by having more wives and more children and so they often marry polygynously.

TABLE 3.8: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED
BY OCCUPATION OF SPOUSE

<u>Occupation of Spouse</u>	Percent	Standar- dized* (%)	Total Wives
Professional	19.3	19.5	275
Managerial	48.8	47.8	506
White Collar	33.3	33.9	1303
Skilled	47.5	50.2	211
Traders/businessmen	58.0	56.8	791
Unskilled Urban	49.5	48.5	321
Unskilled Rural	60.9	54.0	386
Others#	44.8	**	146
Total	45.8	45.8	5874

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives
 ** Cases too small for standardization
 # Others include students, unemployed, widowed, separated, and non respondents.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

Traders and farmers are most likely to marry additional wives, and professionals are more likely to remain monogamous. Men whose occupation is of the managerial group, irrespective if their high occupational status remain traditionally inclined and their chance of entering into polygynous unions is the same as the average population (ex.Ware, 1978:69). Similar high incidence of polygyny among these group of men was observed by Aree (1978:375) in Accra in 1971.

Professionals have the most highly educated wives and are the less likely to be polygynists. A large proportion of the variation in the proportion of wives in polygynous unions among the other occupational groups can also be explained by education. For example, among wives of rural workers 93% did not have any primary education and consequently the highest proportion of polygynists are in this group. As was explained before, the above data was collected from the response of the wives and not husbands and the sampling procedure allowed the interview of all the wives of the same husband. Because of this the above Table may not exactly indicate the exact occupational distribution of husbands.

3.9: MARRIAGE CEREMONY

As was mentioned above, officially a man married in court is not allowed to take another legal wife, but unofficially many of these men do take other wives. The number of court marriages were very small; only 158 out of 5374 unions (less than 3% of the total unions) were conducted only through court ceremonies. Nine percent of the wives who were married by only a court

ceremony were in a polygynous union.

Some women were married by a court and a Christian, Muslim or traditional ceremony. Of these 14% were found to be in a polygynous union. One of the reasons why women married in court remain in monogamous unions may be their high educational level. Of all marriages formalized only by traditional ceremony, half were in polygynous unions. The highest proportion of women in polygynous unions was recorded for those who were married by only a Muslim marriage ceremony, 59%. In contrast only 22% of those married through Christian ceremonies only were found in a polygynous union. De facto wives, too, often joined a polygynous union with 39% of this group in such a union at the time of the survey. It should be noted that the association could be because those getting polygynously married are likely to choose more traditional marriage ceremonies.

3.10: DIVORCE

Polygyny is often associated with a high frequency of divorce (Nag, 1968:95; Dorjahn, 1958:850). Among the Yoruba marriages are conducted at a later age and are fairly stable. Both families are involved in bringing about the marriage and try to keep it intact (Olusanya, 1970:151). Olusanya also found that in Ife and Oyo Towns of Western Nigeria, 92% and 39% of all married women respectively, were still in their first marriages. He observed that type of union was the major factor affecting the stability of a marriage. However, in areas where tradition is not upheld to a great extent the frequency of divorce is rising (Morgan, 1975:201-202).

In instances where a marriage break is inevitable Yoruba women often look for another man before getting divorced. The new husband helps settle her old debts which arise because of the bride-price paid to her at the time of her marriage. The practice of polygyny also helps women marry quickly after divorce or widowhood. Divorcees are observed to marry more frequently into polygynous unions (Okediji and Okediji, 1966:159). There is no difference in the divorce frequency of followers of different religions. Among the Yoruba both Christians and Muslims were observed to have the same divorce rate (Lloyd, 1968:78).

3.11: MIGRATION STATUS

In the CAFN I survey women were asked if they had always lived in Ibadan or not. The majority of all women, 4074 out of 6606 respondents had always lived in Ibadan. Of the 5873 women in unions 62% were born in Ibadan. Most of the in-migrants to the City of Ibadan have different characteristics from the indigenous population. The practice of polygyny among these two groups of women is also different.

TABLE 3.9: PROPORTION OF WIVES POLYGYNOUSLY MARRIED BY PLACE OF BIRTH

<u>Place of birth</u>	Percent	Standar- dized* (%)	Total Wives
Ibadan	49.8	50.4	3634
Out side Ibadan	39.2	38.7	2239
Total	45.8	45.8	5873

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives.
One respondent who did not report on her place of birth has been omitted.

SOURCE: CAFN I

The indigenous population of Ibadan has more Muslims and fewer educated women, while migrants are more likely to be more educated women who have migrated to the city in search of employment. The migrants tend to have a large proportion of Christians because of their higher educational level (Sembajwe, 1977: 199). There are more Christians than Muslims among the migrants because Christians are more educated than Muslims among the Yoruba.

The women who were born in Ibadan were more likely to enter into a polygynous union than the in-migrants. The major reason was that there were more Muslims in this group. Of all wives in polygynous unions 74% were Muslims, and the proportion of Muslims of the Ibadan born was 69% while among the migrants Muslims constituted 36%.

3.12: PART OF IBADAN

Ibadan has two parts, Old Ibadan which is mainly inhabited by Muslims and

people with traditional attitudes, and the Suburbs which are inhabited mainly by migrants who are more educated and have a different style of life. Muslims constitute 60% of the wives in the Old Ibadan compared to 38% of the wives in the Suburbs. Most of the residents in the Old Ibadan are indigenous inhabitants, with 66% of wives born in the city compared to only 48% of the residents of the Suburbs. The educational level of the women in Old Ibadan was also lower compared to women in the Suburbs with 55% of the women illiterate in Old Ibadan compared to 38% in the Suburbs. All these factors affect the chance of a woman marrying either into a polygynous or a monogamous union. The proportion of women who are in polygynous unions was 48% of those residing in Old Ibadan and 38% of Suburban residents. The mean ages of wives in the two parts were similar, with the wives in Old Ibadan having a mean of 29.5 years and the rest with a mean of around 30 years. After standardization for age differences, the proportion of wives polygynous among the wives in Old Ibadan remains at 48% while among in the Suburbs it falls to 37% of wives.

3.13: PLACE OF RESIDENCE

CAFN II was carried out in both urban and rural areas. Yorubaland is very densely populated and the majority of the people live in large towns. Some of these may grow very large and yet be mostly inhabited by agricultural people.

Urbanization is often defined on the basis of the population size (density) of the area, together with the kind of facilities available to its residents. In the CAFN II survey information was collected about the availability of different services in each center. These services were: (a) Communication and Official Facilities- post office, buses, banks, (b) Health

Facilities- hospitals, health centers, chemist shops, etc. (c) Fertility and Fertility Control Facilities- family planning clinics, availability of contraceptives, etc. (d) Other Facilities- educational institutions, availability of electricity, newspapers, etc. Mezue (1982) identified 20 facilities that may be considered to give a town an urban character. Centers that had at least ten of these facilities were classified as Urban and those that did not, classified as Rural. The availability of most services also depended heavily on the size of its population. Twenty three centers were identified as Urban and twenty seven as Rural. Except for two, all the Urban centers had a population size of more than 20,000 and except for three all the Rural centers had less than 20,000 people. In rural areas the proportion of wives in polygynous unions was found to be 58% while in the Urban areas it was 47%. The proportion of women in polygynous unions in the rural areas was higher than in the urban areas. This is because it is still very convenient to marry polygynously in rural areas because of the low cost of maintaining wives and children. In the Urban areas where houses are rented and the cost of living is also high it may be uneconomical for many people to marry polygynously.

The incidence of polygyny was higher in rural areas than in urban areas. There were 44 polygynists per hundred married men in rural areas while there were only 36 polygynists per hundred married urban men. But the intensity of polygyny is similar in both areas, with 2.6 wives per polygynist in rural areas and 2.7 wives per polygynist in urban areas. On average, the rural Yoruba have 171 wives per 100 married men, while in the Urban centers it is only 159.

CHAPTER 4

TYPE OF UNION AND FERTILITY DIFFERENTIALS

4.1: INTRODUCTION

One of the major reasons why men practice polygyny is to increase their number of children. The number of children a man has increases directly as he takes more wives. This kind of relationship was also observed in the Temne society (Dorjahn, 1958:846). In that society the mean live birth to the wife of a monogamist was 2.4 while the wives of a polygynist with more than three wives had a mean of 11 live births. Among the Yoruba too, a similar relationship was observed.

TABLE 4.1: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO HUSBANDS
BY NUMBER OF WIVES

<u>No of Wives</u>	<u>Mean CEB</u>	<u>Standardized* mean</u>	<u>No. of Husbands</u>
1	3.75	4.50	640
2	7.27	6.64	265
3	11.38	9.42	77
4(+)	14.38	9.74	80
Total	5.98	5.98	1062
2(+)	9.37	7.78	422

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all husbands
SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE

The mean number of children for men married monogamously was 3.8, for those who had three wives it rose to 11.4 and for those who had 4 or more wives it reached 14.9. The age distribution of men varied with their number of wives. Husbands who had more wives were older than those with fewer wives but the difference in the fertility level was still great after standardizing for age.

The effect of polygyny on the fertility of women raises controversy among different researchers. Many studies indicate that polygyny has a depressing effect on fertility. Other studies, in contrast, indicate that there is no difference between the fertility of women in different types of unions, while still others claim that wives of polygynists have higher fertility than wives of monogamists. Various factors are cited as having different effects on the fertility of women in monogamous and women in polygynous unions. Some of these are; lower frequency of sexual intercourse in polygynous unions, higher infertility and sub-fertility among the wives of polygynists, higher marital mobility in polygynous unions, greater difference in the age of the couple in polygynous unions and longer durations of abstinence of wives in polygynous unions. All these will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

4.2: FERTILITY DATA

The measure of fertility that will be used in the following analysis is the number of children ever born per woman. Every woman was asked how many of her children were staying with her at home, how many were staying elsewhere and how many of them were dead. She was also asked the total number of live births she had and her response was checked for consistency.

TABLE 4.2: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO WIVES BY NUMBER OF WIVES OF HUSBAND - CAFN I

<u>ALL WIVES</u>	<u>No of Wives</u>	<u>Mean CEB Per Wife</u>	<u>Standardized* Mean</u>	<u>Mean Total Wives</u>	<u>age of Wives</u>
	1	2.51	2.79	3184	27.9
	2	2.98	2.39	1446	30.0
	3	3.33	2.91	634	32.3
	4	3.77	2.85	397	34.6
	5(+)	4.04	3.17	213	35.8
	All Wives	2.85	2.85	5874	29.6
	2(+)	3.49	2.96	2690	31.6
<u>FERTILE WIVES ONLY</u>					
	1	2.83	3.09	2818	28.6
	2	3.19	3.16	1348	30.4
	3	3.55	3.18	594	32.9
	4	4.00	3.26	374	35.0
	5(+)	4.32	3.45	199	36.0
	Total	3.14	3.14	5333	30.3
	2(+)	3.49	3.21	2515	32.1
	3(+)	3.83	3.25	1167	34.1

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives for total women and using the age distribution of all fertile wives for fertile women.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

The reported mean children ever born data shows a consistently increasing value as the ages of the women increases. It is possible that there may have been a small number of births that were not mentioned, particularly of dead children since the Yoruba do not want to mention the dead. When this data is compared to the usually encountered pattern of falling completed fertility levels that most reports in many developing countries show, its quality can be considered to be very good.

In the CFN I survey, women were also asked whether they were pregnant or not. The women who were not pregnant were asked to report when their last child was born. The main objective of the question was to find out the pregnancy status of the woman and the length of time since the last birth for non pregnant women. From this response, information on current fertility could be derived, but because of the way the data was collected and because the data was collected only during the first survey, mean number of children ever born is the only measure of fertility that is used in the analysis. Mean CEB is also the measure of fertility used in many investigations of fertility differentials between women in polygynous unions and women in monogamous unions.

The fertility pattern presented by all wives and only fertile wives was very similar. In both instances fertility was higher in polygynous unions than in monogamous unions. Fertility also increased as the number of co-wives increased. However most of this effect was due to the difference in the age of the women. The age of the women rises as the number of the wives of their husband increases. After standardizing for age the mean CEB for all women in monogamous unions became 2.8 and for women in polygynous unions 3.0. The same

effect is observed among the fertile wives; a mean CEB of 3.1 compared to a mean CEB of 3.2 for women in monogamous unions and women in polygamous unions respectively. Among the fertile wives, it can also be noted that CEB (standardized) slightly and consistently increases with the number of wives. A similar pattern of fertility is indicated by the Yoruba women interviewed in CAFN II.

TABLE 4.3: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO WIVES BY NUMBER OF WIVES OF HUSBAND - CAFN II

	<u>No of Wives</u>	<u>Mean CEB Per Wife</u>	<u>Standardized* Mean</u>	<u>Mean Total Wives</u>	<u>age of Wives</u>
<u>ALL WIVES</u>					
	1	3.18	3.67	601	32.1
	2	3.81	3.70	3.44	35.5
	3(+)	4.92	4.17	287	41.7
	Total	3.76	3.76	1232	35.3
	2(+)	4.32	3.87	631	38.3
<u>FERTILE WIVES ONLY</u>					
	1	3.49	3.93	548	32.7
	2	4.02	3.97	326	35.5
	3(+)	5.19	4.46	272	41.8
	Total	4.04	4.04	1146	35.6
	2(+)	4.56	4.15	598	38.4

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all wives for total women and using the age distribution of all fertile wives for fertile women.
SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE.

The fertile wives in CAFN II reported higher fertility than the fertile wives in CAFN I. This is because CAFN II included women in rural areas and among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria the rural women have higher fertility compared to the urban women (see Section 4.18). The pattern of fertility of women in CAFN II is similar to the fertility pattern of women in CAFN I, wives with only one co-wife having similar fertility to wives of monogamists and wives with more co-wives having a slightly higher fertility. After standardizing by age women in monogamous unions had a mean CEB of 3.9 and women in polygynous unions had a mean CEB of 4.2. Women in polygynous unions are generally older than women in monogamous unions and standardization by age reduces the effect of the difference in their ages on their fertility levels. But even after standardizing by five year age groups their difference in fertility may still be slightly affected by the difference in age between the wives in the two types of unions, in view of the five year age grouping rather than single year ages used for standardizing. The sample size does not enable standardization by single years of age.

4.3: CHILDLISSNESS

Polygynous unions are often associated with sub-fertility or infertility of wives. Childlessness of a wife is one of the factors that encourages a man to marry polygynously (eg. Muhsam, 1956). Among the Beduin Muhsam studied there were slightly more childless women in polygynous unions than in monogamous unions. Ware (No date:49) observed that 77% of Yoruba wives in both types of unions in Ibadan would be pleased if their husbands took another wife if they

(the wives) were childless. Seventeen percent stated that they may even suggest it to the husbands themselves. Similarly 68% of wives in monogamous unions reported that they would welcome a new wife in this event.

One of the reasons offered for the high occurrence of infertility or sub-fertility among women in polygynous unions is the high incidence of venereal diseases among them (Dorjahn, 1958:851; Olusanya, 1971:174). Extra marital relations are more frequent among those in polygynous unions. Because of this there is a high chance of one of the wives or the husband contracting the disease, which is then rapidly spread among the wives by the husband. This may be very important, particularly in Central Africa where sterility is very severe and venereal diseases considered as one of the causes (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1983).

Caldwell and Caldwell (1983:23) also observed that the degree of primary sterility among the Yoruba was very low. They found that among the women in CAFN I, only seven out of 2663 women aged 30 and over had never had a child. Secondary sterility was also low, with only 27 out of 1705 women aged 30-39 years old having two or less children, and 27 women out of 958 aged 40+ years having 3 or less. They also found that the proportion of wives who had primary or secondary sterility was the same for women in polygynous unions and monogamous unions.

As Dorjahn (1958:852) found in the Temne society, women in polygynous unions are not always more frequently childless than women in monogamous unions. The present data also does not support the suggestion that a higher proportion of women in polygynous unions are childless. In the survey conducted in Ibadan (CAFN I), 540 (9%) of the 5874 wives in unions reported

that they had never had a live birth. Of these 366 were in monogamous unions and 174 in polygynous unions. The proportion of childless wives was 11% for women in monogamous unions and 6% for women in polygynous unions. A large number of these women were childless because they had married only just prior to the survey. The mean age of childless wives in monogamous unions was 23 years and of the childless wives in polygynous unions was 27 years. Further, 37% of the childless wives married to monogamists and 36% married to polygynists reported that they were already pregnant or probably pregnant. If these pregnant women are excluded, only 6.1% of all wives of monogamists and 4.2% of the wives of polygynists remain childless and this difference could probably be largely explained by the age difference between the two groups.

The characteristics of the childless women were not very different from the general population, except for their ages. The educational level of the childless women was also similar to that of fertile wives. Of the childless wives 50% were illiterate, (58% of the wives of monogamists and 64% of wives of polygynists). The proportion of women who were illiterate among the fertile wives was 55%. The pattern of marriage was also more or less the same, except that women in defacto unions were more likely to be childless than the rest; 20% of the defacto wives were childless (24% of those in union with a monogamist and 13% of those in union with a polygynist). Part of the explanation for this is again the age of these women. Women in de facto unions had a mean age of 18 years, while the mean age of all wives was 30 years. A smaller proportion of childless women were economically active, 54% compared to 58% of fertile wives. The lower economic participation of childless wives may be due to their shorter duration of marriage and their lower ages. Among the Yoruba, older women tend to be more economically involved than the young.

A similar situation was observed among the women in CAFN II. A total of 76 women in unions were reported childless, 50 in monogamous unions and the rest in polygynous unions. Their characteristics were also similar to the rest of the population except for their ages.

As was shown above, childlessness especially in monogamous unions was due to the short duration of marriage, and a large proportion of the childless wives were already pregnant. The following analysis will try to investigate the effect of polygyny on the fertility of women. Much of the analysis will concentrate on fertile wives only, in order to eliminate the effect caused by childless women. This approach is similar to the one used by Olusanya (1971) and Arowolo(1981) in their analysis of fertility differentials among women in polygynous and women in monogamous unions. Because of the small number of childless women the results of the analysis could be expected to remain the same even if all wives were considered.

4.4: FREQUENCY OF INTERCOURSE

Muhsam (1956) tried to investigate the effect of reduced sexual intercourse on fertility and he found that women in monogamous unions had 1077 children aged 0-4 per thousand, first wives in polygynous unions 610, and second wives 364 per thousand. Muhsam's suggestion was that the fertility differential was partly due to the reduced frequency of sexual intercourse among women in polygynous unions. His data was very much affected by age difference among the wives and the differential mortality that may occur among the children. Dorjahn (1958: 838) also indicated that the number of active sperm per ejaculation decreases with increased frequency of intercourse, thus

lowering fertility. But these cases may apply to cases where a chief or a very rich man has a great number of wives, but such cases are very rare. Among the Yoruba of Ibadan only 8% of the women in polygynous unions had more than three co-wives. Other Nigerian studies also indicate that the number of wives of a polygynist does not generally become so high as to lower the fertility of each wife because of the reduced frequency of sexual intercourse (Olusanya, 1971:171-172, Bongaarts, 1978).

Another factor often mentioned which may lower fertility in polygynous unions is avoidance of some of the wives and favouring particular ones (eg. Lorimer, 1954:93; Muhsam, 1956:4). However these factors equally well may apply to monogamists who may avoid their wives.

4.5: AGE

One of the major factors affecting the fertility of women is their age. Even though this is a generally accepted fact some studies of differentials in fertility among monogamous and polygynous women did not take this into consideration (example; Van de Walle, 1968; Nag, 1968). The effect of age is particularly important because polygynists are older than the general population and the number of children born to women increases directly with age. Polygyny among the Yoruba has also been declining over the years and because of this polygynists tend to be older than monogamists.

TABLE 4.4: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND AGEGROUP

<u>Agegroup</u>	<u>Monogamous Unions</u>	<u>Polygynous [2 Wives]</u>	<u>Polygynous [3 or more Wives]</u>	<u>All Polygynous Unions</u>	<u>All Unions</u>
15 - 19	1.19 (100)	1.16 (32)	1.40 (20)	1.25 (52)	1.21 (152)
20 - 24	1.60 (801)	1.77 (269)	1.80 (161)	1.78 (430)	1.67 (1231)
25 - 29	2.44 (802)	2.64 (357)	2.67 (219)	2.65 (576)	2.53 (1378)
30 - 34	3.38 (546)	3.56 (329)	3.65 (242)	3.60 (571)	3.49 (1117)
35 - 39	4.43 (249)	4.15 (140)	4.06 (147)	4.11 (487)	4.25 (536)
40 - 44	5.09 (176)	4.74 (123)	4.85 (166)	4.80 (289)	4.91 (465)
45 - 49	5.65 (74)	5.22 (55)	5.62 (101)	5.48 (156)	5.54 (230)
50 - 54	5.28 (54)	4.82 (33)	6.32 (84)	5.90 (117)	5.70 (171)
55 - 59	5.13 (16)	6.50 (10)	6.59 (27)	6.57 (37)	6.13 (53)
Raw Total	2.83 (2818)	3.19 (1348)	3.83 (1167)	3.49 (2515)	3.14 (5333)
Standardized*	3.09	3.16	3.25	3.21	3.14

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile women.
Number of cases are shown in brackets.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

At ages below 35, women in polygynous unions tend to have higher fertility than women in monogamous unions. At the middle ages (35-49 years) women in monogamous unions have higher fertility, with women in polygynous unions again having higher fertility at ages above 50. Polygynously married women with more than one co-wife have higher fertility than the ones with only one co-wife in all age groups except one (35-39 years), though the difference is generally small.

Any difference in fertility and other behaviour between women in polygynous and monogamous unions can be expected to be higher as the number of co-wives increases. Because of this most of the following analysis will look at women in polygynous unions in two groups; those who have only one co-wife and those who have more than one co-wife. In CAFN I, fertile wives in polygynous unions with more than one co-wife had a mean age of 34 and wives of polygynists with only one co-wife had a mean age of only 32 years. The standardized mean CEB for women with only one co-wife was 3.2 compared to 3.3 for other wives in polygynous unions. In CAFN II also the fertile wives of polygynists with more than one co-wife had a standardized mean CEB of 4.5 which was slightly higher than the mean CEB of 4.0 of wives who have only one co-wife. The unstandardized fertility rates indicate higher differences between the women in the two types of unions.

4.6: AGE AT MARRIAGE

Information on age at first marriage was collected only in the CAFN II Survey. In the survey only 68% of all wives (a total of 831 women) reported their age at the time of their first marriage in exact years. The mean age at first marriage for the women in polygynous unions was 21.2, and for those in monogamous unions 21.5 years. Of women in monogamous unions 9% reported that

they do not know their exact age at the time of their first marriage but that it was below 20 years, and 18% reported that it was above 20 years. Of these the proportion of women in polygynous unions was 14% and 21% respectively. The data shows that 60% of wives who gave exact age at first marriage got married at ages 18-22, and 91% at ages 17-26 years.

Information on duration of marriage was not collected at the time of the survey. Duration of marriage could have been assumed to be represented by the difference between age at the time of the survey and age at first marriage. Traditionally, in the Yoruba society re-marriage is very frequent, with women often arranging a new husband before they are completely separated from their previous union. They then often go directly to their new house from their old one and so have little or no time between marriages (Olusanya, 1970:151). In the survey one third of the women did not state their exact age at their first marriage. Because of this, and because most women marry at similar ages, and particularly since age is itself very closely related to duration of marriage, the analysis that follows concentrates on age rather than duration of marriage.

The proportion of women who have been married more than once is different between women in monogamous unions and women in polygynous unions. Fifteen percent of women in polygynous unions and four percent of those in monogamous unions were married more than once. Because of this, if there is any significant period between a dissolution of marriage and a re-marriage, the calculation of duration of marriage according to the procedure described above would be more frequently biased in the case of women in polygynous unions.

4.7: EDUCATION

In the following analysis all women who can not read or write and those who had only Koranic education are considered as illiterate. The group of women who had only primary education comprises 165 who were self taught, 414 who did not complete their primary education and 934 who completed primary education. The group who had secondary education includes 28 who had university education and 182 who also had training beyond secondary level and 667 women who had only secondary education.

TABLE 4.5: MEAN CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND EDUCATION

<u>Education</u>	Monogamous <u>Unions</u>	polygynous <u>[2 Wives]</u>	Polygynous <u>[3 or more Wives]</u>	All Polygynous <u>Unions</u>	All <u>Unions</u>
Illiterate	2.86 <2.95> (1200)	3.31 <3.10> (881)	3.98 <3.24> (861)	3.64 <3.18> (1742)	3.32 <3.09> (2942)
Primary	2.81 <2.68> (902)	3.02 <3.23> (371)	3.45 <3.33> (240)	3.19 <3.31> (611)	2.96 <3.34> (1513)
Secondary	2.82 <2.84> (716)	2.81 <3.12> (95)	3.23 <3.18> (66)	2.98 <3.15> (161)	2.85 <3.11> (877)
Total	2.83 <3.09> (2818)	3.19 <3.16> (1347)	3.83 <3.25> (1167)	3.49 <3.21> (2514)	3.14 <3.14> (5332)

Notes: Standardized values are shown in angle brackets.
Number of cases are shown in curve brackets.
Standardized using the distribution of all wives as standard.
One woman who did not report her education has been omitted.
SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

The level of education of women in different types of unions varies with only 43% of the wives of the monogamists but 69% of the wives of polygynists

illiterate. Among the polygynists 65% of those who had only one co-wife but 74% of those who had more than one co-wife could not read or write. In monogamous unions, women who were illiterate had higher fertility than those who had some education but this was not true for polygynous unions.

For each educational category, wives of polygynists had higher fertility than wives of monogamists. Also, those with more than one co-wife had higher fertility than those with only one co-wife.

4.8: RELIGION

Among the Yoruba followers of the different faiths show different levels of fertility, Muslims having lower fertility than followers of other religions. Since 69% of all women in polygynous unions are Muslims compared to only 45% among the women in monogamous unions, this may have the effect of reducing the fertility of polygynous wives. Muslims also tend to have a lower educational level and generally lower fertility.

In the sample there were 31 fertile wives who were followers of the traditional Yoruba religion. The traditionalists are less educated and generally older. They have a mean age of 33 years while Muslims have a mean age of 30 years, Catholics 29 and the other Protestant groups around 30 years.

TABLE 4.6: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND RELIGION

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Monogamous Unions</u>	<u>Polygynous [2 Wives]</u>	<u>Polygynous [3 or more Wives]</u>	<u>All Polygynous Unions</u>	<u>All Unions</u>
Moslem	2.53 <2.82> (1258)	3.13 <3.05> (874)	3.75 <3.24> (867)	3.44 <3.15> (1741)	3.06 <3.14> (2999)
Catholic	3.03 <3.25> (236)	2.95 <2.96> (54)	3.87 <3.19> (38)	3.29 <3.10> (102)	3.11 <3.21> (338)
Protestant -Major	3.19 <3.25> (317)	3.25 <3.24> (249)	3.92 <3.33> (155)	3.50 <3.30> (404)	3.29 <3.25> (1221)
Protestant -New Sects	3.06 <3.16> (105)	3.50 <3.06> (30)	4.30 <4.30> (10)#	3.70 <3.18> (40)	3.23 <3.25> (145)
Protestant -African	2.86 <3.33> (375)	3.58 <3.34> (120)	4.29 <3.27> (35)	3.88 <3.40> (205)	3.22 <3.34> (580)
Traditional African*	3.39 (18)	2.96 (7)#	5.33 (6)#	4.00 (13)	3.65 (31)
Others*	3.44 (9)#	5.00 (4)#	3.17 (6)#	3.90 (10)	3.68 (19)
Total	2.83 <3.09> (2819)	3.19 <3.16> (1348)	3.83 <3.25> (1167)	3.49 <3.21> (2515)	3.14 <3.14> (5333)

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets.

Number of cases are given in curve brackets.

Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile wives.

* Not standardized by age because of small sizes.

Cases too small for useful analysis

°Others° include 14 wives who reported they have no religion.

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

The age standardized level of fertility was always higher among wives of polygynists compared to the wives of monogamists among the Muslims and the African Protestants. Catholics showed higher fertility for the wives of monogamists while the followers of the other religions show similar fertility levels for the wives in the two types of unions. The highest difference is observed among the Muslims who had a standardized mean CEB of 3.2 for women in polygynous unions and a standardized mean CEB of 2.8 for women in monogamous unions. Also women with only one co-wife had lower fertility than those with more than one co-wife.

Religion is very much related to other factors which affect fertility, like age, education and period of abstinence and it is not easy to observe its effect on the fertility of women in different types of unions. The analysis presented in the section which makes use of the Multiple Classification Analysis Technique is expected to take care of these interrelated factors.

4.9: MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Women married by different types of marriage ceremonies show different levels of fertility. This is because the type of marriage ceremony depends on the religion and educational level of the couple.

TABLE 4.7: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND TYPE OF MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Type of Ceremony	Monogamous Unions	Polygynous [2 Wives]	Polygynous [3 or more Wives]	All Polygynous Unions	All unions
Court	3.35 <3.16> (339)	4.08 <3.67> (25)	3.90 <3.44> (20)	4.00 <3.45> (45)	3.42 <3.16> (384)
Christian	3.21 <3.32> (417)	3.50 <3.38> (82)	4.03 <3.52> (35)	3.66 <3.56> (117)	3.31 <3.36> (534)
Muslim	2.61 <2.90> (580)	3.13 <3.06> (446)	3.74 <3.21> (463)	3.44 <3.15> (909)	3.12 <2.98> (1489)
Traditional	2.79 <3.12> (1226)	3.18 <3.17> (689)	3.97 <3.23> (570)	3.54 <3.23> (1259)	3.17 <3.17> (2485)
De Facto Relation	2.26 <3.09> (236)	3.04 <3.19> (97)	3.21 <3.03> (75)	3.12 <3.14> (172)	2.62 <3.01> (408)
Others*	2.45 (20)	3.44 (9)#	7.00 (4)#	3.15 (13)#	2.73 (33)
Total	2.83 <3.09> (2818)	3.16 <3.16> (1348)	3.83 <3.25> (1167)	3.49 <3.21> (2515)	3.14 <3.14> (5333)

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets.
Number of cases are given in curve brackets.
Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile women in unions.

* Not adjusted for ages because of small size.

Cases too small for useful analysis

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

women who married through court and a Christian ceremony, 21 women who married through court and a Muslim ceremony, and 63 women who married through court and a traditional ceremony. The cases presented as "Others" refer to 11 women who are girlfriends and have sex, and 22 whose marriage ceremony is unknown. The categories presented as celebrating the Christian and the Muslim marriage ceremony may or may not have gone through a traditional ceremony too.

Women in de facto unions have a smaller mean CEB. The major reason is that these women are younger than other wives. The mean age of de facto wives was 18 years, while the mean age of all wives was 28 years. Because of this the de facto wives had a shorter duration of marriage than other wives. Women in de facto relations also exhibited the smallest difference in fertility between those married to monogamists and those married to polygynists. For all types of marriage ceremony higher fertility is found in polygynous unions than in monogamous unions. The greatest difference is among those who were married by a Court ceremony, but their proportion in the whole population is not great, comprising only 12% of women in monogamous unions and 2% of women in polygynous unions. Women who were married by a Muslim ceremony or a Christian ceremony also show a higher fertility level for wives in polygynous unions.

4.10: MARITAL MOBILITY

Polygyny is usually associated with a high degree of marital mobility. Since a polygynist husband could satisfy his needs with one of his wives he may easily divorce another. Divorcees also tend to re-marry into polygynous unions, because of the lower bride-price that is paid for them. Marital mobility among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria is higher among women in

polygynous unions than among women in monogamous unions. Only 4% of wives in CAFN II survey married to monogamists were married more than once, compared to 15% of wives married to polygynists.

There is a very strong positive relationship between age and number of times women get married. Women who are divorced or widowed and then re-marry would experience a reduction in their fertility. This is because of their reduced exposure to intercourse (Davis and Blake, 1956) compared to others who were constantly in unions. But among the Yoruba re-marriage occurs very quickly so that its effect on fertility is not great (Olusanya, 1970:151). Another factor that may explain the reduced fertility of women who marry more than once is that childlessness is one of the causes of divorce in many instances. The proportion of wives childless among those who married only once was 6%, while among women who married more than once it was 11%. Unfortunately, there were only 10 childless women among wives in monogamous unions who were married more than once. Because of this small size no further comparison of childless wives by number of times married could be carried out for the women in the two types of unions.

The mean CEB (standardized for age) is slightly higher for those married only once than those married more than once. Women in polygynous unions have a mean CEB of 4.2 for those married only once and a mean CEB of 4.1 for those married twice or more. This relationship was not observed among women in monogamous unions, possibly because only 18 women in the sample had been married more than once. The difference in the fertility of those married only once and those married more than once is not very great. This may partly be due to the fast re-marriage of divorcees and widows. Since a higher proportion

of women in polygynous unions have been married twice or more, this would have a tendency to lower their fertility compared to women in monogamous unions (also Dorjahn, 1958:849).

TABLE 4.8: MEAN CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND NUMBER OF TIMES MARRIED

<u>Number of Times Married</u>	<u>Monogamous Unions</u>	<u>Polygynous [2 Wives]</u>	<u>Polygynous [3 or more Wives]</u>	<u>All Polygynous Unions</u>	<u>All Unions</u>
Once	3.42 <3.90> (529)	4.02 <4.07> (288)	5.14 <4.52> (227)	4.51 <4.19> (515)	3.96 <4.05> (1044)
Twice Or More	5.56 <3.97> (18)	4.05 <3.73> (38)	5.47 <4.21> (45)	4.82 <4.08> (83)	4.95 <3.99> (101)
Total	3.49 <3.93> (547)	4.02 <3.97> (326)	5.19 <4.46> (272)	4.56 <4.14> (598)	4.04 <4.04> (1145)
Proportion married twice or more	.04	.12	.17	.15	.09

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets.
 Number of cases are given in curve brackets.
 Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile wives in unions in CAFN II.
 One woman who did not report how many times she was married has been omitted.
 SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE

4.11: OCCUPATION

Women in the different occupational groups show varying proportion of them in polygynous unions. And the women in the two types of unions do not have similar distribution of occupational categories. This may influence the

fertility levels between the two types of unions. The same applies to the occupation of spouse and the occupation of father.

White Collar jobs include Professional and Managerial workers, while the Blue Collar jobs comprise Skilled Workers, Un-Skilled Workers and the Traders. Rural Workers include Big and Small Farmers together with the Un-Skilled Rural Workers.

Similar fertility in both types of unions is observed for women in White Collar jobs, but in lower status occupations women in polygynous unions generally seem to have a slightly higher fertility than women in monogamous unions. The fertility levels of women in different occupational groups have similar values for those in polygynous unions than those in monogamous unions. Wives of Blue Collar workers show slightly higher fertility for those in polygynous unions than those in monogamous unions. The same relationship is observed with occupation of father. Daughters of farmers have a mean CEB of 3.2 for the wives of polygynists and a mean CEB of 3.0 for wives in monogamous unions. Among the daughters of Blue Collar Workers also, higher fertility is observed among women in polygynous unions.

TABLE 4.9: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND OCCUPATION

	Monogamous Unions	Polygynous [2 Wives]	Polygynous [3 or more Wives]	All Polygynous Unions	All Unions
<u>OWN OCCUPATION</u>					
White Collar	3.12 <2.98> (336)	2.70 <2.68> (30)	3.00 <2.79> (17)	2.81 <2.96> (47)	3.08 <2.97> (383)
Blue Collar	2.96 <3.13> (1853)	3.32 <3.19> (1083)	3.91 <3.30> (975)	3.60 <3.17> (2085)	3.30 <3.19> (3911)
House Work	2.30 <3.03> (620)	2.66 <3.01> (232)	3.39 <3.06> (171)	2.97 <3.07> (403)	2.57 <3.04> (1023)
Others**	2.33 (9)*	2.00 (3)#	4.75 (4)#	3.57 (7)#	2.88 (16)
<u>OCCUPATION OF SPOUSE</u>					
White Collar	3.07 <3.26> (1223)	3.05 <3.05> (393)	3.65 <3.20> (302)	3.31 <3.18> (695)	3.16 <3.21> (1918)
Blue Collar	2.56 <2.95> (1394)	3.10 <3.14> (8243)	3.55 <3.03> (687)	3.31 <3.17> (1511)	2.95 <3.08> (2905)
Rural	3.33 <2.99> (136)	4.01 <3.18> (97)	4.90 <3.78> (122)	4.51 <3.52> (219)	4.06 <3.27> (355)
Others	3.18 2.90 (65)	4.65 2.55 (34)	5.80 3.23 (56)	5.37 3.29 (90)	4.47 3.06 (155)
<u>OCCUPATION OF FATHER</u>					
White Collar	2.96 <3.17> (515)	3.21 <3.16> (136)	3.49 <3.10> (101)	3.37 <3.16> (237)	3.08 <3.17> (752)
Blue Collar	2.70 <3.10> (831)	3.09 <3.11> (403)	3.49 <3.22> (370)	3.28 <3.16> (773)	2.98 <3.13> (1604)
Rural	2.86 <3.07> (1451)	3.24 <3.03> (799)	4.07 <3.29> (683)	3.62 <3.15> (1482)	3.25 <3.11> (2933)
No Response**	3.24 (21)	3.00 (10)	3.31 (13)	3.17 (23)	3.20 (44)
Total	2.83 <3.09> (2818)	3.19 <3.16> (1348)	3.83 <3.25> (1167)	3.49 <3.21> (2515)	3.14 <3.14> (5333)

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets.
Number of cases are given in angle brackets.

* Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile women in unions.

** Not standardized because of small size.

cases too small for useful analysis

SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

4.12: RANK OF WIFE

Not all wives of polygynists enjoy the same social status. Because of this it can be expected that women of different ranks may experience different levels of fertility (Arowolo, 1981, Ware, 1981 b, :95). Sween and Clignet observed a higher fertility rate among the senior wives aged 21-25 years compared to the junior wives of similar ages in the Cameroon census of 1964. Senior wives have a higher social status than junior wives. Usually senior wives are also older than the junior wives of the same husband, although this is not always the case. Seniority is determined by the order of marriage, the first woman to marry the man attaining the position of senior rank irrespective of her age. One of the reasons why senior wives enjoy a higher position is that they had contributed to the wealth of the family through their labours enabling the husband to marry again (Dorjahn, 1958:843).

The difference between the age of the husband and wife tends to be greater for second and third wives. The duration of marriage for junior wives is generally less than for senior wives. This would have the effect of reducing the fertility of junior wives. Ukaegbu (1977) argues that the age difference between spouses is a major factor reducing the fertility of polygynous wives. He studied 16 villages in Eastern Nigeria and observed that the wives of polygynists had lower fertility than the wives of monogamists and the difference in reported mean parity among senior wives was 15% less than that of wives of monogamists while second and third wives showed a 37% and 46% deficit respectively compared to wives of monogamists. However this finding does not take the difference in the ages of the women into account. The current data unfortunately do not enable such comparisons. Both men and women were interviewed in CAFN II, but there was no means of identifying the husband of individual women.

TABLE 4.10: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE POLYGYNOUS WIVES BY NUMBER OF WIVES OF HUSBAND AND RANK OF WIFE

No of Wives of Husband	Senior <u>Wives</u>	Second(+) <u>Wives</u>	All <u>Wives</u>
2 Wives	4.61 <4.09> (163)	3.36 <4.21> (158)	3.99 <4.33> (321)
3(+) Wives	5.96 <5.38> (102)	4.73 <4.67> (168)	5.20 <4.84> (270)
All Wives	5.13 <4.73> (265)	4.07 <4.43> (326)	4.55 <4.54> (591)

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets.
 Number of cases are given in curve brackets.
 Standardized using the age distribution of 591
 fertile wives in polygynous unions who reported
 their rank and age.
 Seven wives of polygynists who did not report on their
 rank have been omitted.
 SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE

Senior wives have higher fertility than wives with a lower rank. The age standardized mean CEB of senior wives was 4.4 but their junior counterparts had a mean CEB of only 4.0. The difference in the fertility level between senior and junior wives is greater in cases where the husband has more than two wives. Part of this effect may be due to the greater difference in the duration of marriage between the wives. Even for women of the same age, the marriage duration of senior wives is usually higher than junior wives.

4.13: IDEAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Most Yoruba desire to have many children (Ware, 1975). In rural areas land is owned communally and parcelled out for use by each family according to its needs. In these circumstances the size of a family does not affect its financial status very strongly. More importantly, the greater the size of the family the more respect the family obtains from the community. Family obligations are not strictly limited to the immediate family and limiting its size does not drastically reduce the overall level of family expense. The Yoruba also do not accept that additional children may make the family poorer (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1976a).

TABLE 4.11: IDEAL FAMILY SIZE BY TYPE OF UNION

<u>Type of Union</u>	<u>Mean Number of Children</u>	<u>Standardized* Mean</u>	<u>No of wives</u>
Unmarried	4.9	4.7	201
Monogamous	5.7	5.7	448
Polygynous			
(two wives)	6.3	6.1	216
(three wives)	6.1	6.1	167
(all)	6.2	6.2	383
Total	5.7	5.7	1032

Notes: *Standardized using the age distribution of all 1045 women who reported their ideal size of children.

SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE.

Wives in polygynous unions get a share of the wealth of the husband in proportion to the size of their family. Since children are also valued greatly by these societies each wife tries to out do the other to get a greater share of the wealth of the husband and more respect from the society (Olusanya, 1971:172).

In the CAFN II Survey all women were asked how many children they considered to be the best size. Only 1032 women reported in exact figures and their mean ideal size was 5.7 for those in monogamous unions, 6.2 for women in polygynous unions, and 4.7 for unmarried women (after standardizing for ages). The mean ideal size for all women was 5.7.

Of the women interviewed, 438 responded that it is up to God to decide the size of their families. These women can be considered as favouring large families. They constituted 25% of the women in monogamous unions, 38% of women in polygynous unions and 17% of the unmarried. This indicates that women in polygynous unions place a higher value on children and desire to have more.

4.14: SEXUAL ABSTINENCE

In many societies prolonged breast feeding, leading to a delay in ovulation, and abstinence from sexual relations after the birth of a child are the major factors that reduce the overall fertility of women. Yoruba females abstain from sexual relations for long periods, most of them for some period of time even after the child is weaned. Post partum sexual abstinence is therefore a major factors in child spacing and reduction of fertility.

Okediji and others (1976:129) reported that post natal sexual abstinence may reduce the overall fertility of the Yoruba women by as much as one fourth of potential fertility in the absence of these and other fertility control factors.

Among the Yoruba the tradition of abstinence is upheld for the benefit of the health of the suckling infant and for recouping the health of the mother in preparation for the new child that may be conceived later. Yoruba women in rural areas and in poorer parts of Ibadan feel that it is necessary for the woman to abstain from sex for six months after the last baby is weaned (Caldwell, 1977:198). Among the Yoruba even if the couple are not ready to abstain, it is often enforced by their mothers. It is common for the mother of either the wife or the husband to stay with the family for a long period after the birth of a child. The mother makes sure that the couple abstain for the prescribed period. It is believed that sexual relations poison the milk of the infant who is being breastfed (Olusanya, 1969; Caldwell, 1977:198). Polygyny makes the practice of abstinence easier for the husband because he has another wife to go to while one is abstaining. The sexual taboo after birth is often mentioned as one of the reasons for the practice of polygyny.

Women in polygynous unions report a longer duration of abstinence as the ideal length. This difference remains almost unaffected after adjustment for the difference in the pattern of age between the two groups of women. Older women report only a slightly higher durations as ideal compared to younger wives.

TABLE 4.12: MEAN IDEAL DURATION OF ABSTINENCE BY TYPE OF UNION

<u>Type of Union</u>	<u>Mean Duration of Abstinence</u>	<u>Standardized* Duration</u>	<u>N</u>
Monogamous	20.3	20.5	3117
Polygynous			
(two wives)	23.8	23.8	1409
(three wives)	25.9	24.9	1214
(all)	24.8	24.3	2623
Total	22.4	22.4	5740

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of 5740 women who reported on the ideal duration of abstinence. (134 women who did not report on the ideal duration of abstinence have been omitted)
SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

Orubuloye (1979:669) observed that women in polygynous unions abstained longer than women in monogamous unions by as much as 5 and 3 months in two Yoruba villages in Western Nigeria. The CAFN I data also supports the fact that polygynist wives abstain longer than other women. Wives of monogamists abstain for a standardized mean of 19 months while wives of polygynists abstain for a standardized mean of of 24 months.

The mean duration of abstinence for the entire group of women was 22 months. Of these only 10% abstained for six months and less and 32% abstained for 7-32 months. Over half the women (58%) abstained for two or more years. Women who were still abstaining after their first birth (numbering 575) were not included in the analysis. Also the instructions to the enumerators were that women who had a child which later died before the period of abstinence was completed were not to report this period. Santow and Bracher (1981:202)

feels that some responses may still be referring to periods that were truncated by the death of an infant. The above two factors may under-estimate the duration of abstinence, but no adjustment for this will be attempted in this study.

Most women abstain for periods which are multiples of six months. In the CAFN I survey 85% of the women (a total of 4043 wives) abstained for such periods. The most frequent period of abstinence was 24 months (32% of the wives) followed by 36 and 18 months. It is believed that this is not a case of heaping due to recall lapse but of actual experience (Santow and Bracher, 1981:203).

TABLE 4.13: MEAN DURATION OF ABSTINENCE BY TYPE OF UNION

<u>Type of Union</u>	<u>Mean Duration of Abstinence</u>	<u>Standardized Duration</u>	<u>N</u>
Monogamous	19.7	19.1	2426
Polygynous			
(two wives)	23.4	23.5	1239
(three wives)	25.6	24.6	1091
(all)	24.5	23.9	2330
Total	22.0	22.0	4756

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of the 4756 women who reported completed abstinence. Two non respondents have been omitted.
SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

A long duration of sexual abstinence after birth has a depressing effect on fertility, but length of abstinence is also very closely related to other factors such as age, education, and religion. In the present data, women who abstained for more than two years had an overall mean CEB of 3.2 while those who abstained for shorter periods had a mean of 3.6. However after adjustment for age the mean CEB for both groups of women becomes 3.4. Women in polygynous unions generally have similar fertility to women in monogamous unions in both groups of abstainers. Among those who abstained for less than two years, wives of polygynists have a mean CEB of 3.5 while the wives of monogamists have a mean CEB of only 3.4. Among those who abstained longer both groups have a mean of 3.4. To give the correct picture, other factors like education, religion, and occupation should be controlled. Sembajwe(1977) performed a multivariate analysis on the CAFN I data and observed that women aged 38 years and over, who had at least two children and who abstain for more than 22 months had a mean CEB of 4.9 compared to 5.2 for those who abstained for shorter periods.

Education is another factor that may be related to the period of abstinence. The more educated wives abstain for shorter durations than the less educated. Santow and Bracher (1981:205) observed that of the women in the CAFN I survey 70% of those aged 15-29 years old and who were illiterate abstained for at least 18 months but only 44% of the women with primary education and 25% of those with some secondary education abstained for such a period. They observed the same relationship among women in the other age categories.

After standardizing for age, women in polygynous unions who had some secondary education had 2.9 mean CEB for those who abstained for less than two

years, compared to 3.5 for those who abstained for more. For women who had only primary education it was 3.7 and 3.5 respectively, and for those who were illiterate (including Koranic education only) it was 3.5 and 3.4 respectively. Illiterate women in polygynous unions, after standardizing for age, had a slightly higher fertility than illiterate women in monogamous unions, and the mean CEB for those who abstained for less than two years, was 3.5 and 3.3, respectively and for those who abstain for two years and more it was 3.4 and 3.3 respectively. Among the women who had primary education and abstained for less than two years, both groups had the same mean CEB of 3.6, but among those who abstained longer the wives of polygynists had only 3.5 mean CEB while the wives of monogamists had a mean CEB of 3.7. For women in monogamous unions, after standardizing for age, the difference in fertility level became similar for both abstinence groups.

4.15 USE OF CONTRACEPTIVES

The practice of contraception among the women interviewed was not very great. Many of the users were younger women. One of the reasons for this was that younger women had more access to education, and contraceptives became more popular when these women reached maturity (Santow and Bracher, 1981:202). The effect of the use of contraception on the fertility of women varies among the subgroups. Caldwell (1977:208) observed that,

Among the women over 30 years of age, past and current contraceptors were recorded as being one fifth and one quarter respectively more fertile than those who had never practiced any method of fertility control except abstinence [CAFNI I]. At younger ages the position was reversed so that in the 20-24 age group past and current contraceptors claimed parities six and 30 percent respectively below those who only abstained. This looks like a simple case of a

society in which the excessively fertile were at first also the most highly motivated to try to prevent their families from increasing, while the younger generation were learning to practice contraception to postpone pregnancy. The truth is probably far more complex than this and depends on who uses contraception and for what purpose.

Many of the women who use contraception do so for reasons other than planning to limit family size (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1976b:363; Ware, 1975:283). Not many women in the sample use contraception. Only 16% of the women ever used any method of contraception (pills, condoms, withdrawal, IUD, etc.) other than abstinence. The proportion of women who used contraception among the wives of monogamists was 21%, while among the wives of polygynists it was 10%.

The women who were using contraceptives had more children than women who did not. These women also abstained for shorter durations than the rest (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1977:208). Since the women who used contraceptives were few, and because of many other inter-related factors, no further analysis comparing the effect of contraceptive use on the fertility of women in different types of marital union will be carried out. The Multiple Classification Analysis shows the effects of these factors on the fertility of the two groups of women.

4.16: MIGRATION STATUS

Women who were born in different places experienced different levels of fertility. This may be related to their different age structure, educational level and different pattern of religion.

TABLE 4.14: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE POLYGYNOUS WIVES BY PLACE OF BIRTH

<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Monogamous Unions</u>	<u>polygynous [2 Wives]</u>	<u>Polygynous [3 or more Wives]</u>	<u>All Polygynous Unions</u>	<u>All Unions</u>
Ibadan	2.63 <2.95> (1584)	3.10 <3.07> (872)	3.64 <3.19> (817)	3.36 <3.14> (1689)	3.01 <3.01> (3273)
Out side Ibadan	3.09 <3.25> (1234)	3.36 <3.25> (475)	4.27 <3.40> (350)	3.75 <3.34> (825)	3.35 <3.28> (2059)
Total	2.83 <3.09> (2818)	3.19 <3.16> (1347)	3.83 <3.25> (1167)	3.49 <3.21> (2514)	3.14 <3.14> (5332)

Notes: Standardized values are given in angle brackets
Number of cases are given in angle brackets
Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile wives.
One woman who did not report on her place of birth was omitted
SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

On average the women who were born in Ibadan experience lower fertility than the migrants. One of the reasons may be that there are more Muslims among the non-migrants, and Muslims are observed to have lower fertility than non-Muslims. Some of the reasons for the lower fertility of Muslims also mentioned by Sembajwe(1977:201-202) include the lower health level of the Muslims which brings about a high level of sub-fertility and the longer duration of abstinence period after birth practiced by Muslims.

4.17: PART OF IBADAN

Women who reside in Old Ibadan show different fertility levels compared to the fertility level of women in the Suburbs. Women in Old Ibadan tend to be less educated, more traditionally inclined and more prone to observe the sexual taboo after birth with a mean period of abstinence of 24.6 months (wives of monogamists abstain for 20.8 months and wives of polygynists abstain for 24.6 months). Wives in the Suburbs abstain for a mean period of 19.6 months (wives of monogamists abstain for 16.9 months and wives of polygynists abstain for 23.9 months). The educational levels of the women in Old Ibadan is also lower than the educational level of the women in the Suburbs.

TABLE 4.15: MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES
BY PART OF IBADAN

<u>Place of Residence</u>	Old Ibadan		Suburbs		Total
	Mean <u>CEB</u>	Standar <u>dized*</u>	Mean <u>CEB</u>	Standar <u>dized*</u>	Standar <u>dized*</u>
Monogamous	2.72	3.03	3.12	3.22	3.09
	(2028)		(790)		(2818)
Polygynous					
(Two wives)	3.14	3.10	3.38	3.25	3.16
	(1064)		(284)		(1438)
(Three wives)	3.80	3.23	3.95	3.36	3.25
	(963)		(204)		(1167)
(All)	3.46	3.19	3.62	3.30	3.21
	(2027)		(488)		(2515)
Total	3.09	3.11	3.31	3.25	3.14
	(4055)		(1278)		(5333)

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile women in unions.
Number of cases are shown in brackets.
SOURCE: CAFN I DATA TAPE

The standardized mean CEB of the women in the Inner parts is 3.1 which is

slightly smaller than the standardized mean CEB of 3.4 of the New parts. The high proportion of Muslims in the Inner parts of the city has the effect of reducing the fertility level in those parts because Muslims have lower fertility compared to others.

4.18: PLACE OF RESIDENCE

TABLE 4.16: MEAN CHILDREN EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES BY TYPE OF UNION AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

<u>Type of Union</u>	Urban		Rural		Total
	Mean CEB	Standar dized*	Mean CEB	Standar dized*	Standar dized*
Monogamous	3.50	3.70	3.47	3.98	3.93
	(316)		(232)		(548)
Polygynous					
(Two wives)	4.05	3.92	4.01	3.98	3.97
	(145)		(181)		(326)
(Three wives)	5.15	4.32	5.24	4.58	4.46
	(132)		(140)		(272)
(All)	4.57	4.02	4.54	4.26	4.15
	(277)		(321)		(598)
Total	4.00	3.94	4.10	4.15	4.04
	(593)		(553)		(1146)

Notes: * Standardized using the age distribution of all fertile women in unions in CAFN II
Number of cases are shown in brackets.

SOURCE: CAFN II DATA TAPE

As was indicated in previous sections, CAFN II covered areas of both urban and rural character. It can be assumed that the women in different types of unions may be responding towards fertility differently in the two areas. The circumstances in which a man marries polygynously and the characteristics of couples who marry into polygynous unions may also be different in urban and rural areas (see for example, Clignet and Sween, 1971).

Rural areas show a slightly higher fertility than urban areas. The standardized mean CEB for urban residents was 4.0 while for rural people it was 4.2. Among urban people those in monogamous unions had a standardized mean CEB of only 3.7 compared to 4.0 of those in polygynous unions. Similarly of those in rural areas the wives of monogamists have a standardized mean CEB of only 4.0 compared to 4.3 of the wives of polygynists.

4.19: MULTIPLE CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS OF FERTILITY DIFFERENTIALS

This Section makes use of the Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) Technique developed by Andrews et al. (1973). The method is similar to multiple regression, and it also enables the use of categories. It can also be used when relationships are non-linear. MCA makes the assumption that the effects of each variable are additive. It also assumes that there is no strong correlation between the variables. A small correlation does not affect the results of the analysis as long as the sample size is not small since the technique was developed to deal with variables that have small correlations.

But high correlations would make the analysis less meaningful. Particularly in cases where one category of a variable are all included in another category of another variable, only one of the variables should be used during the analysis. For example in this analysis only religion and not marriage ceremony will be used because of their high correlation. For example all women who are married through the Christian ceremony are all Christians, and those who marry through the Muslim ceremony are all Muslims.

The dependent variable used is mean number of children ever born to fertile women. MCA is used to obtain deviations from the grand mean of each variable and the unadjusted and adjusted effects of the independent variables on the mean CEB. Type of union of a woman is considered as one of the independent variables, and other variables that may affect the differentials in fertility between wives of monogamists and wives of polygynists are also considered. The variables considered were type of union, own occupation, highest educational level, and religion. The covariates were occupation of father, occupation of spouse, place of birth, length of abstinence, practice of contraception, and age. The size of the sample reduces to 4753 because responses to the question on length of abstinence period were obtained only from women who had at least one birth and had ceased abstaining after that birth.

TABLE 4.17: MULTIPLE CLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS OF MEAN CHILDREN
EVER BORN TO FERTILE WIVES

VARIABLES/ CATEGORIES	N	GROSS EFFECTS	ETA	NET EFFECTS	BETA
NUMBER OF WIVES OF HUSBAND					
Monogamous	2425	-.27		-.07	
Polygynous	2328	.28		.07	
			.14		.04
OWN OCCUPATION					
White Collar	365	-.22		-.29	
Blue Collar	3565	.12		.05	
House Work	809	-.42		-.09	
Others	14	-.26		-.42	
			.11		.05
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT					
Illiterate	2627	.20		.03	
Primary	1314	-.15		.10	
Post Primary	812	-.40		-.27	
			.14		.06
RELIGION					
Moslem	2632	-.06		-.10	
Catholic	315	-.13		.06	
Protestant-Major	1111	.12		.13	
Protestant- New Sects	130	.09		.10	
Protestant - African	520	.08		.17	
Traditional African	27	.60		.16	
Other Religion	18	.43		-.23	
			.05		.06

GRAND MEAN = 3.40

MULTIPLE R SQUARED .386

The MCA Table also produces the 'Gross Effects' of each variable. These are deviations of the mean CEB of the respondents in each category of any variable from the total mean number of children ever born of all women in the sample. The wives of polygynists and the wives of monogamists show different levels of deviation from the total mean CEB. The 'Net Effects' indicate the deviations from the total mean CEB, after taking all the other variables into account. The net deviations from the total mean CEB of wives in polygynous unions and wives in monogamous unions are very close. This indicates that the difference in the level of fertility of wives of polygynists and wives of monogamists can be explained mostly by the other variables in the analysis.

The R squared value indicates that only 39% of the variation in the level of fertility is explained by the above variables. The square of the eta values indicate the proportion of variance explained by a given variable. It can be observed that in gross terms, fertility is more affected by age, occupation of spouse and length of abstinence, than by type of marital union. But type of union has a stronger effect on fertility than the other factors in the Table. The beta values indicate the effects of a variable on mean CEB taking the effects of all other factors into consideration. The beta values of type of union show that the number of wives of a husband does not have a strong effect on mean CEB when all the independent variables are taken into account.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Yoruba are one of the most highly polygynous societies in Africa and the practice of polygyny is widely accepted by a large portion of the society. Many of the traditional ideas and customs influence a man to take many wives. This tradition still persists among most of the population, and many of the polygynists desire to take additional wives. One of the reasons for this is the high demand in the society for having more children. The high mortality rate of children in the population also encourages men to marry polygynously.

Many of the wives of polygynists also have a favourable attitude towards the practice of polygyny, as was also observed by Ware (1979). The marriage of women in polygynous unions allows them to have more freedom to trade or to pursue other activities. The CAFN I data indicates that a high proportion of the wives of polygynists are involved in economic activity compared to the wives of monogamist. As was also observed by Brown (1981:323), this is due to the high social freedom enjoyed by wives of polygynists.

Because of its large sample size and because the survey was conducted under very heavy supervision, CAFN I is used to investigate the characteristics of women in the two types of unions. The analysis shows that women in the two types of unions have slightly different characteristics and behavior. Religion has a strong influence on whether a woman marries

polygynously or not. Muslims have the highest proportion of women married polygynously, but many Protestants and Catholics are in such unions even though most Christian denominations do not approve of polygynous marriages. Education also has a strong influence on the type of union a woman may enter. The higher the educational level of a woman of a particular age, the lower her chance of marrying into a polygynous union. Occupation of the father also influences whether a woman marries either into a polygynous union or a monogamous union. The higher the occupational level of the father the less the chance of the daughter getting married to a polygynist.

The main objective of the sub-thesis was to investigate differentials in fertility levels between women in monogamous unions and women in polygynous unions using mean CEB as the measure of fertility, as has been done in most other studies. The analysis of fertility differentials by type of union is complicated because of other factors such as age, education, occupation, social background and religion which also influence the fertility level of a woman (Olusanya, 1971, Arowolo, 1981).

Many factors are often mentioned as lowering the fertility level of women in polygynous unions: (A) Longer duration of abstinence of wives of polygynists (see for example, Orubuloye, 1979:669). (B) Higher proportion of childless and infertile women in polygynous unions. (C) Higher marital mobility of wives of polygynists. (D) Lower frequency of sexual intercourse in polygynous unions (see for example, Muhsam, 1956). (E) Age difference between the spouses in polygynous unions (see for example, Ukaegbu, 1977:397).

Some other factors are often observed to encourage the fertility level of wives of polygynists. (A) A more traditional attitude of the wives of

polygynists (see for example, Ware, 1971:169). (B) Higher ages and longer duration of marriage of wives of polygynists.

The CAFN I data shows that wives of polygynists abstain for a longer period after the birth of a child compared to the wives of monogamists. However, contrary to the expectation, the data set indicates that the proportion of women who were childless was higher among the wives of monogamists compared to the wives of polygynists. This may have been caused by the age difference between the wives in the two types of unions. The wives of monogamists included many women who had recently married and did not have the opportunity to have any children. This was indicated by the fact that about half of the childless women were already pregnant or thought they were probably pregnant. Caldwell and Caldwell (1983:23) also found that the proportion of women who were infertile or subfertile in the CAFN I data set was not related to the type of union of the women.

Both CAFN I and CAFN II show that the number of wives of a polygynist does not usually rise to such a level that the wives may experience a lower fertility because of the reduction in the frequency of sexual intercourse. The hypothesis that the fertility level of women in polygynous unions is lowered by the age difference between the couple could not be tested using either data set. Even though both men and women were interviewed in the CAFN II survey, it was not possible to identify the husband of each woman. The CAFN II data indicated that a higher proportion of wives of polygynists were married more than once. When standardized for age differences, women who were married more than once show a lower fertility level compared to those who were married only once.

The CAFN I data set indicated that wives of polygynists were more traditional minded than the wives of monogamists. Women in polygynous unions have a lower educational level, and consider a higher number of children as ideal for a family and also feel that a woman should abstain for a longer time after the birth of a child compared to the wives of monogamists. Since the more traditional women also place higher values on children, they may endeavour to have as many children as they could.

Information on age at first marriage of women was collected only during the CAFN II survey, and one third of the women in that survey were unable to report their exact age at the time of their first marriage. Because of this only the age of women, which is very closely related to duration of marriage was used during the analysis. The CAFN I survey shows that wives of polygynists have higher ages compared to wives of monogamists. Because of this the reported mean CEB of the wives of polygynists was higher than the reported mean CEB of the wives of monogamists. When the data is standardized for the difference in age, the fertility level of the women in the two types of unions was much closer to each other. When the other factors like religion, education, abstinence, and occupation were also taken into account, it was observed that the two groups of women had similar levels of fertility. This finding is contrary to most findings of the investigation of fertility and type of union elsewhere in Africa (Dorjahn, 1959; Page, 1975; Ryna and Bouquet, 1975). But it is similar to the findings of some studies which indicate similar relationship between fertility and type of union (Pool, 1968; Podlowski, 1975). A high proportion of the Yoruba women are in a polygynous union and most of the ones in a monogamous unions are potential wives of polygynists. Because of this and particularly because most woman try

to have as many children as they can, the women in the two types of unions experience similar levels of fertility.

The present study makes use of information collected on the current type of union of a woman and her completed fertility behavior. All the births of a woman in any type of union were considered to have all occurred in that type of union. The biggest drawback of the analysis is that some of the births may have occurred in a different type of union. For a more detailed analysis it is necessary to have a complete fertility history of the women together with the reasons for the choice of the type of union, the number of wives of the husband, rank of the wife, and other demographic and socio-economic variables. Such a complete survey and analysis can help to find out other remaining relationships between fertility and type of union.

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