

**Can women's perceptions of their own autonomy enable them to  
generate changes in their reproductive behavior?  
Evidences from gender perspectives**

**By  
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**Abstract:**

*The dimensions of women's autonomy in terms of outside mobility, access to economic resources and involvement in household decisions and their association with fertility and contraceptive behavior were investigated in a probability sample of 418 young married couples in Ratlam district of Madhya Pradesh, India. Findings reveal that all the three dimensions of women's autonomy are strongly encouraged by both the spouses in their opinion and experience. Multivariate regression suggests that results are not constantly significant from all the three dimensions but striking in several ways. The association of all three dimensions is positive with socio-economic and demographic factors, linked to low fertility and contraceptive use after controlling the covariates. Further, opinions are higher than experience and wives are more than their husbands in favor of women's autonomy. We conclude that involving husbands and encouraging couples' joint decision-making in reproductive behavior may provide an important strategy in achieving women's autonomy.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Autonomy defines as the capacity for a woman to achieve well being and a role in decision-making. The 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) focused attention on the role of women's empowerment in influencing reproductive behavior. However, there is no complete agreement on how this concept should be defined and measured (Mason, 1997; Mason and Smith, 2000). Because women's authority can be measured in different ways as well as reproductive attitudes or practices, results of empirical studies are different depending on the indicators used. In 1995 Jejeebhoy compiled the empirical evidence to confirm the notion that women's behavior changes are mediated by their acquisition of "autonomy." While women's autonomy is conditioned largely by gender stratification and patriarchal authority in the society in which they live, education can also increase a woman's autonomy.

Throughout the world, women constitute the poor, underemployed and socially and economically disadvantaged. Although there is recognition that virtually no society provides women with equal status with men. Fertility and contraceptive use in developing countries are associated with various markers of socioeconomic status, most prominent of which is women's autonomy. The ability of women to make decisions that affect the circumstances of their own lives is an essential aspect of empowerment. Women have a considerably lower social status and autonomy than men (Jejeebhoy SJ, 1995; Dyson T and Moore M, 1983), and their low status and autonomy seems to be associated with lower fertility control (Jejeebhoy SJ, 1995; Dyson T and Moore M, 1983, Mason KO, 1987).

There is some disagreement about what accounts for the suppression of opportunity for women. The disagreement is present when policymakers and planners discuss how to best improve women status. Education, work participation and exposure to media are some of the means by which women gain status and autonomy, both important aspects of their empowerment. Evidence of the limited control that Indian women exercise over their own lives increasingly documented. Recent studies emphasize their limited control over material and other resources, their restricted access to knowledge and information, their constrained authority to make independent decisions, their enforced lack of physical mobility and their incapability to forge equitable power relationship within families (Basu 1992; Visaria 1996; Jejeebhoy 2000).

Few studies, moreover, have compared the perspectives of women and their husbands on women's roles and the extent to which they have and should have a voice in their own lives. Rather, studies that have explored spousal agreement have focused on reproductive attitudes and preferences (Mason and Taj 1987; Bankole 1995; Becker 1996; Bankole and Singh 1998; and Mason and Smith 2000). Findings from most of these studies indicate that reproductive health interventions aimed at both partners in a couple may be more effective than the same interventions focusing on only one partner. Some of the few studies conducted in India have explored men's perceptions of women's status. Among these few, largely qualitative studies conclude that men generally corroborate women's reports of their lack of status and that they justify existing power imbalances within the home. One such study conducted in north India highlights the extent to which men justify

the central role they play in life choices of women. “It is husband of elder male member of the family who decides where or to which clinic should women to be taken. Women have no freedom in such matters but men have all the freedom and power to decide” (Khan et al. 1998).

Status of women is likely to have a significant impact on the demographic and health seeking behavior of couples by altering women’s relative control over fertility and contraceptives use and by influencing their attitudes (for example, attitudes towards the sex composition of children) and abilities (for example, the ability to obtain health services for themselves and their children) (Sen and Batliwala, 1997).

Empowerment of women is the complex and multi-dimensional nature of ability to influence the educational attainment, economic pursuits, gender bias in childcare, pattern of marriage, inheritance and type of residential units (patrilineal and patrilocal) that are favorable to male, all of which reflect the differential values accorded to male versus female lives and therefore provide vital clues in understanding the position of empowerment of women in society. A woman who feels that she does not have much control over basic aspects of her life may be less likely to feel she can make and carry out decisions about her fertility (Visariya L, 1993; Abadian S, 1996). She may also feel the need to choose methods that are less obvious or that do not depend on her husband’s cooperation. Education and employment are the important factors links with directly or indirectly to enhance the status of women in the household and decreased unmet need for family planning significantly with educational level and paid employment (Al ryami A et al., 2004).

There have been increasing evidences that women’s autonomy and empowerment promotes contraceptive use and fertility decline (Jejeebhoy, 2002; Malhotra et. al., 1995). These studies revealed that in India, women with greater autonomy have if not more, equal say as far as the fertility preferences and contraception uses are concerned. In fact, sometimes they are found to dominate the decision regarding family planning use. The men’s dominance of the preferences over the wife’s also tends to weaken if the women have greater autonomy and among couples that have frequent communication (Mason and Smith, 2000).

A women’s control over her own body can only come through greater gender equality, increase in women’s autonomy and improvement in the roles and position in the household and community (Das et. al., 2002). One of the study conducted in Pakistan reveal that no direct relationship between a women’s unaccompanied mobility and her use of either contraception or reproductive health is found (Mumtaz Z and Salway S, 2005).

In Zimbabwe, women’s decision-making autonomy was not associated with current modern contraceptive use. Women who had no decision-making autonomy had 0.26 more children than women who had some autonomy. These autonomy measures provide additional independent explanatory power of fertility related behavior net of traditional measures of women’s status such as education and labor force participation (Hindin MJ, 2000).

A study conducted on women's autonomy and contraceptive use in Ethiopia, found that fertility and husband involvement variables were found to be most important determinants for couple's contraception use, once adjusted for all the independent variables. Except literacy, women's autonomy variables were not found to have a significant effect on couple's contraceptive use (Haile A and Enqueselassie F, 2006).

Findings from the effect of status on women autonomy in Bolivia, Peru and Nicaragua reveal that autonomy is multidimensional. The study shows that each of the specific dimensions has some influence on autonomy with education and socio-economic status being the most important. Findings conclude that policies designed to change educational, economic, and familial characteristics of women will only have a modest impact on women's overall sense of autonomy (Heaton TB, et al., 2005).

Rastogi S and Nguyen K (2005) analyzed Egypt Demographic Health Survey data and found that certain dimensions of female's autonomy are indeed important for contraception use in the Egyptian context, while there is no clear relationship for other dimensions. Decision-making index is the most important dimension of female autonomy in predicting a woman's use of modern contraception while mobility and gender role indices are respectively the second and third most important dimensions.

Using matched couple data from Nepal Demographic and Health Survey, describe that when spouse agree the wife is autonomous, the association between her autonomy and reproductive behavior is found to be substantially stronger than when spouses disagree about her autonomy. The findings also suggests that the association between women's autonomy and reproductive behavior may be under estimated when only women's reports are considered (Allendorf K, 2007).

Main objective in present study is to investigate the impact of women's autonomy on reproductive behavior. Of the several dimensions of women's autonomy described in the literature but this study explores the three dimensions by defining different measure of women's autonomy:

- Movement autonomy
- Access to economic resources (economic autonomy) and
- Decision-making autonomy

In order to assess movement autonomy, questions on who is perceived by the respondents were, if women were usually allowed to go five different places – the market, friends/relatives' home, parents' home, health centre and community/*anganwadi* centre – alone, only with someone, or not at all. To assess the movement autonomy, an index was created separately for opinion and experience on the basis of response given unescorted visit to different places. The responses were scored 1 point for unescorted for each of five places in the index.

Similarly wives' access to economic resources is measured by five variables: whether a woman set aside money for her as she wish, free to purchase items for daily use, free to buy gift for friends/relatives, free to buy cloth for self and free to purchase small jewelry items for self. An index to access economic resources sums responses to these five

questions and ranges from zero to five. Separate indices were computed for opinion and experience in similar fashion as reported by both husbands and wives.

Decision autonomy was estimated from the questions on economic decision making authority. Economic decision-making authority is measured in terms of women's participation in four economic decisions: purchase of major jewelry items, purchase of major household goods, schooling of children and health care for self. For computing the index, the responses were scored as follows: 2 points for decisions made by the wife or jointly with other members; 1 point for involvement of wife in decisions-making activities and 0 for others. The index sums responses to these four questions and ranges from zero to eight.

Further, to understand men's perspectives on women's autonomy through different dimensions, like women's mobility, women access to resources, and women's participation in household decision making, husbands were asked about their opinion and attitudes regarding a wife's participation in a same series of questions related to women's autonomy.

For the all above mentioned indices, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient used to assess whether individual questions in the scale measured the same one underlying factor (the higher coefficient, the more internally consistent is the scale; values larger than 0.6 are considered acceptable). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.78, indicating a good internal consistency.

## **2. Data and Methods**

With the commitment to reproductive health, Government of India (GoI) has launched the Reproductive and Child Health Programme in 1997. As the programme is decentralized at district level, performance needs to be assessed at the district level. In the light of this, District Level Household Survey was undertaken in the country as whole during 2002-04.

The present study was carried out in the identified DLHS-RCH sample household and taken consent for further interview within a week. The total 418 couples were covered successfully from 25 rural and 12 urban Primary Sample Units (PSUs) in the study area of Ratlam District, Madhya Pradesh, India. Under this study wives age between 15 to 44 years and their husbands were the respondents where a series of questions on reproductive behavior has been asked to both the spouses, providing a unique opportunity to study reproductive behavior of the couples. It may be mentioned that during DLHS-RCH survey the questions on spouse's employment, perspectives of spouses, discussion of family planning etc. which are important in explaining couples reproductive behavior, have not been asked. Therefore, the present study collected a complete basket of information to fulfill the study of my objectives.

In DLHS-RCH household survey, a uniform sampling design was adopted in all the districts of India. The target sample size for each district was fixed at 1000 completed households interview from 40 selected Primary Sampling Units using PPS sampling procedure. In order to take care of non-response due to various reasons, over sampling of 10 percent was done.

Univariate and bivariate analysis are conducted with all variables. To address the research question, a statistical model is estimated using logistic regression. All independent variables significant in the bivariate models are included in the multivariate model. Variables that are not significant are eliminated. Results from both full and reduced models are presented. Data are analyzed using STATA 8.0 statistical software.

## **Results**

### **3.1. Levels of women's autonomy**

As mentioned above, four types of women's autonomy assessed in present study viz; women's mobility (the freedom to visit different places unescorted), access to economic resources, household decision making authority and realized autonomy.

#### **3.1.1. Movement autonomy**

Freedom of movement outside the home is an important aspect of women's autonomy and empowerment. This is particularly true in a largely patriarchal society in India with a long tradition of '*pardah-pratha*' in several states. Freedom of movement outside the home for a woman gives an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and exposure towards world's phenomenon.

In present study mobility related questions asked from both husband and wife. The questions were if a woman allows to go five different places – the market, home of a relative or friend, home of parents, health centre, and community/*anganwadi* centre. Each of the places asked separately for within locality and outside locality with response form of opinion and experience of both the spouses. The present distribution of spouses by their type of access to these places is shown in Table 2.1. While comparing the responses of both the spouses, wives are more in favor of woman's unescorted visit in different specific places compared to their husbands' opinion, which is more to visit market rather than other places. Further, opinion regarding woman's unaccompanied visit is more in within locality as compared to outside locality. In this regards, a similar trend can be seen with husbands' opinion. As expected, proportion of opinion responses is always greater than reported experience of wives regarding unaccompanied outside visit as, nearly six out of ten wives believe that a woman should visit market alone within locality but in actual four out of ten have visited alone and only one-fourth of wives visited market in outside the locality while one-third have given their opinion.

Reporting responses of husbands are also in almost similar proportion of their wives in terms of visit to market. To visit friends or relatives' home, 46 percent of wives think that a woman should allowed to go alone within the locality compared to one-fourth in outside locality with more or less same thinking of their husbands. In terms of experience responses, only 36 percent visited friends or relatives' house alone within locality and 21 percent in outside locality. Almost nine and eight out of ten wives in within and outside locality respectively, believe that a woman should visit to health centre. For the health care aspect, husbands are slightly more in favor of women to visit health centre compared to their wives in terms of within as well as outside locality. Nearly half of wives believe that a woman should visit to community or *anganwadi* centre alone within locality as compared to 29 percent in outside locality followed by their husbands. Nearly one-third

of couples believe that a woman should not allow visiting community or *anganwadi* centre in outside locality and that has also been reflected in their reporting experience. Overall, one out of ten couples believe that a woman should not be allowed to visit at all in such specific places in within locality but at the same time two out of ten couples revealed same opinion for outside the locality.

<b>Table 2.1:</b> percent of wives and husbands who perceive whether women are permitted to go unescorted or escorted to specific places							
<b>Mobility indicators</b>		<b>Opinion</b>			<b>Experience</b>		
Should a woman visit to:		Alone	Some one else	Not at all	Alone	Some one else	No experience
<b><i>Wife</i></b>							
Market	Within locality	57.4	31.1	11.5	41.1	34.2	24.6
	Outside locality	33.7	46.4	19.9	26.6	39.7	33.7
Friends/ relatives	Within locality	46.2	41.4	12.4	36.4	43.5	20.1
	Outside locality	24.9	55.7	19.4	20.8	56.7	22.5
Parents	Within locality	46.4	46.4	7.2	5.5	3.8	90.7*
	Outside locality	26.3	70.3	3.3	52.2	36.8	11.0
Health centre	Within locality	41.9	44.5	13.6	27.8	46.9	25.4
	Outside locality	27.5	51.9	20.6	16.7	51.7	31.6
Community/ <i>Anganwadi</i> centre	Within locality	46.9	35.9	17.2	42.3	37.1	20.6
	Outside locality	29.2	40.2	30.6	24.2	40.2	35.6
<b><i>Husband</i></b>							
Market	Within locality	43.8	45.5	10.8	39.2	42.1	18.7
	Outside locality	28.9	48.3	22.7	25.4	45.2	29.4
Friends/ relatives	Within locality	44.0	44.0	12.0	35.2	48.3	16.5
	Outside locality	26.6	56.5	17.0	21.1	56.0	23.0
Parents	Within locality	52.2	44.5	3.3	7.7	3.3	89.0*
	Outside locality	27.8	65.8	6.5	25.4	67.7	6.9
Health centre	Within locality	40.9	46.4	12.7	31.6	42.8	25.6
	Outside locality	21.3	61.2	17.5	16.3	51.0	32.8
Community/ <i>Anganwadi</i> centre	Within locality	43.1	41.6	15.3	35.4	45.0	19.6
	Outside locality	22.7	44.5	32.8	17.7	47.8	34.4
<i>*No parents in within locality</i>							

<b>Table 2.2:</b> Percent of wives and husbands who agree and disagree whether women are permitted to go unescorted to specific places according to their opinion and experience						
<b>A woman can visit unescorted to specific places</b>	<b>Agreement</b>			<b>Disagreement</b>		<b>Kappa value</b>
	Total	Both say NO	Both say YES	Only wife say YES	Only husband say YES	
	<b>Opinion</b>					
Market	80.6	39.7	40.9	16.5	2.9	0.62***
Friends/relatives' home	81.1	43.5	37.6	8.6	10.3	0.62***
Parents' home	88.5	45.0	43.5	2.9	8.6	0.77***
Health centre	72.7	43.3	29.4	15.8	11.5	0.45***
Community/ anganwadi centre	68.4	39.2	29.2	17.7	13.9	0.36***
	<b>Experience</b>					
Market	85.2	51.9	33.3	8.1	6.7	0.69***
Friends/relatives' home	86.4	57.4	28.9	7.4	6.2	0.70***
Parents' home	48.6	29.9	18.7	38.8	12.7	0.03
Health centre	79.9	60.0	19.9	8.4	11.7	0.52***
Community/ anganwadi centre	68.7	45.5	23.2	19.1	12.2	0.32***
Level of agreement: 0.00 (Poor), 0.01-0.20 (Slight), 0.21-0.40 (Fair), 0.41-0.60 (Moderate), 0.61-0.80 (Substantial), 0.81-1.00 (Almost perfect). ***: Significant at $p < 0.01$ ; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$ ; *: Significant at $p < 0.10$						

Table 2.2 shows the comparison of responses of both the spouses on individual items, persist more light on the extent of agreement and disagreement in the pattern of responses. A larger proportion of wives and their husbands agree that women have greater freedom to visit such relatively unthreatening places such as market, home of a relative or friend, home of parents, health centre, and community/*anganwadi* centre within locality and outside the locality. The level of agreement is assessed by kappa statistics, is highly significant for all the specific places except parents' home in terms of their experience. Interesting, agreement is more in terms of experience than their reported opinion about woman's unescorted mobility to specific places. Concordance regarding women should visit unescorted public places such as market, health centre, and community or *anganwadi* centre is reported more by wives both in terms of their opinion as well as experience compared their husbands.



### 3.1.2 Index of mobility and association with socio-economic and demographic characteristics

Table 2.1.1 presents a mobility index which was created that ranges from zero if the woman must be escorted to all of these specific places, to five if she visit every one of them unescorted. Findings suggest that some agreement exists between wives and their husbands with regard to mobility. Of the five places included in the index, wives report that they visited, on average, not more than 2.1 places unescorted which is 18 percent less as they believe (2.4 places). Husband's rating for unescorted women's movement is lower than their wives' report. Husbands says their wives use to visit alone on average 1.7 out of five specific places compared to their opinion (2.3 places), which is 32 percent fewer from their wives experience. As expected, regarding the location considered, both the spouses report in terms of opinion as well as experience considerably more freedom of women's unescorted mobility in within locality than outside locality.

<b>Table 2.1.1: Index of mobility: wives' and husband' ratings of women's overall ability to move about unescorted in public</b>		
<b>Index</b>	<b>Wives' rating</b>	<b>Husbands' rating</b>
<b><i>Opinion</i></b>		
Within locality	2.39	2.24
Outside locality	1.42	1.27
Total	2.42	2.28
<b><i>Experience</i></b>		
Within locality	1.53	1.49
Outside locality	1.40	1.06
Total	2.06	1.73

Many studies reveal that education, work participation and exposure to media are some of the means by which women gain status and autonomy, both important aspects of their empowerment. Table 2.1.2 shows the association of women's unescorted mobility index with selected background characteristics. Women residing in households located in urban areas, economically developed will be more autonomous than women residing in less developed, rural areas. On average three out of five specific places both the spouses in urban areas are in favor of women's unescorted mobility as compared to rural areas, where couples reported only two places out of five in their opinion. In terms of experience, wives in urban areas report 2.4 places unescorted visit compared to 1.9 places in rural areas. Reporting experience of wives are 22 and 12 percent more than their husbands in both urban and rural areas, respectively. Usually women mobility is slightly more among socially disadvantage group like scheduled castes/tribes than others (NFHS-3, 2005-06), this may be their search of livelihood. Findings of caste/tribes regarding women's mobility show some association in similar trend as reported by both the spouses. In terms of couple's opinion, marital duration is positively associated (3 places out of 5) with women's unescorted mobility among couples who have been married more

than ten years than newly married couple (2 places out of 5). Further, wives who have been married more than ten years have visited alone more in such places compared to wives married below five years (mean number of places 2.5 and 2.3 respectively).

Improving women's education has been seen one way to increase their status and autonomy (Jejeebhoy SJ, 1995; Mason KO, 1986), and it has been proposed that autonomy acts as a mediator of the link between education and reproductive behavior (Cleland J, Kamal N and Sloggett A, 1996; Sabana S and Martin B, 2005). Women who are more educated, who have some financial independence and who live in household with kinship structures promote gender equality are likely to be the ones who are also more autonomous (Mason KO, 1987; Dyson and More, 1983). Among the educated couples, wives believe more in women's unescorted outside mobility (3 out of 5 places) than un-educated couples (2 out of 5 places) with same opinion of their husbands in this regards. Comparing the opinion responses with experience between spouses, educated couples are more precise in reporting than un-educated couples.

Occupation, exposure to mass media, and standard of living play an imperative role in women mobility. As discussed, couples where one of the spouse is in professional jobs, are more (3 out of 5 places) in favor of unescorted women's mobility compared to couples working in agricultural sectors. Also similar trend is reported by who have experience unescorted women's mobility (mean number of 2.4 places). Couples exposed to any media, believe more (3.1 places out of 5) compared to couples who are not exposed to media at all (1.7 places). Furthermore, couples exposed to any media, wives use to visit alone in more number of places compared to other couples with similar trend as reported by their husbands. Unescorted mobility is positively associated with standard of living. Wives from higher standard of living are more in favor of unescorted mobility (average 3 places) compared to with lower standard wives (average 2 places). Such reporting gap in opinion is more among husbands.

In addition, Wives, who interviewed first, are more in favor of women's mobility than spouses interviewed other time. Overall, unescorted women mobility in terms of asking their opinion as well experience from both the spouses, is more for within locality compared to outside locality regardless of their place of residence, education, occupation, exposure to media, standard of living, religion and cast. Further, reporting disparity is more in terms of outside locality compared to within locality from both the spouses.

**Table 2.1.2: Mean number of places where women visited unescorted as rated by wives according to their opinion and experience.**

Background characteristics	Opinion		Experience		Number
	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	
<b>Residence</b>					
Rural	2.21	1.93	1.92	1.57	304
Urban	2.98	3.19	2.43	2.18	114
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	2.42	2.26	2.05	1.74	399
Other	2.47	2.68	2.21	1.68	19
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Scheduled caste/tribes	2.26	2.26	1.96	1.78	27
Other	2.43	2.28	2.06	1.73	391
<b>Age gap</b>					
0-2 years	2.25	1.93	2.17	1.61	197
3-4 years	2.62	2.09	2.37	1.68	126
5+ years	2.51	2.28	2.38	2.05	95
<b>Marital duration in years</b>					
Less than 5 years	2.25	2.25	1.95	1.63	146
5-10 years	2.37	2.17	2.08	1.70	169
11 years or more	2.75	2.50	2.17	1.93	103
<b>Education</b>					
Both illiterate	1.98	1.78	1.68	1.35	80
One of the spouse literate	2.30	1.91	2.12	1.68	172
Both literate	2.77	2.35	2.73	1.98	166
<b>Work status</b>					
Both working in agricultural sector	2.49	2.08	2.27	1.71	149
One of the spouse is professional* worker	2.90	2.41	2.91	2.05	118
Other combinations	1.98	1.76	1.79	1.51	151
<b>Exposure to any mass media</b>					
Both not exposed	1.66	1.44	1.36	1.22	97
One of the spouse exposed	1.98	1.74	2.17	1.59	129
Both exposed	3.10	2.58	2.81	2.09	192
<b>Children surviving</b>					
No living children	2.18	2.06	2.23	1.81	90
Only daughter	2.35	2.32	2.26	1.86	69
Only sons	2.67	1.98	2.47	1.52	94
Both daughters and sons	2.44	1.99	2.20	1.76	165
<b>SLI Quintiles</b>					
Lowest	2.03	1.76	1.90	1.47	88
Second	2.21	1.80	1.97	1.60	95
Middle	2.17	2.07	1.84	1.60	90
Fourth	2.79	2.19	2.55	1.89	75
Highest	3.13	2.63	3.44	2.26	70
<b>Couple interviewed</b>					
Same time	2.20	1.89	1.94	1.53	238
Wife first	3.22	2.50	2.88	2.03	32
Husband first	2.61	2.23	2.69	1.99	148
Total	2.42	2.06	2.28	1.73	418

\*Includes white/blue color service, business at large scale, petty/small scale business and skilled workers.

### 2.1.2 Index of mobility and association with fertility attitudes and preferences

At the macro level, regions of low female autonomy are also regions where fertility is high (Dyson and Moore, 1983). One explanation of this is that for a woman living in a patriarchal household, children especially sons are likely to help position in her husband's home and improve her status (Dixon, 1975; Caldwell, 1986). However, this explanation also involves that women who are more autonomous initially, or those circumstances allow them to be more autonomous, are less likely to need children or sons as supports their status. Table 2.1.3 shows the association of women unescorted mobility with fertility preferences. Wives, who have reported on average 3 out of 5 specific places in their opinion, are more likely to prefer ideal family size up to two children than others. Ideal family size up to two children is also reported who have experienced of outside mobility in same direction as reported in their opinion. In addition, husbands who are more in favor of women's unescorted mobility (3 places out of 5) and their wives who visited alone on average 2 places out of 5 prefer up to two children ideal family size compared to others.

Fertility indicators	Wife		Husband		Number
	Opinion	Experience	Opinion	Experience	
<b>Ideal family size (IFS)</b>					
1-2	2.58	2.19	2.55	1.93	188
3+	2.46	1.67	1.77	1.05	39
Non-numeric responses	1.13	1.06	0.88	0.56	16
Wife says more	2.07	1.96	2.21	1.69	81
Husband says more	2.61	2.20	2.23	1.86	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.42</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Sex composition in IFS</b>					
One son and one daughter	2.55	2.19	2.66	1.98	156
Wife says more sons than husband	2.21	2.02	1.79	1.83	53
Husband says more sons than wife	2.78	2.13	2.40	1.56	63
Other combinations	2.67	2.08	2.32	1.64	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>2.13</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>1.81</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>Desire for children</b>					
Want more	2.15	2.05	2.08	1.70	131
Want no more	2.64	2.05	2.40	1.78	87
Not decided/up to god	2.45	2.09	2.45	1.82	22
Sterilized	2.65	2.13	2.44	1.83	109
Other ( <i>different responses</i> )	2.29	1.96	2.17	1.55	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.42</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Preferred sex of additional child</b>					
Boy	2.10	2.04	2.10	1.72	126
Other( <i>different response</i> )	2.42	2.08	2.39	1.70	64
<b>Time to desire additional child</b>					
Less than 2 years	2.18	2.09	2.13	1.77	132
Other( <i>different response</i> )	2.26	1.97	2.34	1.59	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.21</b>	<b>2.05</b>	<b>2.19</b>	<b>1.72</b>	<b>190</b>

Furthermore, wives who have reported more in terms of their opinion and experience (3 places out of 5 specific places), prefer only one son and one daughter as ideal sex composition family size than others. Reporting experience of wives in terms of

unescorted mobility is more (11 percent) than their husbands' report for preferring one son and one daughter as ideal sex composition.

Desire for more children is vary much associated with living children. Couples who believe in woman's unescorted mobility are less likely to desire for more children compare to other couples, revealed from both the spouses' opinion and experience. Son preference goes down among wives who visited alone in more number of specific places (2.4 places) as shown in Table 2.1.3. There is no significant difference for son preferences among husband's reporting in terms of their wives' unescorted visits. Time to desire additional child is more precise among wives who believe a woman should visit more number of places compared to other wives. This trend is similar with their husbands' report in terms of their opinion and experience.

### 3.1.3 Index of mobility and association with contraceptive attitude and preferences

In order to determine whether there is an association between contraceptive behavior and the autonomy of women in terms of mobility, examine spouses' opinion and their experience, Table 2.1.4 shows the complete knowledge of modern family planning methods by index of women mobility. Mean value of mobility index (both opinion and experience indices) is always greater among couples where wives having complete knowledge of any modern method than other couples. Couples with only wives having complete knowledge of any modern family planning method, their husbands believe more in unescorted women's mobility (2 places out of 5). Couples, who have no complete knowledge of any family planning method, the index value reveal about limited experience of their wives regarding unescorted women mobility.

Complete* knowledge about family planning methods	Wife		Husband		Number
	Opinion	Experience	Opinion	Experience	
<b>Any modern methods</b>					
Both	2.51	2.17	2.32	1.79	312
Only husband	2.24	1.64	2.20	1.45	55
Only wife	1.94	1.91	2.14	1.89	35
Neither	2.31	1.69	1.94	1.31	16
<b>All modern methods</b>					
Both	2.69	2.09	2.64	1.78	55
Only husband	3.15	2.46	2.85	2.04	46
Only wife	2.65	2.30	2.37	1.88	43
Neither	2.21	1.95	2.09	1.65	274
Total	2.42	2.06	2.28	1.73	418

\*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)

Couples having complete knowledge about all modern methods, wives believe more in unescorted women mobility (mean index value 3 places out of 5 specific places) compared to wives believe less in unescorted women mobility (mean index value 2 places out of 5 specific places) belong to couples having no complete knowledge of all

modern methods. This trend is similar with husbands' belief and their wives experience of women mobility.

Table 2.1.5 shows that wives report more in favor of women's unescorted mobility in their opinion, both the spouses approve the family planning compared to other wives. It is also precise in case of husbands' opinion as well as experience. Further, wife believes husband approve of family planning among visited on average 2.1 out of 5 places compared to wives who believe their husband disapprove, visited only 1.9 places.

On average, couples using any family planning method have wives' opinion index value 25 percent more than couples not using any method. Mean number of places visited by wives as report by both the spouses, not shows much difference in using contraceptives. Regarding intention to use family planning in future, wives believe more women's unescorted mobility (on average 2.4 places out of 5), are more intend to use contraceptives in future than couples refused to use in future. Similar trend has been seen in terms of wives experienced with unescorted mobility as they visited on average 2 out of 5 places, couples reported intention to use family planning method in future where as wives visited on average 1.7 out of 5 places, couples are not intended to family planning method in future. Husbands reporting about their wives unescorted visit less (near about 20 percent) compared to their wives report, which associates in similar trend as their wives report.

<b>Table 2.1.5: Mean number of places where a woman visit as reported by couples according to family planning behavior</b>					
<b>Family planning indicators</b>	<b>Wife</b>		<b>Husband</b>		<b>Number</b>
	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	
<b>Approval of family planning</b>					
Both approve	2.55	2.16	2.41	1.84	329
Only wife approves	1.91	1.74	1.68	1.18	34
Only husband approves	2.08	1.69	1.85	1.59	39
Both disapprove/CS	1.75	1.63	1.94	1.13	16
Wife believes husband approves	2.51	2.13	2.38	1.81	296
Wife believes husband disapproves	2.21	1.89	2.04	1.55	122
Total	2.42	2.06	2.28	1.73	418
<b>Time to use family planning</b>					
Immediately after marriage or first child	2.60	2.16	2.56	1.76	25
After 2nd child	2.68	2.15	2.54	1.85	105
Others combinations	2.31	2.01	2.16	1.69	288
Total	2.42	2.06	2.28	1.73	418
<b>Current use of family planning method</b>					
Both	2.75	2.08	2.50	1.75	159
Only husband	2.50	2.15	2.50	1.85	26
Only wife	2.00	2.08	1.85	1.15	13
Neither	2.20	2.03	2.12	1.75	220
Total	2.42	2.06	2.28	1.73	418
<b>Intention to use in future</b>					
Both	2.42	2.01	2.31	1.67	177
Only husband	2.33	2.13	2.40	2.04	55
Only wife	2.57	2.43	2.48	2.00	21

Neither	1.84	1.73	1.61	1.18	51
Total	2.32	2.01	2.22	1.67	304
*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)					

### 3.1.4 Determinants of women mobility to reproductive behavior

Table 2.1.6a and b present the results of logistic regression models predicting whether women report ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use. All the dependent variables such as ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use defined as dichotomous variables and set equal to one if respondent report up to two ideal children, ideal sex composition as one son and one daughter, desire for additional child, preferred sex boy, complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods, approving of family planning, currently using any family planning method and wanting to use family planning method in future and set zero otherwise. Correlates include the indices of women unescorted mobility within the locality and outside the locality as reported by both the spouses in terms of their opinion as well as experience. Place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples are included as controls to see the effect of women mobility on reproductive behavior. Odds ratios greater than one indicate a positive relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables, and Odds ratios less than one indicate a negative relationship.

The findings are not constantly significant but are striking in several ways in terms of within and outside the locality as opinioned by both the spouses individually. There is a positive association between desired ideal family size up to two children and women's unescorted mobility in within locality and outside locality as opinion given by wives (unadjusted OR 1.11,  $p < 0.1$ ) but after controlling the socio-economic characteristics, women unescorted mobility relate negatively with ideal family size (adjusted OR 0.99). Husbands' opinion about their wives reveal a positive association regarding women's unescorted mobility with ideal family size even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.11,  $p < 0.1$ , adjusted OR 1.07). Table 2.1.6b shows that wives who have visited alone within or outside locality are strongly in favor of ideal family size up to two children (unadjusted OR 1.16,  $p < 0.1$ ) even though after controlling the background characteristics (adjusted OR 1.06). Husbands revealed significantly more likely to favor in this regards where their wives visited alone outside the village (adjusted OR 1.24,  $p < 0.1$ ).

There is no significant difference between ideal sex composition of children (one son and one daughter) and women unescorted mobility as wives less likely to prefer ideal sex composition who have opinioned unescorted outside mobility even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 0.99, adjusted OR 0.91). But this trend is not true with their routine life experience as wives who have experienced unescorted mobility especially in outside locality are more likely to prefer one son and one daughter ideal family size and also after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.13, adjusted OR 1.14). Regarding ideal sex composition, husbands reveal positive opinion about their wives even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.17, adjusted OR 1.08) that has also revealed from their wives experience of unescorted outside mobility where the association is significantly positive in favor of ideal sex composition (unadjusted OR 1.19,  $p < 0.1$ ; adjusted OR 1.18,  $p < 0.1$ ).



More important are relative strengths of wives' report and husbands' perceptions of women's autonomy and the role of contextual factors. Desire for additional child(ren) by both the spouses is negatively associated with women outside mobility as reveal in Table 2.1.6a where both the spouses less likely to believe desire for more child after controlling the contextual factors. Wives who have visited alone outside home, poorly associated with desire for more children as reported by both the spouses. Preferred sex as boy is negatively associated with women's unescorted mobility as revealed by both the spouses in their opinion as well experience belonging to couples who have desired for more children.

As expected, Family planning knowledge is positively linked to women's mobility. Couples where both the spouses believe about women's unescorted mobility are more likely to have complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods (unadjusted OR 1.26,  $p < 0.001$ ; OR 1.20,  $p < 0.01$  respectively) but after controlling the socio-economic characteristics husbands' opinion relate in negative direction (adjusted OR 0.97). This similar pattern has reflected in their life experience as shown in Table 2.1.6b also after controlling the socio-economic characteristics.

Approval of family planning is positively associated with women's unescorted outside mobility. This fashion remains similar even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics as reported by both husbands and wives. In terms of experience about unescorted outside mobility by wives, both the spouses reveal positive association with approval of family planning after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.18; OR 1.17,  $p < 0.1$ ) as shown in table 2.1.6b.

Current use of contraceptive practice is positively influenced by both the spouses in terms of their opinion about women unescorted outside mobility (unadjusted OR 1.19,  $p < 0.01$ ; OR 1.13,  $p < 0.1$ ). Interesting; when controlling the socio-economic characteristics, the mobility shows negative association with current use of family planning as revealed by both wives and husbands in their opinion (adjusted OR 0.997; OR 0.939 respectively) which is not significant. In terms of experience (Table 2.1.6b), wives who have visited alone outside the home are not much in favor of family planning use as reported by both the spouses and this relationship goes weaker when controlling the socio-economic characteristics.

Future use of family planning is significantly and positively influenced by women's unescorted outside mobility as reported by both the spouses. Wives who believe outside mobility are more likely to use family planning in future (unadjusted OR 1.25,  $p < 0.1$ ) even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.22,  $p < 0.1$ ). Similarly, husbands are also in favor of wives' outside mobility and which has reflected in their opinion even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.54,  $p < 0.01$ ). Table 2.1.6b also shows the relationship between experience of mobility with future use of family planning as husbands reveal significantly more positive association with their wives experience and future use of family planning even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.32,  $p < 0.1$ ).

**Table 2.1.6a: Odds ratios for associations of wives and husbands concerning aspects of women's unescorted mobility and reproductive behavior, controlling for socioeconomic and demographic factors**

Fertility and family planning indicators	Wife's opinion		Husband's opinion		Number of couples
	Unadjusted	Adjusted	Unadjusted	Adjusted	
<b>Desired ideal children (up to 2)<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.108*	0.988	1.217**	1.059	418
Outside locality	1.163**	1.029	1.193**	1.056	
TOTAL	1.113*	0.986	1.225**	1.067	
<b>Sex composition as one boy and one daughter of desired ideal children<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	0.986	0.906	1.161*	1.067	345
Outside locality	1.106	1.030	1.144*	1.051	
TOTAL	0.991	0.909	1.171*	1.076	
<b>Desire for additional child<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	0.865*	0.960	0.913	0.963	418
Outside locality	0.866*	0.938	0.916	0.946	
TOTAL	0.861*	0.950	0.906	0.955	
<b>Preferred sex as boy<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	0.877	0.850	0.899	0.806	190
Outside locality	0.940	0.905	0.983	0.893	
TOTAL	0.882	0.859	0.901	0.804	
<b>Complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.243**	1.108	1.191**	0.962	418
Outside locality	1.237**	1.079	1.136*	0.924	
TOTAL	1.259***	1.114	1.203**	0.968	
<b>Approval of family planning<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.247**	1.137	1.238**	1.125	418
Outside locality	1.218*	1.054	1.260*	1.139	
TOTAL	1.253**	1.137	1.249**	1.141	
<b>Current use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.193**	1.006	1.115*	0.934	418
Outside locality	1.165*	0.934	1.122*	0.943	
TOTAL	1.189**	0.997	1.125*	0.939	
<b>Future use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.227*	1.207	1.310**	1.288*	304
Outside locality	1.259*	1.162	1.536**	1.539**	
TOTAL	1.249*	1.224*	1.311**	1.283*	
Note: Covariates includes place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples.					
<sup>B</sup> Both the spouses; <sup>E</sup> Either wife or husband.					
Level of significance: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.10					

**Table 2.1.6b: Odds ratios for associations of wives and husbands concerning aspects of women's unescorted mobility and reproductive behavior, controlling for socioeconomic and demographic factors**

Fertility and family planning indicators	Wife's experience		Husband's report		Number of couples
	Unadjusted	Adjusted	Unadjusted	Adjusted	
<b>Desired ideal children (up to 2)<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.149*	1.040	1.207**	1.103	418
Outside locality	1.178*	1.123	1.291**	1.243*	
TOTAL	1.159*	1.057	1.185**	1.114	
<b>Sex composition as one boy and one daughter of desired ideal children<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.036	0.962	1.132	1.063	345
Outside locality	1.133	1.135	1.189*	1.176*	
TOTAL	1.055	0.984	1.129*	1.090	
<b>Desire for additional child<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	0.960	1.015	0.949	0.980	418
Outside locality	1.016	0.987	0.946	0.985	
TOTAL	0.997	1.042	0.981	1.019	
<b>Preferred sex as boy<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	0.892	0.771	0.982	0.891	190
Outside locality	1.067	0.946	1.010	0.926	
TOTAL	0.980	0.828	1.008	0.939	
<b>Complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.171*	0.981	1.132*	0.941	418
Outside locality	1.205*	1.076	1.198*	1.016	
TOTAL	1.169*	0.987	1.102	0.939	
<b>Approval of family planning<sup>B</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.256*	1.156	1.272*	1.175	418
Outside locality	1.178	1.118	1.330**	1.266*	
TOTAL	1.266**	1.176	1.236*	1.169*	
<b>Current use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.075	0.933	0.999	0.836*	418
Outside locality	0.919	0.828	1.066	0.960	
TOTAL	1.026	0.893	0.991	0.861*	
<b>Future use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Within locality	1.218*	1.176	1.369*	1.326*	304
Outside locality	1.221	1.196	1.476*	1.440*	
TOTAL	1.211	1.166	1.337*	1.317*	
Note: Covariates includes place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples.					
<sup>B</sup> Both the spouses; <sup>E</sup> Either wife or husband.					
Level of significance: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.10					

### 3.2.1. Access to economic resources

Wives' access to economic resources is measured by five variables: whether a woman set aside money for her as she wish, free to purchase items for daily use, free to buy gift for friends/relatives, free to buy cloth for self and free to purchase small jewelry items for self. An index to access economic resources sums responses to these five questions and ranges from zero to five. Separate indices were computed for opinion and experience in similar fashion as reported by both husbands and wives. Table 2.2.1 shows the percentage of wives and husbands who reported their views whether women are allow accessing the economic resources. In terms of opinion from both the spouses regarding different components of economic resources is higher that their experience. Buying gift to friend/relatives, wives' opinion is higher than husbands while in terms of experience reported more by husbands than wives.

<b>Table 2.2.1:</b> Percent of wives and husbands who agree and disagree whether women are allow to access to economic resources according to their opinion and experience						
Access to economic resources	Agreement			Disagreement		Kappa value
	Total	Both say NO	Both say YES	Only wife say YES	Only husband say YES	
	<i>Opinion</i>					
Set aside money for her as she wish	82.3	13.6	68.7	7.7	10.0	0.49***
Purchase of items for daily use	90.4	20.3	70.1	4.1	5.5	0.75***
Buy gifts for friends/relatives	83.8	37.6	46.2	9.3	6.9	0.67***
Buy cloth for self	90.6	28.2	62.4	3.6	5.7	0.79***
Buy small item of jewelry for self	81.6	16.5	65.1	13.2	5.3	0.52***
	<i>Experience</i>					
Set aside money for her as she wish	84.0	32.3	51.7	7.2	8.9	0.67***
Purchase of items for daily use	85.1	25.8	59.3	4.5	10.3	0.67***
Buy gifts for friends/relatives	73.9	45.0	28.9	12.2	13.9	0.47***
Buy cloth for self	87.6	41.9	45.7	4.1	8.4	0.75***
Buy small item of jewelry for self	84.4	39.2	45.2	6.7	8.9	0.69***
<b>Level of agreement:</b> 0.00 (Poor), 0.01-0.20 (Slight), 0.21-0.40 (Fair), 0.41-0.60 (Moderate), 0.61-0.80 (Substantial), 0.81-1.00 (Almost perfect).						
***: Significant at $p < 0.01$ ; **: Significant at $p < 0.05$ ; *: Significant at $p < 0.10$						

Regarding the access to economic resources, there is agreement between spouses in at least three-quarters of the cases in terms of opinion as well as experience. Looking more closely at the result shown in table 2.2.1, more than half of the spouses believe that a woman should access to money for different components apart from buying the gift for friend/relatives. In terms of experience regarding access to economic resources, more than half of the couples reported that wife set aside money for her as she wish and purchasing of items for daily use. Forty-five percent agreement has seen among couples about purchasing of cloths and small items of jewelry by wife for herself.

As discussed earlier, an index has been created judge the access to economic resources reported by both the spouses in terms of their opinion as well as experience. Table 2.2.2 show the mean index value with selected background characteristics. On average, four and three out of five way of access to economic resources has been reported by both the spouses in terms of their opinion and experience respectively. Urban wives are more in favor of economic autonomy than rural counterpart. Husbands' reporting is also in similar trend with regards to place of residence. There is no significant difference in religion and ethnicity as reported by both the spouses. Couples with age gap more than three years between the spouses believe more in access to economic resources (on average 4 out of 5 ways) compared to couples with age gap less than three years (on average 3 out of 5 ways) and this similar trend has replicated in their routine life. Marital duration of couples also has an influence on access to economic resources as couples married for 5-10 years are believe more (4 out of 5) compared to newly married couples (3 out of 5). Similarly, couples where both the spouses are educated have reported opinion on access to economic resources on average 4 out of 5 ways compared to other couples and this fashion is same with the couples who have experienced the five specific ways of access to economic resources.

Occupation has greater impact on access to economic resources as expected; couples where one of the spouses is professional worker have more opinion in economic freedom than other group of couples which is also reflected in their routine life. Exposure to mass media also plays an important role in access to economic resource; couples where both the spouses are exposed to any media, have given more opinion and also experienced more (4 out of 5 ways) compared to other group of couples. Couples with no living children are less experienced of ways to access the money than the couples with surviving children. Standard of living has also greater influence on access to economic resources as couples belong to highest quintile having more opinion to explore the ways concerning access to economic resources than the couples belong to lower quintiles. Such higher standard of living quintiles explored more ways of economic access to resources (on average 4 out of 5 ways) compared to lowest standard of living quintile (on average 2 out of 5 ways). Furthermore, couples interview timing also affect in reporting about opinion and experience of spouses. Wives whose husbands interviewed first, shown more opinion than both the spouses have interviewed at same time. Hence, couples interviewed at same time have reported less opinion and experience in terms of exploring ways of access to economic resources.

**Table 2.2.2: Mean of access to economic resources by women according to background characteristics as rated by wives and husbands in terms of their opinion and experience.**

Background characteristics	Wife		Husband		Number
	Opinion	Experience	Opinion	Experience	
<b>Residence</b>					
Rural	3.26	2.39	3.30	2.60	304
Urban	4.16	3.37	3.89	3.37	114
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	3.48	2.62	3.46	2.79	399
Other	3.89	3.42	3.42	3.32	19
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Scheduled caste/tribes	3.33	2.78	3.11	2.41	27
Other	3.51	2.65	3.48	2.84	391
<b>Age gap</b>					
0-2 years	3.34	2.54	3.36	2.66	197
3-4 years	3.72	2.78	3.44	2.92	126
5+ years	3.55	2.73	3.68	2.98	95
<b>Marital duration in years</b>					
Less than 5 years	3.02	2.65	3.10	2.71	146
5-10 years	3.72	2.73	3.65	2.94	169
11 years or more	3.83	2.54	3.65	2.75	103
<b>Education</b>					
Both illiterate	3.15	2.09	3.15	2.44	80
One of the spouse literate	3.41	2.28	3.35	2.55	172
Both literate	3.77	3.31	3.72	3.26	166
<b>Work status</b>					
Both working in agricultural sector	3.42	2.42	3.40	2.65	149
One of the spouse is professional* worker	3.76	3.50	3.63	3.41	118
Other combinations	3.38	2.23	3.39	2.50	151
<b>Exposure to any mass media</b>					
Both not exposed	3.07	2.09	3.06	2.30	97
One of the spouse exposed	3.35	2.26	3.37	2.56	129
Both exposed	3.82	3.20	3.72	3.24	192
<b>Children surviving</b>					
No living children	2.71	2.56	3.02	2.68	90
Only daughter	3.49	2.74	3.35	2.83	69
Only sons	3.88	2.74	3.59	2.81	94
Both daughters and sons	3.72	2.62	3.67	2.88	165
<b>SLI Quintiles</b>					
Lowest	3.05	2.31	3.19	2.53	88
Second	3.39	2.29	3.37	2.55	95
Middle	3.24	2.16	3.29	2.50	90
Fourth	3.89	3.15	3.68	3.15	75
Highest	4.14	3.70	3.90	3.56	70
<b>Couple interviewed</b>					
Same time	3.25	2.25	3.20	2.46	238
Wife first	3.66	3.41	3.69	3.44	32
Husband first	3.88	3.15	3.82	3.24	148
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>418</b>

\*Includes white/blue color service, business at large scale, petty/small scale business and skilled workers.

### 3.2.2 Index of access to economic resources and association with fertility attitudes and preferences

Table 2.2.3 shows the association of access to economic resources, one of the dimensions of women autonomy with fertility preferences. Wives believe on average 3.6 out of 5 specific ways are more likely to prefer ideal family size up to two children than others. Desiring two children ideal family size is also reflected in their life experience in similar direction as reported in their opinion. Husbands believe more women's access to economic resources (3.6 out of 5 specific ways) are also prefer up to two children ideal family size and with reported experience of their wives (explored 3 out of 5 ways) compared to other husbands who do not prefer ideal family size up to two children.

Fertility indicators	Wife		Husband		Number
	Opinion	Experience	Opinion	Experience	
<b>Ideal family size (IFS)</b>					
1-2	3.63	3.10	3.64	3.15	188
3+	3.33	2.21	3.05	2.23	39
Non-numeric responses	3.50	2.44	3.19	2.56	16
Wife says more	3.09	2.26	3.25	2.38	81
Husband says more	3.67	2.33	3.50	2.78	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Sex composition in IFS</b>					
One son and one daughter	3.59	3.10	3.62	3.15	156
Wife says more sons than husband	3.40	2.34	3.25	2.42	53
Husband says more sons than wife	3.73	2.48	3.48	2.79	63
Other combinations	3.78	2.58	3.59	2.82	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>Desire for children</b>					
Want more	3.21	2.57	3.34	2.78	131
Want no more	4.10	3.16	3.82	3.18	87
Not decided/up to god	2.73	2.18	2.91	2.27	22
Sterilized	3.63	2.51	3.56	2.71	109
Other ( <i>different responses</i> )	3.35	2.55	3.26	2.74	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Preferred sex of additional child</b>					
Boy					
Other( <i>different response</i> )	3.08	2.48	3.21	2.69	126
	3.22	2.39	3.23	2.53	64
<b>Time to desire additional child</b>					
Less than 2 years					
Other( <i>different response</i> )	3.13	2.55	3.24	2.77	132
	3.12	2.22	3.17	2.34	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>2.45</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>190</b>

Furthermore, wives who experienced more way (3 out of 5 specific ways) of access to economic resources prefer only one son and one daughter as ideal sex composition than others. Desire for more children is vary much associated with living children. Couples who do not want any more child, belief more (mean index value 4 out of 5) in access to economic resources compared to other couples that has revealed from both the spouses in terms of their opinion and experience. Son preference slightly goes down among wives who explored more ways of access to economic resources (2.5 ways) than wives who visited few places (2.1 places) as shown in Table 2.2.3.

<b>Complete* knowledge about family planning methods</b>	<b>Wife</b>		<b>Husband</b>		<b>Number</b>
	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	
<b>Any modern methods</b>					
Both	3.46	2.70	3.43	2.82	312
Only husband	4.13	2.73	4.09	3.25	55
Only wife	2.97	2.31	3.09	2.29	35
Neither	3.25	2.25	2.69	2.31	16
<b>All modern methods</b>					
Both	4.24	3.82	4.16	3.73	55
Only husband	3.50	3.07	3.41	2.85	46
Only wife	3.49	3.44	3.74	3.37	43
Neither	3.36	2.23	3.28	2.53	274
Total	3.50	2.66	3.46	2.81	418

\*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)

### **3.2.3 Index of access to economic resources and association with contraceptive attitudes and preferences**

In order to determine whether there is an association between contraceptive behavior and the autonomy of women in terms of access to economic resources, examine spouses' opinion and their experience through index. Table 2.2.4 shows the complete knowledge of modern family planning methods by index of women's access to economic resources. Table shows that mean index value (both opinion and experience indices) is higher among couples where either both the spouses or only husbands having complete knowledge of any family planning method. This trend is similar for couples having complete knowledge of all modern methods where wives and husbands' opinion and experience index value is higher (4 out of 5 specific ways) than other group of couples.

Furthermore, Table 2.2.5 shows that wives report more ways in their opinion regarding access to economic resources where both the spouses approve the family planning. In case of husbands' opinion as well as experience about their wives is also similar to their wives report. Interesting; wife believes husband approve of family planning, explored on average 3 out of 5 specific ways compared to those who believe their husband disapprove, explored only 2 out of 5. Regarding time to use family planning, couples want to use immediately after marriage or first child as wives opinioned higher index values (3.72) as compared to other couples who desire to use after second child.

Couples who are currently using any family planning method have a higher opinion index value 3.8 and 3.7 as reported by wives and husbands respectively. Interesting; spouses who have opinioned 4 out of 5 specific ways to access the economic resources, where only wife is currently using the family planning method. This similar trend has reflected in their routine life also as both the spouses revealed.

Regarding intention to use family planning in future, the opinion index value is higher among the couples where both the spouses or only wives intended to use family planning method in future as opinion given by wives and husbands. The experience index values is



higher (on average 3 out of 5 specific ways) among couples where both the spouses or only wives willing to use family planning method as reported by both the spouses in their experience. Husbands reporting about their wives' exploring ways of access to economic resources are in similar trend as their wives' report.

<b>Table 2.2.5: Mean number of places where a woman visit as reported by couples according to family planning behavior</b>					
<b>Family planning indicators</b>	<b>Wife</b>		<b>Husband</b>		<b>Number</b>
	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Experience</b>	
<b>Approval of family planning</b>					
Both approve	3.64	2.76	3.52	2.89	329
Only wife approves	3.53	2.53	3.56	2.74	34
Only husband approves	2.67	2.10	3.23	2.44	39
Both disapprove/CS	2.63	2.06	2.63	2.25	16
Wife believes husband approves	3.67	2.79	3.58	2.96	296
Wife believes husband disapproves	3.10	2.33	3.16	2.46	122
Total	3.50	2.66	3.46	2.81	418
<b>Time to use family planning</b>					
Immediately after marriage or first child	3.72	3.00	3.68	3.12	25
After 2nd child	3.66	2.59	3.53	2.71	105
Others combinations	3.43	2.65	3.41	2.82	288
Total	3.50	2.66	3.46	2.81	418
<b>Current use of family planning method</b>					
Both	3.82	2.76	3.72	2.91	159
Only husband	3.50	3.04	3.38	3.12	26
Only wife	4.15	3.31	4.31	3.69	13
Neither	3.23	2.50	3.23	2.65	220
Total	3.50	2.66	3.46	2.81	418
<b>Intention to use in future</b>					
Both	3.90	2.99	3.69	3.11	177
Only husband	2.93	2.55	3.16	2.65	55
Only wife	3.57	2.86	3.86	3.14	21
Neither	2.49	1.80	2.67	2.08	51
Total	3.46	2.70	3.43	2.86	304
*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)					

### 3.2.4 Determinants of women access to economic resources to reproductive behavior

Table 2.2.6 present the results of logistic regression models predicting whether women report ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use. All the dependent variables such as ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use defined as dichotomous variables and set equal to one if respondent report up to two ideal children, ideal sex composition as one son and one daughter, desire for additional child, preferred sex boy, complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods, approving of family planning, currently using any family planning method and wanting to use family planning method in future and set zero otherwise. Correlates include the indices of women access to economic resources by both the spouses in terms of their opinion as well as experience. Place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples are included as controls to see the effect of women access to economic resources on reproductive behavior. Odds ratios greater than one indicate a positive relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables, and Odds ratios less than one indicate a negative relationship.

The findings are not constantly significant but are striking in several ways in terms of opinion and experience reported by both the spouses. To judge the association between desired ideal family size up to two children and women access to economic resources, there is a positive relation as opinioned by wives (unadjusted OR 1.10) but while controlling the socio-economic and demographic characteristics, women access to economic resources relate negatively with ideal family size (adjusted OR 0.98) which is not significantly. Findings also reveal that wives who have experienced access to economic resources are strongly willing to desire ideal family size up to two children (unadjusted OR 1.33,  $p < 0.001$ ) even though after controlling the background characteristics (adjusted OR 1.18,  $p < 0.1$ ). Husbands' opinion about their wives regarding women access to economic resources reveal positive association with ideal family size even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.07; adjusted OR 1.20,  $p < 0.1$ ).

There is no significant difference between ideal sex composition of children (one son and one daughter) and women access to economic resources as wives less likely to prefer ideal sex composition in their opinion even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 0.97, adjusted OR 0.88). But this trend is not true with their experience as wives who have experienced access to economic resources are more likely to prefer one son and one daughter ideal family size and also after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.23,  $p < 0.01$ ; adjusted OR 1.11). Regarding ideal sex composition, husbands reveal positive opinion about their wives even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.09, adjusted OR 1.02) but is significantly positive associate with their reported experience by wives (unadjusted OR 1.22,  $p < 0.01$ , adjusted OR 1.16,  $p < 0.1$ ).

Desire for additional child(ren) by both the spouses is negatively associated with women's access to economic resources as reveal in Table 2.2.6 where both the spouses believe less likely to desire for child. Wives who have experienced of economic freedom are negatively associated with desire for more children as reported by both the spouses. However after controlling the socio-economic and demographic factors women's access to economic resources is significantly and positively associated with desire for child especially with husbands' reporting (adjusted OR 1.19,  $p < 0.1$ ). Preferred sex as boy has no strong association with women's access to economic resources as revealed by both the spouses in their opinion as well experience belonging to couples who have desired for more children.

As expected, Family planning knowledge is positively linked to women's access to economic resources. Couples where both wives and husbands believe about women's access to economic resources are more likely to have complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods (unadjusted OR 1.18,  $p < 0.1$ ; OR 1.31,  $p < 0.01$  respectively) but after controlling the socio-economic characteristics wives' and husbands' opinion becomes poor (adjusted OR 1.05; OR 1.18,  $p < 0.1$ ). This similar pattern has reflected in their life experience as shown in Table 2.1.6 also after controlling the socio-economic characteristics.

Approval of family planning by both the spouses is positively associated with women's access to economic resources. This fashion remains similar even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics as reported by both the spouses individually. In terms of experience of access to economic resources by wives, both the spouses reveal positive association means more likely to approve family planning after controlling the socio-economic characteristics.

Current use of contraceptive practice is positively influenced by both the spouses in terms of their opinion about women's access to economic resources (unadjusted OR 1.25,  $p < 0.01$ ; OR 1.27,  $p < 0.01$ ). Interesting; when controlling the socio-economic characteristics, it shows negative association with current use of family planning as revealed by wives in their opinion (adjusted OR 0.96) which is not significant and husbands' opinion remain positive but weakly associated. In terms of experience (Table 2.2.6), wives who have explored women's access to economic resources are positively associated with family planning use as reported by both the spouses and this relationship goes weaker when controlling the socio-economic characteristics.

Future use of family planning is significantly and positively associated with women's access to economic resources as reported by both the spouses. Wives who believe women's access to economic resources are more likely to use family planning in future (unadjusted OR 1.49,  $p < 0.001$ ) even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.36,  $p < 0.01$ ). Table 2.2.6 also shows the relationship between experience of women's access to economic resources with future use of family planning as husbands reveal significantly more positive association with their wives experience and future use of family planning even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.38,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, husbands are also in favor of women's access to economic resources and which has reflected in their opinion even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.40,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 2.2.6: Odds ratios for associations of wives and husbands concerning aspects of women's access to economic resources and reproductive behavior, controlling for socioeconomic and demographic factors**

Fertility and family planning indicators	Wife		Husband		Number of couples
	Opinion	Experience	Opinion	Experience	
<b>Desired ideal children (up to 2)<sup>B</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	1.095	1.330***	1.172*	1.321***	418
Adjusted	0.984	1.181*	1.072	1.202*	
<b>Sex composition as one boy and one daughter of desired ideal children<sup>B</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	0.973	1.232**	1.088	1.221**	345
Adjusted	0.881	1.116	1.015	1.163*	
<b>Desire for additional child<sup>B</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	0.854*	0.960	0.919	0.980	418
Adjusted	1.235*	1.031	1.381**	1.189*	
<b>Preferred sex as boy<sup>B</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	0.951	1.029	0.991	1.067	190
Adjusted	0.900	1.009	0.971	1.074	
<b>Complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods<sup>E</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	1.181*	1.587***	1.306**	1.455***	418
Adjusted	1.049	1.357***	1.183*	1.248*	
<b>Approval of family planning<sup>B</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	1.260**	1.188*	1.132	1.174	418
Adjusted	1.143	1.076	1.010	1.058	
<b>Current use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	1.250**	1.122*	1.274**	1.160*	418
Adjusted	0.960	1.023	1.057	1.038	
<b>Future use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>					
Unadjusted	1.491***	1.435***	1.477***	1.468***	304
Adjusted	1.357**	1.381**	1.292*	1.399**	

Note: Covariates includes place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples.

<sup>B</sup>Both the spouses; <sup>E</sup>Either wife or husband.

Level of significance: \*\*\*p < 0.01; \*\*p < 0.05; \*p < 0.10

### 3.3.1. Decision making authority

Decision autonomy was estimated from the questions based on economic decision making activities. Economic decision-making authority is measured in terms of women's participation in four economic decisions: purchase of major jewelry items, purchase of major household goods, schooling of children and health care for self. For computing the index, the responses were scored as follows: 2 points for decisions made by the wife or jointly with other members; 1 point for involvement of wife in decisions-making activities and 0 for others. The index sums responses to these four questions and ranges from zero to eight. A separate index was created for wives and husbands based on their responses. In the interview responses, wives and their husbands generally agree that woman's decision making authority is limited (nearly one woman take decision in every 10) as shown in Table 2.3.1. While comparing the responses between spouses, husbands clearly perceive a greater decision making role for wives than wives perceive for themselves in all the four economic decisions. More than half of the couples agree for involvement of women in household decision making activities. Table 2.3.1 reveals that a huge disparity between participation of women (six women in every ten women) and their role as a main decision maker (one woman in every ten women). Agreement in responses about individual items is low as revealed by Kappas (slight agreement). Decision regarding purchasing of jewelry and cloths for self is poor among women as reported agreement by both the spouses. Further, wives and their husbands agreed that women are more likely to participate in decision regarding purchasing of major households goods than other three individual items.

**Table 2.3.1:** Percentage of wives and husbands who agree and disagree about whether women have the authority to make specific household decisions

Experienced of following:	Agreement			Disagreement		Kappa value
	Total	Both say NO	Both say YES	Only wife say YES	Only husband say YES	
<b>Purchase of major jewelry items</b>						
Involvement of wife	67.7	7.7	60.0	7.2	25.1	0.15**
Final decision made by wife or jointly with other family members	69.9	60.3	9.6	11.5	18.7	0.19***
<b>Purchase of major household goods</b>						
Involvement of wife	70.6	5.5	65.1	6.5	23.0	0.13**
Final decision made by wife or jointly with other family members	65.8	51.7	14.1	15.6	18.7	0.21***
<b>Schooling of children</b>						
Involvement of wife	66.5	7.9	58.6	7.4	26.1	0.14**
Final decision made by wife or jointly with other family members	68.9	58.4	10.5	13.6	17.5	0.20***
<b>Own health care</b>						
Involvement of wife	62.4	12.0	50.5	6.5	31.1	0.18***
Final decision made by wife or jointly with other family members	78.5	68.9	9.6	9.6	12.0	0.34***
Level of agreement: 0.00 (Poor), 0.01-0.20 (Slight), 0.21-0.40 (Fair), 0.41-0.60 (Moderate), 0.61-0.80 (Substantial), 0.81-1.00 (Almost perfect). ***: Significant at p < 0.01; **: Significant at p < 0.05; *: Significant at p < 0.10						

As discussed earlier, an index has been created to judge the household decision making authority among women as reported by both the spouses. Table 2.3.2 show the mean index value by selected background characteristics. Of a possible score of eight, the average response from wives is 3.56 and from husbands assigned 4.50 for their wives (26 percent more). To examine these index values more closely, urban wives participate more in household decision making authority (index values 5.6) than rural counterpart (index values 2.8). Husbands residing in rural areas report almost 50 percent more than their wives report regarding participation in household decision making activities. Thirty-eight percent of scheduled tribe/caste wives less likely to participate in household decisions compared to other caste of wives which is not supported by husband responses. Couples with age gap less than three years between spouses are less likely to involve in household decision making (on average 3 out of 8 index value) compared to couples with age gap more than three years (on average 4 out of 8) as responded by wives while there is not much differences in reporting of husbands.

Marital duration of couples also has a positive influence on household decision making authority, couples married for more than five years, wives report more involvement in household decisions compared to wives belongs to newly married couples. Responses from husbands reveal just opposite than wives' about marital duration as husbands says newly married wives participate more in household decision compared to older couples. Similarly, couples where both the spouses are educated, wives reported more involvement in household decision making compared to couples who are illiterate. Consistency in reporting responses by husbands is more than wives as husbands' response vary only 24 percent from uneducated couples to educated couples while wives' response goes up to 80 percent in similar range. While comparing the spouses' responses in terms of education, the difference goes down from uneducated to educated categories (59 percent to 8 percent) which reveal the reliability of reporting between educated and uneducated couples.

Occupation has greater impact on household decision making authority as expected; couples where one of the spouses is professional worker, wives participate more in household decision making (index values 5.1 out of 8). Exposure to mass media also plays an important role; couples where both the spouses are exposed to any media, 82 percent of wives participate in household decisions compared to wives belongs to couples with no media exposure. Interesting, wives belong to couples with only surviving son(s) involve more in household decision compared to other couples this has also been supported by their husbands. Standard of living has also greater influence on household decision making authority as couples belong to highest quintile having more household decision making authority than the couples belong to lower quintiles. Couples where both the spouses interviewed same time, report less likely to involve in household decisions compared to other couples where one of the spouse is interviewed in different time. While interviewing husbands first, 57 percent of wives report more participation in household decisions compared to both the spouses interviewed at same time.

**Table 2.3.2: Mean index value of household decision making authority by women according to background characteristics as rated by wives in terms of their opinion and experience.**

	Wife	Husband	Number
<b>Background characteristics</b>			
<b>Residence</b>			
Rural	2.78	4.14	304
Urban	5.62	5.45	114
<b>Religion</b>			
Hindu	3.45	4.44	399
Other	5.79	5.68	19
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Scheduled caste/tribes	2.63	4.26	27
Other	3.62	4.52	391
<b>Age gap</b>			
0-2 years	3.10	4.53	197
3-4 years	4.02	4.40	126
5+ years	3.91	4.58	95
<b>Marital duration in years</b>			
Less than 5 years	3.42	4.82	146
5-10 years	3.49	4.44	169
11 years or more	3.86	4.16	103
<b>Education</b>			
Both illiterate	2.51	3.99	80
One of the spouse literate	3.06	4.29	172
Both literate	4.58	4.96	166
<b>Work status</b>			
Both working in agricultural sector	2.92	3.90	149
One of the spouse is professional* worker	5.18	5.58	118
Other combinations	2.92	4.25	151
<b>Exposure to any mass media</b>			
Both not exposed	2.49	3.57	97
One of the spouse exposed	2.95	4.39	129
Both exposed	4.51	5.05	192
<b>Children surviving</b>			
No living children	3.61	4.94	90
Only daughter	3.12	4.62	69
Only sons	4.12	4.52	94
Both daughters and sons	3.39	4.19	165
<b>SLI Quintiles</b>			
Lowest	2.43	4.25	88
Second	2.73	4.00	95
Middle	2.91	4.00	90
Fourth	4.67	5.03	75
Highest	5.74	5.57	70
<b>Couple interviewed</b>			
Same time	2.86	4.34	238
Wife first	4.50	5.13	32
Husband first	4.48	4.62	148
Total	3.56	4.50	418
*Includes white/blue color service, business at large scale, petty/small scale business and skilled workers.			

### 3.3.2 Index of household decision making authority and association with fertility attitudes and preferences

Table 2.3.3 shows the association of household decision making authority, one of the dimensions of women autonomy with fertility preferences. Wives, who participate more in household decisions (4 out of 8), are more likely to prefer ideal family size up to two children than other wives. Husbands also supported up to two children ideal family size as they revealed their wives involvement is more compared to other husbands who do not prefer ideal family size up to two children. Further, husbands report 24 percent more than their wives in terms of participation of wives for household decisions belonging to the couples who desire ideal family size should be up to two children. Couples who report one son and one daughter as ideal sex composition, wives report greater participation in household decisions (4 out of 8 index value) than wives belonging to couples who desire different sex composition. Husbands also replied in similar way of their wives in this regards.

<b>Table 2.3.3: Mean of household decision making authority by a woman as rated by husbands and wives according to fertility preferences</b>			
	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Husband</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Fertility indicators</b>			
<b>Ideal family size (IFS)</b>			
1-2	4.02	4.97	188
3+	3.18	3.90	39
Non-numeric responses	1.94	4.06	16
Wife says more	3.26	4.02	81
Husband says more	3.33	4.29	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Sex composition in IFS</b>			
One son and one daughter	4.11	5.01	156
Wife says more sons than husband	3.28	4.45	53
Husband says more sons than wife	3.86	4.17	63
Other combinations	3.44	4.33	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>Desire for children</b>			
Want more	3.08	4.63	131
Want no more	4.24	4.83	87
Not decided/up to god	3.41	4.59	22
Sterilized	3.57	4.24	109
Other ( <i>different responses</i> )	3.64	4.22	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>418</b>
<b>Preferred sex of additional child</b>			
Boy	2.90	4.59	126
Other( <i>different response</i> )	3.78	4.53	64
<b>Time to desire additional child</b>			
Less than 2 years	3.18	4.61	132
Other( <i>different response</i> )	3.24	4.47	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>190</b>

Desire for more children is vary much associated with living children. Couples who do not want any more child, believe their wives participate more in household decision making activities compared to other group of couples that has revealed from their



husbands also as shown in Table 2.3.3. Son preference is more among couples where wives involvement is less in household decisions (index value 2.9 out of 8). Whilst, husbands report more (58 percent more) involvement of their wives in terms of son preference than their wives report individually. Timing of desire for additional children, wives belongs to couples who would like next child to be within two years, report less likely to involve in decisions regarding household's matters than the other group of couples but their husbands report just in reverse direction.

### 3.3.3 Index of household decision making authority and association with contraceptive attitude and preferences

In order to determine whether there is an association between contraceptive behavior and the autonomy of women in terms of household decision making authority, examine spouses' experience through index. Table 2.3.4 shows the complete knowledge of modern family planning methods by index of women involvement in household decision making authority. Wives belongs to couples who have complete knowledge of any modern method, are more involve in household decision making activities compared to other couples. This trend is similar for couples having complete knowledge of all modern methods where both the spouses having report wives' involvement is more in making household decisions than other group of couples who do not have complete knowledge.

<b>Complete* knowledge about family planning methods</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Husband</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Any modern methods</b>			
Both	3.76	4.55	312
Only husband	3.35	4.00	55
Only wife	2.37	4.86	35
Neither	2.94	4.44	16
<b>All modern methods</b>			
Both	5.36	5.20	55
Only husband	3.78	4.89	46
Only wife	4.37	5.02	43
Neither	3.03	4.21	274
Total	3.56	4.50	418

\*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)

Table 2.3.5 also shows that wives belonging to couples approve family planning, report more involvement regarding household decision making activities than other couples where both the spouses do not approve. In case of husbands' reporting from the couples approval of family planning is more (18 percent) than their wives report. Further, wife believes husband approve of family planning, involvement is more in household decisions (index values 3.7) than the other group of couples where wives believe their husbands disapprove the family planning (index value 3.1). Regarding time to use family planning, both the spouses report more wives' involvement in household decisions belonging to couples want to use immediately after marriage or first child compared to other couples who desire to use family planning after second child.

Couples where one of the spouse currently using any family planning method, wives report more involvement in decision regarding household's matters (index value 4 out of 8) compared to couples who are not using any method to control fertility (3 out of 8). Interesting; husbands report more involvement of their wives where current use of family planning reported by individual.

Regarding intention to use family planning in future, wives' involvement is higher among couples where either both the spouses or only wives intended to use family planning method in future as reported by wives and husbands compared to couples who are not intend to use family planning in future. Husbands' reporting about their wives' involvement in household decisions is more among the couples where one of the spouses interested for future use of family planning.

<b>Table 2.3.5: Mean value of women involvement in household decisions according to family planning behavior</b>			
<b>Family planning indicators</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Husband</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Approval of family planning</b>			
Both approve	3.86	4.56	329
Only wife approves	2.56	3.94	34
Only husband approves	2.38	4.72	39
Both disapprove/CS	2.38	3.88	16
Wife believes husband approves	3.73	4.58	296
Wife believes husband disapproves	3.14	4.31	122
Total	3.56	4.50	418
<b>Time to use family planning</b>			
Immediately after marriage or first child	4.64	5.00	25
After 2nd child	3.50	4.34	105
Others combinations	3.48	4.51	288
Total	3.56	4.50	418
<b>Current use of family planning method</b>			
Both	4.01	4.50	159
Only husband	4.62	4.92	26
Only wife	4.08	5.23	13
Neither	3.08	4.40	220
Total	3.56	4.50	418
<b>Intention to use in future</b>			
Both	4.05	4.66	177
Only husband	2.35	5.11	55
Only wife	4.29	4.38	21
Neither	2.98	3.90	51
Total	3.58	4.60	304
*Complete knowledge (Knows where to get and how to use method)			

### **3.3.4 Determinants of women's household decision making authority to reproductive behavior**

Table 2.3.6 present the results of logistic regression models predicting whether women report ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use. All the dependent variables such as ideal number of children, desire for additional child, family planning knowledge, approval, current use and future use defined as dichotomous variables and set equal to one if respondent report up to two ideal children, ideal sex composition as one son and one daughter, desire for additional child, preferred sex boy, complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods, approving of family planning, currently using any family planning method and wanting to use family planning method in future and set zero otherwise. Correlates include the indices of women's household decision making authority as reported by both the spouses. Place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples are included as controls to see the effect of women access to economic resources on reproductive behavior. Odds ratios greater than one indicate a positive relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables, and Odds ratios less than one indicate a negative relationship.

To examine the association between desired ideal family size up to two children and household decision making authority by women, there is a positive relation as reported by wives (unadjusted OR 1.18,  $p < 0.001$ ) but while controlling the socio-economic and demographic characteristics, women access to economic resources relate negatively with ideal family size (adjusted OR 0.99) which is not significantly. Husbands report about their wives regarding households decisions by women reveal positive association with ideal family size even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.13,  $p < 0.001$ ; adjusted OR 1.23,  $p < 0.01$ ).

There is no significant difference between ideal sex composition of children (one son and one daughter) and household decision making authority by women as wives less likely to prefer ideal sex composition in their opinion even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 0.96). Regarding ideal sex composition, husbands reveal positive association of their wives even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.24,  $p < 0.01$ ; adjusted OR 1.17,  $p < 0.1$ ).

Desire for additional child(ren) by wives is negatively associated with women's involvement in household decisions as reveal in Table 2.3.6 where wives believe less likely to desire for child (unadjusted OR 0.89,  $p < 0.01$ ). However after controlling the socio-economic and demographic factors women's involvement in household decisions is also negatively associated with desire for child as reported by both the spouses (adjusted OR 0.96).

Preferred sex as boy shows significantly negative association with women's involvement in household decisions as revealed by wives belonging to couples who have desired for more children (unadjusted OR 0.89,  $p < 0.1$ ; adjusted OR 0.80,  $p < 0.1$ ). husbands report about their wives' involvement in households decisions more likely to associate with preferred sex of boy (unadjusted OR 1.02) but after controlling the socio-economic and

demographic characteristic in the model, the relationship goes inverse (adjusted OR 0.92).

As expected, Family planning knowledge is positively associated with women's involvement in household decisions. Couples where both wives and husbands strongly report that wives who involve in household decisions are more likely to have complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods (unadjusted OR 1.31,  $p < 0.001$ ; OR 1.29,  $p < 0.001$  respectively). However, after controlling the socio-economic characteristics a similar pattern is exist in both the spouses' reporting (adjusted OR 1.11,  $p < 0.1$ ; OR 1.14,  $p < 0.1$ ).

Approval of family planning by both the spouses is positively associated with women's involvement in household decisions. This trend remains similar even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics as reported by wives individually. Husbands reporting reveal weak association with approval of family planning even after controlling the background characteristics.

Current use of contraceptive practice is positively influenced by both the spouses about women's involvement in household decisions (unadjusted OR 1.19,  $p < 0.001$ ; OR 1.14,  $p < 0.1$ ). After controlling the socio-economic characteristics, association becomes weak but still positive with current use of family planning as revealed by wives and husbands (adjusted OR 1.02; OR 1.04 respectively) which is not significant.

Future use of family planning is significantly and positively influenced by women's involvement in household decisions as reported by both the spouses. Wives who report their involvement in household decisions are more likely to use family planning in future (unadjusted OR 1.11,  $p < 0.1$ ) even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (adjusted OR 1.06). Table 2.2.6 also shows the relationship between experience of wives' involvement in household decisions with future use of family planning as husbands reveal significantly more positive association with their wives experience and future use of family planning even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics (unadjusted OR 1.25,  $p < 0.01$ ; adjusted OR 1.34,  $p < 0.01$ ).

<b>Table 2.3.6: Odds ratios for associations of wives and husbands concerning aspects of women's household decision making authority and reproductive behavior, controlling for socioeconomic and demographic factors</b>			
<b>Fertility and family planning indicators</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Husband</b>	<b>Number of couples</b>
<b>Desired ideal children (up to 2)<sup>B</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.182***	1.132***	
Adjusted	0.986	1.225**	418
<b>Sex composition as one boy and one daughter of desired ideal children<sup>B</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.101*	1.237**	
Adjusted	0.957	1.174*	345
<b>Desire for additional child<sup>B</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	0.889**	1.057	
Adjusted	0.958	0.962	418
<b>Preferred sex as boy<sup>B</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	0.887*	1.015	
Adjusted	0.795*	0.915	190
<b>Complete knowledge of all modern family planning methods<sup>E</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.307***	1.290***	
Adjusted	1.109*	1.139*	418
<b>Approval of family planning<sup>B</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.285***	1.084	
Adjusted	1.205**	0.993	418
<b>Current use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.187***	1.138*	
Adjusted	1.018	1.058	418
<b>Future use of family planning<sup>E</sup></b>			
Unadjusted	1.113*	1.254**	
Adjusted	1.062	1.336**	304
Note: Covariates includes place of residence, religion, ethnicity, age gap between spouses, duration of marriage, education, living sex of children, occupation, wealth index and timing of interviewed of couples.			
<sup>B</sup> Both the spouses; <sup>E</sup> Either wife or husband.			
Level of significance: ***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.10			

#### **4. Summary and conclusion**

In this study, the findings are not constantly significant from all the three dimensions of women autonomy but striking in several ways. The result of this study indicate no more than a loose agreement between wives and their husbands concerning the dimensions of women's autonomy within the home. More important are the relative strengths of wives' report and husbands' perceptions of women's autonomy and the role of contextual factors – especially education or media exposure determining these effects. In general, husbands' assessments of wives' autonomy influence reproductive outcomes more strongly than do wives' perceptions of their own autonomy in all the three dimensions. At the same time, the findings drawn from logistic regressions suggest that women may have strategically downplayed their autonomy in order to conform to social norms.

Regarding agreement between spouses on freedom of movement, majority of wives and their husbands agree that women should have greater freedom to visit outside the home. Findings from present study reveal that agreement is more in terms of experience than opinion given by both the spouses regarding unescorted women's outside visit. Where disagreement is expected, husbands are more likely to project a comparatively liberal picture on their wives' autonomy than do their wives. Husband's rating for women's mobility is lower than their wives' report. Further, husbands are more in favor of women's mobility within locality rather than outside locality as also revealed from their experience reporting. This indicates that husbands are in favor of women unescorted outside mobility which need to encourage more in this regards. However, the women's unescorted mobility is reported more by both the spouses among the couples residing in urban areas, married for more than ten years, educated exposed to mass media, one of the spouses in professional worker, and belonging to higher standard of living and also among the couples whose wives interviewed first.

Regarding the determinants of the women's mobility on reproductive behavior; the difference between the spouses' fertility and contraceptive attitudes and preference, findings are not constantly significant but positively associated even after controlling the socio-economic and demographic factors as reported by both the spouses in terms of within and outside locality. Approval and current use of family planning by both the spouses is positively associated with women's mobility. This fashion remains similar when effect of socio-economic and demographic characteristics controlled as reported by both the spouses. In terms of experience wives who have visited alone outside the home are not much in favor of family planning use when controlling the socio-economic characteristics. Future use of family planning is significantly and positively influenced by women unescorted outside mobility as reported by both the spouses even after adjustment of socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

Findings from another dimension of women's autonomy is women's access to economic resource reveal that there is a agreement between spouses in at least three quarters of the cases in terms of opinion as well as experience. Mean index value of access to economic resources reveals urban wives are more in favor of access to economic resources than rural counterpart. Husbands' voice is also similar with their wives regarding place of residence. Similarly, couples where both the spouses are educated have reported opinion

and experience on access to economic resources on average 4 out of 5 ways compared to other couples.

Occupation has greater impact on access to economic resources as expected; couples where one of the spouses is professional worker are more in favor of women's access to economic resources. Standard of living has also greater influence on access to economic resources as couples belong to highest quintile having more opinion to explore the ways concerning access to economic resources than the couples belong to lower quintiles.

To judge the association between desired ideal family size up to two children and women access to economic resources, findings reveal that both the spouses who have experienced access to economic resources are strongly willing to desire ideal family size up to two children even though after controlling the background characteristics. Interesting; desire for additional child(ren) by both the spouses is negatively associated with women's access to economic resources where both the spouses believe less likely to desire for child. Preferred sex as boy has no strong association with women's access to economic resources as revealed by both the spouses in their opinion as well experience.

As expected, knowledge and approval of family planning is positively linked to women's access to economic resources as reported by both wives and husbands after adjusting the socio-economic characteristics. Wives who have explored women's access to economic resources are positively associated with family planning use as reported by both the spouses and this relationship goes weaker when controlling the socio-economic characteristics. Future use of family planning is significantly and positively influenced by women's access to economic resources as reported by both the spouses.

Household decision making authority is one of the important dimensions of women's autonomy. While comparing the responses between spouses, husbands clearly perceive a greater decision making role for wives than wives perceive for themselves in all the four economic decisions. More than half of the couples agree for involvement of women in household decision making activities. Finding also reveal that a huge disparity between participation of women (six women in every ten women) and their role as a main decision maker (one woman in every ten women).

Wives, who participate more in household decisions (4 out of 8), are more likely to prefer ideal family size up to two children than other wives followed by their husbands. Couples who do not want any more child, belief wives participate more in household decision making activities compared to other group of couples and that has revealed from their husbands also.

To examine the association between desired ideal family size up to two children and women involvement in household decisions, there is a positive relation as reported by wives but while controlling the socio-economic and demographic characteristics, the association goes in reverse with ideal family size but is not significantly. This is to note that husbands report about their wives regarding households decisions reveal positive association with ideal family size even after controlling the socio-economic characteristics. Desire for additional child(ren) by wives is negatively associated with women's involvement in household decisions where wives believe less likely to desire for child. However after controlling the socio-economic and demographic factors

women's involvement in household decisions is also negatively associated with desire for child as reported by both the spouses.

As revealed from in many studies, knowledge and approval of family planning is positively linked to women's decision-making authority as reported by both wives and husbands after adjusting the socio-economic characteristics. Wives who have explored women's decision-making authority are positively associated with family planning use as reported by both the spouses and this relationship goes weaker when controlling the socio-economic characteristics. Future use of family planning is significantly and positively influenced by women's decision-making authority as reported by both the spouses.



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