Differences in Types of Intimate Partner Violence: Implications for Public Policy

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Abstract
Intimate partner violence has been recognized as a serious social problem in the United States since the 1970s, when the leaders in the Women's Movement became alarmed at victimization of women in their own homes by their husbands or boyfriends (Dobash and Dobash 1992). Women still make up 70 percent of all intimate partner homicides, and are twice as likely to be killed by an intimate partner as men are (Catalano, Smith, Snyder, and Rand 2009). The Anti Violence against Women Acts of 1994 and subsequent years have led to more uniform state policies on domestic violence and other violence against women, but have been used to justify intrusion into private homes, particularly with mandatory arrest laws (Davis, O'Sullivan, Farole, and Remple 2008). The law has not been successful at specific deterrence (Peterson 2008), but it has been more effective at punishment (Dixon 2008). Treating all domestic violence cases as though they were the same also has implications for treatment programs (Peterson 2008; Saunders 2008). In this article, I consider the importance of making distinctions among types of intimate partner violence, the effects of failure to do so, along with implications for research, advocacy, and treatment.

Perception versus Reality

The model of intimate partner violence that prevails in the media and public perception is that of the controlling male who inflicts increasingly harsh physical, emotional, and psychological harm on his partner until either she successfully leaves or he kills her (Johnson 2008). This prototype also sees women as equally at risk, regardless of social class, race, ethnicity, where they live, or other structural and cultural factors (Nixon 2010; Richie 2000). Reconciliation to save the marriage or relationship is viewed as an unsafe and foolish option (Baker 2001; Lehrner and Allen 2009). The research literature indicates that this model applies to small, but extremely dangerous proportion of partner violence, but it continues to be generalized to the whole (Johnson and Ferraro 2000). Contrary to the prevailing view, research reveals that while men predominate in inflicting serious injuries and using coercive tactics, both men and women are perpetrators, and both men and women are victims of partner violence (Archer 2000; Felson and Cares 2005; Lauritsen and Heimer 2008; Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz 1981; Tjaden and Thoennes 1998). Moreover, partner violence is not limited to heterosexual relationships, but is experienced in both male and female same sex relationships (Renzetti 1992). Partner violence often includes rape and sexual assault. Although men primarily commit these acts, women also commit them against men (Laruitsen and Heimer 2008). Even though partner violence does occur across categories of race, class, and ethnicity, both victims and perpetrators come disproportionately from the unemployed, minority, and other marginalized groups (Coker 2004; Dixon 2008; Richie 2000; Sokoloff and Pratt 2005).

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Different Types of Partner Violence

Kuchschnitt and colleagues (2004:84) observe that recent research is finding that male perpetrators of violence against their partners are heterogeneous, and that their characteristics support theoretical explanations. The delineation of different types of male perpetrators can be compared with nonviolent men to further understanding of the trajectories leading to partner violence (Kuchschnitt, McLaughlin, and Petrie 2004). Researchers need to measure specific behavior, including hitting, shoving, or demeaning. Productive typologies should characterize the context of the violence, which is the interaction between the spouses and the nature of their relationship (Michalski 2005).

Johnson (1995; 2005) developed a typology based on the attempt to exert control over one's partner and the use of violence. His types are coercive controlling violence, violent resistance, situational couple violence, and a fourth type, which involves mutual coercion. The first two types are most readily adaptable for categorizing motive, relationship, and behavior.

Coercive controlling violence, which he also calls intimate terrorism, refers to the type of violence that most fits the prevailing stereotype of the violent, controlling male. Intimate terrorism aims at complete physical and psychological domination and control of one's partner. A man usually commits this type of violence, and this type of victimization is highly prevalent among women living in shelters. Intimate terrorism is also the prototype for the mobilization of the Antiviolence against Women Movement. In this type of violence, the partner inflicts such emotional and psychological harm that a woman would prefer the physical violence to the shame and abuse. When a woman kills her coercive controlling partner, it is more likely to be in a direct fight for her life, rather than lying in wait or killing him in his sleep (Stark 2007).

The type of partner violence that is most common is situational couple violence, which is mutual violence. In this type of violence disagreements escalate and conflicts advance to violence. It usually does not escalate over time in the marriage or relationship, but is more likely to be one-time or occasional event. A man may become violent only one time, be remorseful, and never repeat the violence. This type of violence can have painful effects on the couple and any children present, but it is entirely different from coercive controlling violence. Johnson stresses, however, that situational couple violence can also be deadly. He cautions that although each of the types of partner violence can vary in frequency and severity "… from relatively minor acts of violence to homicidal assaults, intimate terrorism is the type most likely to be frequent and brutal (Johnson 2005:1127).

The Utility of Typologies

Distinguishing between coercive controlling violence and situational couple violence can be a vital tool in advising people seeking help in a relationship. If a woman is a victim of intimate terrorism, advising her to seek couples counseling could put her at even greater risk, and would only give her coercive controlling partner another opportunity to frame the problem as being her fault, or as residing in the victim (Stark 2007). Shelters and agencies are designed to help women, get out of dangerous coercive controlling relationships, where they have a high probability of being killed. What is being done, however, is that in order to try to prevent the deaths of victims in these

coercive controlling relationships, victims of partner violence in general are urged to get out of the relationship (Mills 1999).

Most victims seeking help fall in the category of situational couples' violence. They may want to stay in their relationship and could be encouraged to seek either couples counseling or some other type of intervention. Not only shelters and social service agencies encourage women to leave the relationship. This extends to the offices of some prosecutors and court services, where it may be considered a victory when a woman leaves her partner, regardless of the context, her needs and wants, or the fit with her lived experience (Ford 1991). Both Ford (2003) and Baker (2001) argue that victims are denied agency when they are presented only the option of ending the relationship, often under threat of losing custody of their children.

A number of typologies of intimate partner violence are being developed. The extent to which they lead to better understanding, treatment, and prevention will depend on how well they represent the realities of people and their relationships. Typologies can be most useful as tools for comparison, but they are best used as guides, not as rigid categories, which would defeat the purpose of recognizing differences. With a better understanding of motivations and relationships, victims can make decisions on the most appropriate action in their situation.

Research, Violence Perceptions, and Social Movements

The violent, controlling male perpetrator is consistent with media representations and public perception, but this prototype is also engrained in theoretical paradigms and research, in public policy, particularly in the United States, legal and criminal justice systems (Peterson 2008; Davis et al. 2008; Mills 1999). Until recently, partner violence as a single type was predominant in both theoretical approaches and empirical research (Felson and Cares 2005; Sokoloff and Pratt 2005). This stems in part from the fact that early partner violence research had roots in the Women's Movement, and established radical feminism as the leading theoretical framework (Felson and Cares 2005). Centered in the operation and effects of male patriarchy and social change, radical feminism explains partner violence as an attempt by males to maintain dominance and control over women, within an established system of male privilege (Dobash and Dobash 1979). In this perspective, because only men are motivated to dominate and control, only men are perpetrators of partner violence. From the standpoint of radical feminism, men are perpetrators of violence and control and women are victims, hence their reluctance to consider different types of partner violence in terms of motive, relationship, severity of violence, and context.

The Antiviolence Movement and Sameness

One of the issues that delayed the development of partner violence subcategories was the opposition of some activist scholars and agencies (Cavanaugh and Gelles 2005), fearing that focusing on differences would either dilute the anti-violence movement or blame the victim if women were included in typologies (Nixon and Humphreys 2010). The assertion that partner violence could happen to anyone was important to the movement. Nixon and Humphreys state that sameness is one of the key mobilizing tools of social movements. In order for a movement to recruit new members and thrive,

it must have a common appeal that supporters share. There must be common values, goals, or problems about which members feel strongly. In the case of the antiviolence against women movement, this means that new recruits and financial supporters must be able to identify with the victim (Nixon and Humphreys 2010). For this to happen, the victim must appear to be like them. This is evidenced in publications and websites of antiviolence advocacy organizations. Moreover, the antiviolence movement's ideology of change promotes the theme that partner violence could happen to any woman, regardless of who they are, where they live, their income, education, race/ethnicity, or station in life. Black feminists contend, however, that individuals experience each of the status factors differently and in different combinations. Failure to consider this was a main factor for feminists who lobbied for the Violence against Women Act and accepted its incorporation into the crime act (Daly 1994). They were not conscious of differences, or of how these differences could interact in the lives of victims of partner violence (Richie 2000).

Scholar-activists wanted change; their research, their community advocacy, and the treatment programs they sponsored in women's shelters reflected this goal. These programs initially focused on the need for men to recognize male dominance as the cause of their violence. These activists sought to change institutions, and carefully guarded the public impression of "battered women" in their scholarship and community advocacy. Radical feminists view society as a system in which men, not women, are the perpetrators of violence because men have the power and want to maintain it. Some activist scholars cautioned that if women were seen as perpetrators of violence, they could then be blamed for their own victimization suffered at the hands of their male partners (McCloskey 2007). Therefore, work for change maintained a single focus, which was not to the advantage of most victims of partner violence or for development of treatment programs for their abusers (Strolovitch 2006). They were less concerned about determining the victim's relationship and the meaning of violence to her life than about initiating social change that would protect women from battery. (Baker 1999; Daly 1994). Antiviolence agencies and scholar-activists were inclined to account for any women's violence in their research findings entirely as a form of resistance to violence committed against them. Thus, they would agree with Johnson (2005) that women sometimes used violent resistance, but unlike Johnson, they interpreted any violence by women as a way of resisting a violent, controlling male partner.

Intersectionality

Collins (1998) has pointed to the need for considering how various structural factors, such as race/ethnicity, class, and gender, jointly produce inequalities, and how these interlocking intersections affect intimate partner violence. Collins also emphasizes the importance of recognizing the lived experiences of people if we are to understand their behavior. This would counteract the tendency to focus on a single type of partner violence. Treating all types of partner violence as the same has led to the similar treatment of men, and increasingly of women, who engage it (Hirschel, Buzawa, Patavina, and Faggiant 2008). This holds, regardless of the relationship, the context, or the wishes of the people involved. Moreover, it has encouraged the treating of all partner violence as fitting the pattern of the violent, coercive, controlling male. Using the intersection-

ality paradigm could be especially useful in determining what approach to treatment would work best for a given individual.

Johnson (2005) attempts to resolve the question of whether women can be violent by distinguishing context. Researchers using data from shelters and agencies are sampling from a population of victims of coercive controlling, violent men. For most of these women, intimate terrorism is a reality in their everyday life. It is uncertain what proportion of perpetrators fit in this category, but there are estimates of 10 to 20 percent (Johnson 2005; Archer 2003). Data from surveys such as National Crime Victimization Survey and the National Violence against Women Survey find a smaller proportion of coercive, controlling men, since their samples drawn from the population as a whole, rather than from shelters and hospital emergency rooms.

The Consequences of Not Differentiating Among Types

Distinctions among types and contexts of partner violence have far-reaching implications for theory and research, public policy and prevention, as well as for treatment of victims and offenders. (Cramer 2009; Dixon 2008; Nixon and Humphreys 2010; Saunders 2008). Similarly, failure to make these distinctions among types of intimate partner violence has multiple consequences, both intended and unintended. The prototype of the violent coercive male has been used to justify warrant-less arrest laws for probable cause in cases of partner violence. Such laws now exist in all states, varying by state on whether warrant-less arrest is mandatory, preferred, or allowed (Buzawa and Buzawa 2008). Treating all intimate partner violence calls to police the same in the decision to arrest contributes to an increase in female and dual arrests and in the number of people who have criminal records (Hirschel et al. 2008). Since young African American men have high rates of previous arrest and incarceration, these laws disproportionately affect them. Moreover, young African American women who have been incarcerated for minor drug offenses are afraid to call the police if they are being assaulted because they know that they have a high likelihood of being arrested (Richie 1996; 2005). Some states and police districts include preferred arrest in cases of violence for other people who live in the household, regardless of their relationship to the perpetrator. The first Violence against Women Act was passed in 1994 as a part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. Through this act, Congress has provided funding for programs for the criminal justice system and encouraged new policies, such as presumptive arrest for domestic violence. Thus, the net continues to widen, such that private behavior is increasingly criminalized and placed in the public domain. (Davis et al. 2008; Davis, Smith, and Taylor 2003).

Conclusion

Distinguishing among types of offenders could reduce unnecessary arrest. It could also reduce the criminal justice and other economic costs of intimate partner violence. Treatment programs hold promise for situationally violent couples, but not for coercive controlling cases. In addition, providing appropriate types of treatment intervention for situationally violent couples could ease emotional stress and later potential for violence of children involved, having a positive impact on communities.

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Interfaith Families through Conversion to Islam: Akan Muslims in Southern Ghana1

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Abstract
This study explored family responses to a relatives' conversion to Islam in a country where Muslims are a minority. Fifteen Akans who embraced Islam in Ghana were interviewed. Target families were primarily Christian or followers of the customary Akan religion. My interviewees lived in the majority-Fante area on Ghana's coastal south. Family background questions focused on ethnicity, religious composition, and affluence. Questions about family response focused on rituals like naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals, but also on expressive and instrumental support. Instant adaptation, ongoing disruption, and sometimes a transition from disruption to adaptation emerged as familial patterns of response to Muslim conversion. Findings are contextualized in the far-reaching religious transformation of Africa over the past century; the increasing fragmentation of families where state-funded safety-nets are disappearing or nonexistent; and the need for more study of Muslim-minorities who primarily live outside of Southwest Asia and North Africa.

Background

In the last century, the growth of Muslim populations has become a notable phenomenon in many societies where the group had been small and invisible (Pew Forum 2010; Smith 2010; Samwini 2006; Westerlund 1999). Muslims have always appeared in a society as a religious minority of some sort, and often as immigrants too. Muslim immigrants often married locals (Mazrui 1994; Levtzion 1994; Curtis 2009; Levtzion 2000), but they also stimulated conversions which eventually produced indigenous Muslim communities (Wilks 1989; Wilks 2000; Levtzion 2000). Members of the earliest indigenous Muslim communities also transformed their families of origin into interfaith families. Typically, the interfaith families produced by conversion go unnoticed. Also, Muslims living in Muslim-minority countries attract less scholarly attention than those living in Muslim-majority societies. Yet, the study of such interfaith families may reveal strategies for managing the religiously plural social spaces (McCarthy 2007) that are created when Muslims emerge in previously non-Muslim communities and countries.

Ghana is a Muslim-minority country, and many Ghanaian Muslims are also religious minorities in their extended families (Samwini 2006). As such, Ghana provides an excellent opportunity to learn about interfaith families created by conversion. This paper will focus specifically on families which contain Muslims, Christians and followers of traditional African religions. However, Ghana is ethnically diverse. So, resource limitations require that this paper only focus on one collection of Ghanaian ethnic groups – the Akans.

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At first blush, one might expect conversion to Islam among Akans in Ghana to be a conflict-ridden affair because Christianity predominates among them. Most Westerners are familiar with the pervasive idea that Christianity and Islam are inherently incompatible (Huntington 1996). Generally, the two religious identities are constructed as mutually exclusive.2 Furthermore, centuries of contact between Muslims and Akan political elites have never produced a Muslim emperor or king, as happened among some other ethnic groups in the region.3 Nevertheless, today Ghana has Akan Muslims whose families of origin remain primarily or significantly non-Muslim. Research on these families is meaningful beyond the Akan, and even beyond Ghana. The research is relevant wherever family fragmentation contributes to social problems, and where Muslim-minority populations are gaining indigenous converts.

With a country's social service capabilities stretched thin, knowing about factors that might increase the homeless and socially marginalized population is important. Like Ghana, many societies hold a negative public image of Muslims. Indeed, many Ghanaians seem to associate Muslims with violence and poverty (Weiss 2007), as do many Sub-Saharan Africans in general (Pew Forum 2010). Therefore, it does not seem far-fetched to think that conversions to Islam might result in familial conflict. Such conflict could leave Muslims at the margins of their birth families, and recipients of inadequate social services. At the extreme, such conflict could result in more homelessness and related social problems.

Demographic Changes in Ghanaian Religion

European Christians first settled among Fante Akans in Elmina (and nearby Cape Coast) over 500 years ago. Yet, Christianity only spread among the southern indigenous people in the last 150 years. In 1960, the first politically independent census of Ghana was taken. At that time, nearly 24 percent of the population had converted to Christianity (Samwini 2006). Meanwhile, at least 600 years of Islam had only produced a small Muslim population, and most Muslims were in the far north of what became Ghana. Only 7 percent of Ghanaians were Muslim in the 1960 census. Forty years later, both groups had grown at the expense of traditional religions. In the 2000 census, 69 percent of Ghanaians were found to be Christian, and 16 percent were Muslim (Weiss 2007). Fertility, migration and conversion each play a role in Ghana's expanding Muslim minority.

However, because of the recent emergence of Muslim communities among non-immigrant groups4 in Southern Ghana, this study is focused on conversion. Again, an outside observer might expect conversion to present challenges to family functioning and unity. For example, Akans who convert to Islam could abandon matrilineal5 practices in favor of the patrilineal descent accepted among most Muslim populations. Converts would likely refuse to make blood sacrifices to nature spirits and ancestors. Most would spurn traditional divination practices, and some would spurn all forms of divination. Whether new Akan Muslims do any or all of these things, the mere introduction of additional ambiguity in kinship practices is the concern. The "family safety net" may be unlikely to perform its function when rites are not observed and obligations are in doubt.

Hence, a central concern of this study is that some Akan families might margin-

alize their Muslim members. They could fail to invite or acknowledge Muslim members during marriages, naming ceremonies, and funerals. Families could block a Muslim's access to elder-hood, headship or chief and queen-mother positions (where applicable). Families could even take extreme measures to disrupt or undo the conversion by withdrawing all instrumental and expressive support. Clearly, some families would fragment if such was the response to conversion. Other families might continue with family life little changed after a conversion. This range of reactions must be considered because Ghanaian families are under tremendous strain today, and neither a welfare state, nor NGOs, nor public charities are sufficient to meet the needs of shunned family members.

Tensions between Ghanaian Muslims and Christians

Ghana has several Muslim communities, and some have very distinct Islamic doctrines, practices, and authority structures.6 Prior research has already shown that intra-religious "conversion" among Muslims can disrupt family stability. Wilks (1989) found that when Muslims from Wa embraced Ahmadiyya Muslim doctrines, they were not allowed to marry women from families of the traditional Muslim backgrounds. Bari (2009) documented how Tijani and Wahhabi-oriented youth among the Sisala clashed with their traditional Muslim parents over burial rituals. However, this research says nothing about inter-religious conversion and conflict.

Only Samwini (2006) documented the Ahmadiyya Muslims' campaign against Christians in Ghana. Fante Muslims first invited the Ahmadiyya to Ghana in 1921. As suggested above, the Ahmadi's focus was on transforming the Ghanaian Muslim community. However, after about 50 years (and some violent encounters) the Ahmadis shifted most of their attention to Ghanaian Christians. Since the 1970s, their activities have contributed to a state of heightened tension between Muslim and Christian Ghanaians who had never clashed before (Samwini 2006). Ghanaian Muslims and Christians now openly preach against one another. They even hold public debates between religious leaders. Today, the Ahmadiyya headquarters in Ghana is based in Salt Pond, a town in majority-Christian Fante-country. In this highly charged context, it is logical to expect tension to follow conversion to Islam from a Christian, or even a traditionalist family.

Methods

My data was gathered over several trips to Ghana. I conducted structured interviews in English and in Fante with one of two different translators who also helped me identify and contact participants. The study began with my first trip to Ghana in the summer of 2009. I stayed for 2 months, and conducted 10 interviews while in the country. After returning to the U.S., I renewed my study of the literature on Islam in the region. Another trip to Ghana in 2010 lasted for 2 months and produced 5 interviews.

In the midst of all this scholarly activity and teaching, I also married into an inter-ethnic Ghanaian family at the level of my wife's father's compound. At the extended-kin network level, hers is also an inter-faith family consisting of Muslims and Christians. Discussions with my new in-laws, as well as personally experiencing a Ghanaian Sisala/Hausa7 wedding, provided unique insights and even added questions about "mates" to this study. However, my experiences were concentrated in the more Christian-identified South, with very short trips to the more Muslim-identified North.

Ghana's sheer diversity mandates that my findings be viewed in the context of an exploratory study. My findings are the most relevant to the Fante coastal area between Accra and Elmina. I spent most of my time, and primarily interviewed residents of, this coastal strip.

The findings reported here are based on individual interviews8 with Ghanaians who converted to Islam. Interviewees were asked background questions on their geographic origin, ethnic identity, family's socio-economic status indicators, and family members' religious identities. Then they were asked questions dealing with traditional African family life events, especially weddings, naming ceremonies, and funerals. Each was probed to elicit actual family reactions, and then family reactions expected by the interviewee if a particular event were to occur—like the interviewee's own funeral.9 Additional questions focused on instrumental and financial support. Questions directed the interviewee to compare family life before conversion to Islam with family life after conversion.

Socioeconomic Status. Reckoning class, status, and religion in Ghana can be difficult, but important for a study like this. In the lands that became Southern Ghana, there was historical resistance to social elites converting to Islam. For example, Ashanti emperor Osei Kwame was deposed in 1798 because it was feared that he would convert and then "establish the Koranic law for civil code of the empire" (Diouf 1998:31). This king was highly involved with Muslims and died mysteriously in 1803 (Robinson 2006). Similarly, in an informal discussion with one of my informants, I was told a story about a Fante princess who embraced Islam in the late 1700s. She was cast out of the village by her royal family, and did not return while alive. However, she had many daughters who have given her line of the family a large number of descendants. Because Fantes are matrilineal, this royal family is now majority Muslim. Yet, the Muslims are reluctant to ascend to chief or queen mother positions because the occupant must perform traditional customs which conflict with their understanding of Islamic piety (oral interview). If these examples indicate a general tendency, embracing Islam may be difficult for members of elite Akan families due to community pressures.

Yet, lineage is not the only door to high status positions in Ghana. By graduating from university and landing a professional job, one can enhance or maintain family prestige. For that reason, I asked each respondent how many people in the family had earned a university degree. If none had a university degree, I asked how many had completed secondary school. I also asked respondents to classify their families by income. It is not culturally appropriate to ask a specific dollar amount. Therefore, I had interviewees specify their family financial standing in relation to "the average Ghanaian family" (i.e. richer, poorer, or in the average income range).

Family Religion. Until two centuries ago, many polities that commanded respect beyond their own borders were Muslim-ruled, if not majority-Muslim. In those days, when West African people embraced Islam they were joining a trans-continental network of respected scholars, traders, rulers, artisans, and warriors. In that era, becoming Muslim could easily be associated with becoming more "civilized" (Diouf 1998; Hunwick 2006) in the eyes of West Africans. Muslim political and economic standing, at that time, would have lent an air of credence to this notion.

However, as growing European hegemony undermined the economic vitality

and political influence of Muslim societies across the globe, they experienced downward structural mobility; Ghana's Muslims included. Over the past 100 years, the overall image of Muslims in Ghana has been stigmatized through an association with violence, illiteracy, and poverty (Pew Forum 2010; Weiss 2007; Samwini 2006). By no means is this the only image, though, as Ghana always has an Islam-affiliated northerner serve as vice-president.

While the prestige of Islam was declining, becoming Christian in West Africa was increasingly becoming associated with being "civilized" because of the association of Western models of Christianity with the narrow conception of progress that is believed to be rooted in "superior" European cultures (Triaud 2000). During British rule, and after decolonization, Christianity spread much more rapidly in Ghana than Islam did. This suggests that if there is a religious status hierarchy in Ghana, Christianity holds the most esteemed position. The general dominance of Christians among the Ghanaian political, economic, and social elite also lends credence to this notion.

Since there is probably a religious status hierarchy in Ghana, it seemed important to note whether a convert's family was inter-religious, traditionalist, or Christian before he embraced Islam. One might expect an inter-religious family to be fairly accepting of additional conversions. Thus, the more Muslims already in the family the less conflict was expected after a conversion.

Findings

At the time of the interviews, all respondents lived in the southern Coastal areas between Elmina and Accra, which I call Fante-country. Indeed, as Table 1 shows, all but two of my respondents were in solidly Fante families. They tended to have two Fante biological parents and all-Fante extended families. The two respondents who were not specifically Fante still had Akan mothers. One respondent was Ashanti, and another had only an Akan mother (although neither Ashanti nor Fante). In one sense, then, this empirical data reflects Akan families with a heavy focus on Fantes.

Table 1 also shows that most respondents' families either were poor, or occupied a middle socioeconomic rank. Less than half of these Akan families were inter-religious at the time of conversion. That is, the family was not entirely of one faith. In only six of these inter-religious families, were there Muslims in the family before the respondent converted. Therefore, most respondents in this study were the only Muslims in their families at the time of conversion. One respondent, though, was a special case. His fiancée converted with him, and this occurred during the traditional marriage process.10 The families in which Muslims already existed usually had only one or two other Muslims. However, one respondent reported that there were 4 other Muslims in his family when he converted, and another said that his family was half Muslim and half Christian when he converted.

Table 2 shows how the interviewees' families responded to Islamic conversion. Two modes of response emerged for the 15 families involved in this study: adaptation and disruption. Adaptation was characterized by the family implementing an effective way of managing religious differences to keep everyone in the family. The Muslims remained participating members of the family with equal standing, and they were still invited to naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals. If they needed financial or in-

strumental assistance, the Muslim converts knew that their non-Muslim relatives would help them. Alternatively, a family could be disrupted after a member converted to Islam. The family could break off relations. They could evict the convert from the family compound. They could stop inviting him to family rituals such as naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals, or even block him from attending if he found out such events were happening. Finally, the family could withdraw the financial and other instrumental support which most Ghanaians still need from their relatives.

Initially, these responses seemed mutually exclusive, but some families responded in both modalities at different times. This process would begin with disruption. Then the family would adapt after some time had elapsed. The possibility of transitions required me to reckon the duration of each family's response. While some families changed their response within less than a year, others took several years, and still others remained disrupted up to the time of the interview. The possibilities are represented in Table 2.

The most common response was adaptation. Nine families immediately provided a supportive atmosphere for conversion. In three cases, a family member even facilitated the conversion. For example, in one inter-religious family the respondent's older brother converted to Islam first, and then began teaching the religion to all of his siblings. Prior to that, the whole family had been followers of the traditional Fante religion. In two families, non-Muslim relatives encouraged my interviewees to embrace Islam. In one case, it was because of the dreams he had been having. In another, the interviewee's traditionalist mother was asked to encourage him to become Muslim by a woman with marital interests in him.

Table 1: Interviewees and Their Families (N = 15)	
Ethnicity	
Fante	13
Other Akan	1
Mixed	1
SES	
Poorer	7
Average	5[a]
More Affluent	4 [a]
Family Religion	
Christian	5
Traditional	3
Mixed	7
Muslims in Family	
Respondent only	9
<2 others	4
>2 others	2

[a] Note: One respondent is counted as both average and affluent because of his parents' divorce and his subsequent change in class position during childhood. The respondent's father was affluent, but not paying alimony or child support. His mother was of average-income.

Table 2: Nature and Duration of Family Response to Islamic Conversion		
	Adaptation	**Disruption**
Never		
Less than a year		1
1-5 years		1
More than 5 years	10	3

These families chose to compromise on how to do family rituals. For example, Muslim naming ceremonies are done in a distinctly Islamic idiom. Unlike Fante naming ceremonies, they do not involve liquor. Also, most interviewees of adapted families mentioned that all of their relatives could attend and watch the naming ceremony, but non-Muslim relatives could not substantively participate in the religious ritual. Instead, the Muslim community would conduct the rituals. In addition to watching, though, the convert's family could enjoy the socializing, food, and festivities that accompany such events. Naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals are all performed in a distinct manner by Akans who have become Muslim. Nevertheless, the differences are surmountable. Most of my participants' families adapted to being interreligious. The conversion disrupted neither the unity nor functioning of the family.

Some families were initially disrupted, but did not remain in that state. One family took less than a year to transition from partially disrupted to fully adapted. The convert's father was initially "happy to see his children praying," but soon encountered resistance from extended kin. As it turned out, the convert's eldest brother had learned to use the Bible, a generally respected book, to explain Islam to Fante people. So, he showed his father Biblical evidence to support Islam. The father used this same evidence to bring the extended family into a conciliatory position. This respondent reported that, when he later got married and had children, his extended family members were there. While he only had one Muslim wedding, he had nine children, each followed by a naming ceremony. Another transitional family's reaction was described by the convert as "terrible in the beginning." He said that they only relented once it became known to the whole family that some of their ancestors had been Muslim. The fact that there once were "Muslims in the family" allowed the family to accept his conversion as a "reversion."

The final case of a transition from disruption to adaptation took five years, and resulted in many more conversions within the family. This family had been solidly Christian before my interviewee converted, and (more importantly) affluent. When the young man converted in 1985, he was immediately put out of the family and accused of joining "the wicked people." He had to survive on his own, and with whatever support the Muslim community could give him. Five years later, his family saw him "dressed well" and participating in a big parade marking the end of Ramadan. This precipitated a change of heart by his relatives. They "laid a red carpet" before his feet, and then invited him to the family house where the elders gave him their blessings. While the elders in his family remained Christian until death, 10 of his siblings converted to Islam after he was allowed back into the family fold in 1990.

Many of his old friends also converted after 1990. Friends, called "mates" or

"colleagues" by most Ghanaians, are such an important part of a person's support network that they fit the anthropological definition of "fictive kin." Despite a lack of blood or legal ties, the expectation of sharing among mates can be as strong as that between other kin. Conversion of a young man to Islam can disrupt shared recreation time involving alcohol and pursuing women. Yet, this interviewee reported that over 100 of his mates have embraced Islam since 1990. This was unquestionably the most dramatic transition from disruption to adaptation. Indeed, no matter how it is defined this family adapted to having not just a Muslim, but to having a sizable Muslim contingent.

For three of my interviewees, more than five years after their conversion, the families showed no signs of adapting to the presence of a Muslim member. One of these families is the most salient because the convert is known all over Southern Ghana – as is his story.11 His affluent uncle had paid for his secondary schooling and then sent him to a Christian seminary school. This uncle had also found him a wife and facilitated his becoming the preacher for a well-to-do church community. Then, the church procured a nice apartment for him in an exclusive neighborhood. It also gave him a business to run. Focused on faith in Christ as the only path to God, his preaching soon featured regular attacks against Islam and Muslims. As a result, he was invited to participate in public debates against Muslim preachers in several southern cities and towns. At some debates he won Christian converts, but at others the Muslims gained converts. The 10th debate ended when my interviewee converted to Islam. After such a dramatic conversion, his uncle led the family in rejecting him; the church reclaimed his flat and his business. The final blow was when his wife, who remains Christian, divorced him.

Still able to draw a crowd because his story is well-known, this new Mallam12 is now debating against Christian preachers. However, his family-situation is difficult. He lives alone in a small apartment, and the only people he can call family are his fictive kinfolk in the Muslim community. At the time of the interview, he was also struggling to gain custody of his son. His wife remained hostile to Islam, but he wanted the boy to be raised as a Muslim.

Four of the five cases in which conversion disrupted the family involved affluent or middle class families. The single case in which a poor family was disrupted was short lived, and it involved devotees of the traditional Fante religion instead of Christians. Within less than a year, the poor family had adjusted to being inter-religious. Meanwhile, in all 4 affluent cases, the family disruption lasted at least five years. One family transitioned to adjustment after 5 years, and even produced additional converts, but in three affluent families no transition has occurred. Nearly all of these interviewees' relatives stopped inviting them to family rituals. They also are unwilling to extend instrumental and expressive support. For one interviewee, though, his traditionalist grandmother and Muslim aunt continue to maintain ties with him. If the rest of the family were to press the matter, this situation could fragment the family or totally isolate the Muslim convert. Overall, though, these three families have not been able to modify their identity and rituals to integrate a member who became Muslim.

Conclusion

This study found two kinds of Akan family responses to Muslim conversion: adaptation and disruption - with transition from disruption to adaptation as a special combination of the two. Adaptation was the typical response for these families. This

usually meant that no family members resisted the conversion, and sometimes they even assisted it. It also meant that naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals continued to be attended by family members of all faiths. Non-Muslim relatives could not substantively participate in Muslim relatives' rituals, but this compromise was accepted. Both instrumental and expressive support continued to flow across religious lines within these families. If quantitative research should find this to be the typical response, then if Muslim conversion continues there is hope for a peaceful religious pluralism in the future. This would mitigate the chances of religious violence erupting as an epiphenomenon of inter-ethnic and political tension. As Mazrui (1994:123) concludes "on the whole, religion in sub-Saharan Africa is probably divisive mainly when it reinforces a pre-existing ethnic differentiation." In Ghana, the perceived confluence of religious and class differences may be a problem.

Disruption was concentrated among the affluent families, and lasted the longest among them. When disruption occurred among poorer families it was short-lived. The poorer families that were disrupted, and even one affluent family, transitioned to an adaptation response. This was facilitated by direct efforts to explain Islam to family members who lacked knowledge of the faith, or as an unintended consequence of other actions.

Conversely, the notion that a religious status hierarchy in Ghana would be relevant to conversion was not supported by this study. Christian families did not seem to react to Muslim conversions as a threat to family status. Indeed, one Christian mother told her son that he probably should become Muslim because of his dreams. The man whose Christian family said that he had "joined the wicked people" seems to be balanced by such a case. What undoubtedly remains a concern for Western readers, though, is the converse scenario. That is, readers may wonder how Muslim families respond to their children embracing Christianity or some other faith.

Perhaps this is why McCarthy (2007) has suggested that members of inter-religious families gain rare civic skills that religiously diverse societies need. This is especially relevant in places like Southern Ghana (or even the United States), where widespread Muslim-Christian interaction is a recent phenomenon, and where negative stereotypes about Muslims abound (Samwini 2006; Weiss 2007). More than one African country has seen religious tension exacerbate social conflicts. Ghanaians have an opportunity to avoid such problems. They can systematically observe successfully adapted inter-religious Akan families, and then share the lessons gleaned with other Ghanaians through television, film, music, and schools. Indeed, the successes in Ghana could help produce a model of peaceful coexistence for other countries whose religious demography is producing conflict.

Despite the challenges with some affluent families, the findings of this study primarily paint a positive picture of how Akan families adjust to Muslim conversion. However, the study limitations must be borne in mind. Because they are based on qualitative data and a convenience sample, these findings cannot tell us anything about the prevalence of disruption and adaptation. Only rigorous survey data collected from random samples can provide generalizable information on prevalence.

Also, this study is limited to male converts. A female interviewer was not available, and an un-related male cannot easily interview female Muslims. Yet, it is important

to know if families react differently when females convert. Like most societies, Ghana is patriarchal. Hence, males are generally allowed more autonomy than females are. The conversion of a female could be a greater challenge for families that have less tolerance for daughters acting independently. Also, among the matrilineal Akan groups, the children born to a female member of the family remain in the lineage. So, if female converts raise their children as Muslims, the family can expect to have more Muslims within one or two generations. Such a possibility could raise special fears among Akan people.

Finally, there is the issue of who reports on family behavior. Muslim converts have their own subjective experience of their family's responses. The non-Muslim segments of these families might construct altogether narratives. Future studies should address such shortcomings.

Notes

1. This research was facilitated by the Morehouse Pan-African Global Experience (MPAGE) during the summers of 2009 and 2010. I would also like to acknowledge my Ghanaian collaborators: Rilwan "Ambassadar" Adamu, Fakiratu "Fikira" Adamu-King, and Issahaku Suleiman.
2. See Murata & Chittick (1994) to understand how Christians can also be Muslim.
3. Contact between Muslims and traditionalist ruling families of the ancient Sahelian states (e.g. Ancient Ghana, Mali, Songhai, and the Hausa states) produced many conversions among the nobility. This is why Muslim-ruled polities have a 1,000 year-old history in West Africa (Levztion 2000; Wilks 2000).
4. Historically immigrant populations are prominent among Ghana's Muslims. The Hausa are known to have immigrated from Northern Nigeria and Niger in recent centuries, and their language is a kind of lingua-franca for many Muslim communities in Ghana. The Fulani are a historically nomadic people with roots typically considered to be in the Senegambia region. The Wangara were originally traders coming from Ancient Mali, which is North and West of Ghana.
5. Especially relevant, here, is the extent to which children belong to their mother's or father's family. Family belonging has ramifications for child naming, child care, schooling fees, marriage ceremonies, and more (Billingsley 1968)
6. The three self-conscious and bureaucratically-organized Muslim communities in Ghana are the Tijaniyya (originated in North Africa but indigenized in West Africa during the 1800s), Wahhabiyya (originated in Saudi Arabia), and Ahdmadiyya (originated in British-ruled India). A fourth group is neither self-conscious nor bureaucratically-organized, but can be called the Suwarian community – named after the scholar whose interpretation of Islam has facilitated Muslim minorities to live peacefully in the forest belt and along the coast for centuries (Wilks 2000). Suwarians may be found among the oldest Muslim communities around Wa and Gonja, as well as among the Wangara of Elmina and Cape Coast. The Tijani are noted for interpreting Islam in a way that is only slightly in conflict with traditional African culture and spiritual practices. Like Suwarians, they may use amulets to ward off evil, exorcize witches, organize elaborate funerals, and battle evil spirits. The Wahhabis and Ahmadis are noted for their near-wholesale rejection of traditional African culture and spirituality, which they tend to see as synonymous with idolatry or paganism (Samwini 2006).
7. The Hausa homeland is in Northern Nigeria and Niger, but some Hausa families

have been in present day Ghana for several centuries. Samwini's (2006) observations suggest that the Hausa have probably been the single most influential ethnic group in the Ghanaian Tijani Muslim community. My personal experiences in Ghana suggest that Hausa is a lingua-franca for many Muslims in Ghana, and that Hausa culture has been quite influential among Muslims, too.

8. Three respondents insisted on being interviewed at the same time. So, some of the dynamics of a focus group may have affected their responses. However, their responses to my questions did not reveal any pattern of conformity. To the contrary, each of them told unique stories, even to the point of making statements like "Well, it was not like that for me. Here is what I experienced…"

9. Talking about one's own death is not seen in problematic terms for most observant Muslims. It is rather a topic that one is encouraged to reflect upon frequently. This keeps one's actions in this world contextualized in their meaning for the next world: paradise or punishment.

10. Traditionally, a marriage in Ghana can take months, or even years, as the groom and his family purchase and deliver traditional gifts to the bride's family, and finally save up enough money to pay the bride-price. Also, Muslims have an additional payment that is called the mahr or bride-gift. Unlike bride-price, which goes to the bride's father, the Islamic mahr goes only to the bride.

11. While other stories have been changed to maintain the anonymity of the interviewee, this man's story is told and retold all over Southern Ghana. Indeed, he asked that I tell his story to as many people as possible. He is trying to raise funds to support his continued preaching.

12. A titular honor given to Muslims who are especially learned in the religion.

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Family and Religion in Luba Life: Centrality, Pervasiveness, Change and Continuity

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Abstract

The Luba people who are the focus of this article live the eastern Kasai Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Luba established one of the great pre-colonial empires of the central Congo savannah. It stretched from the eastern Congo River to Lake Tanzania and northwest to the convergence of the Lulua and Kasai Rivers.1 The family occupies a central place in the personal life of each Luba man or woman and in the social, economic, and political organization of Luba society. Anthropological studies from as early as the 1950s have stressed the central position of the family in the social organization of African societies (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde 1953). The purpose of this article is to review the principal elements of the organizational structure of Luba society that convey power and importance to the Luba family. Luba people's conception of the purpose and role of the family, of values and norms that inspire and regulate their behaviors as family members, as well as the actual changing forms of their familial behaviors across the time can inform us on these elements (Van Caeneghem 1956; Mukenge 1967; 2002). Calling on the author's previous fieldwork among the Luba and other early studies, this article examines, in anthropological and historical contexts, religion and worldview as pivotal in defining relationships between family and other social institutions. A list of selected references is included.

The Centrality of the Family Institution

The Family and the Individual

Achievement requires strength, hard work and supernatural blessings. The family plays a key role in the Luba philosophy of achievement. The family assumes the responsibility to instill the respect and the desire for these values into its members. The family is the principal agent of socialization. It provides the nurturing through childcare, protection against disease and evil doers, and care for the dying, all of which are necessary for building strength. Hard work occupies an important place in the Luba system of socialization. Luba parents teach their children the spirit of achievement by involving them in achieving activities of adults, insistently exhorting them to achieve, and rewarding those who do achieve with praise. Through a religion based in ancestral veneration, the family provides the potential achiever with supernatural assurance that encourages sustained action, and supernatural explanations that help them cope with failures.

The importance of the family in the life of an individual also manifests itself in other ways. For example, the family confers legitimacy, social recognition, status, and acceptability. For instance, a child born outside of marriage did not have a welcome place in the family of either parent unless the child was legitimized by marriage after the birth. For this reason, a girl's virginity before marriage was mandatory. If she became pregnant before marriage, both families exerted pressure on the boy to marry her. This marriage act would save her family from disgrace, but more importantly, it would give the unborn child a chance to be fully accepted into his corporate family group.

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Marriage stability is also emphasized in Luba society. With legitimacy, it explains the importance placed on the faithfulness of the married woman. In traditional Luba society, the unfaithful wife could be beaten to death, not only by her husband but also by his brothers and sisters. When her life was spared, she was either repudiated or forced to pay considerable fines to her in-laws for reinstatement and make a sacrificial offering to the husband's ancestors. A man caught in adulterous action with a married woman could also be justifiably put to death.

The family provides the individual with his identity and determines his rights and privileges in society. To identify himself to others, a Luba person would give his name, his father's name, and his grandfather's name. He would also outline the lineages to which he belongs through his father. Family membership entitles him to free use of the land that belongs to the lineage. Although the importance of love in marriage is acknowledged, a Luba person does not marry for love alone. He marries to establish a family with many children. And the children are not desired for selfish reasons, but as a contribution to the perpetuation and expansion of the patrilineage. Marriage, the act by which families are formed, requires an agreement between the groom's family and the bride's family. When concluded, a marriage is not a contract between the two spouses but an alliance between their two families, expected to last even beyond the lives of the spouses.

For most young men, marriage would be impossible without the family. Marriage requires that the groom's family pay a dowry (bridewealth) to the bride's family. In Luba villages, the amount of wealth required for marriage is generally too high for a young man to accumulate it by his own efforts. In most cases, he has to rely on the wealth of his father, other close relatives, or the bridewealth that his sisters and female cousins will bring in when they marry. Because of this practice, young boys are spared the anxiety of growing up wondering how they will obtain the necessary bridewealth for their marriages. Because of established rules of assigning the bridewealth from the marriages of female relatives, each boy knows, long before the age of majority, which female relative will bring in, through marriage, the bridewealth that will enable him to marry a wife.

The traditional family took care of its members through marriage in two additional ways: the *levirate* and the *sororate*. In *levirate*, a man marries the widow of a deceased brother. In sororate, a man marries the sister of his deceased wife. Through these practices, the marriage is preserved with a substitute wife or husband. In either case, the children of the deceased continue to have two parents. In addition to the fact that in *levirate* or *sororate* one of the biological parents continues to live with them, Luba children are raised in such a way that the loss of a parent does not become a major disruption in their lives. Indeed, during their parents' lifetime, children are raised as sons and daughters of many fathers and mothers. In Luba villages, daily meals are shared with children and adults from other families, mutual visits are frequent among relatives who live in distant locations, and fostering is practiced without formalities or protocol.

Family, Religion and Ecology

The Luba are patrilineal, that is, they trace descent, inherit property, and obtain citizenship through the father's line. They practice patrilocality as well. Generally, when a man marries, he and his wife settle among the members of his paternal lineage. Be-

cause of patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence, the Luba family venerates the ancestors of the husband. Three spirits venerated are those of a man's paternal grandfather, his paternal grandmother, and his father. The shrines that house the two male spirits are placed on the east side of the senior wife's house. The tree that symbolizes the dwelling of the female spirit is situated on the west side of her house. The presence of these spiritual forces transforms the senior wife's house into a powerful location. Where tradition is maintained in Luba society, the senior wife's house faces south. The major rivers in the area run south to north. As rivers are reputed to carry scourges, the upstream orientation of this spiritually powerful house constitutes a strategic placement for protection of the community's welfare.

Family, Economy and Religion

The Luba are primarily agriculturalists. Production is organized through the nuclear family household, whether monogamous or polygamous. Husbands, wives, and children have their own fields. The products of their fields belong to them collectively under the supervision of the husband-father. Unlike production, consumption always involves the larger community. Consumers include members of the extended family, particularly the man's patrilineal family because of the rules of patrilineal descent and patrilocal residence. A Luba expression describing this practice can be translated as, "Food is cultivated by one, but consumed by many."

Corn (maize) is the main food crop in Lubaland. The first corn harvest of the season is offered to the ancestral spirits and everyone present shares a meal. Corn represents the subsistence phase of agricultural production. But the Luba do not work in their fields for subsistence alone. They also work to accumulate wealth. They invest proceeds from produce sales to buy livestock, usually chickens and goats. They use some profits from produce and livestock sales to pay dowries for themselves and their relatives. At each step in the wealth accumulation process, the individual is expected to offer his first earnings to the elder who represents the ancestors. In the case of acquiring a first wife, this offering is symbolic. The representative of the ancestral spirits receives the wife as a present, performs a ritual blessing and returns her to the husband. Through this practice, the representative of the ancestors metaphorically carries out his duty as the elder to acquire a wife for his junior relatives.

The Family and the Political System

Given the importance attached to the family, all the founders of Luba chiefdoms are typically portrayed as family men who immigrated to the area with their wives, children, and a few followers, mostly close relatives. Even the evolution of the chiefdoms after the arrival of the immigrants is simply a collection of family histories.

Luba chiefdoms are subdivided into political segments that oral tradition traces to conflicts between the founders' children over their fathers' power and wealth. The various political segments comprising the chiefdom are assigned political functions based on whether the members of the segment descended from the founder's senior wife or from his other wives. For example, only members of the segment descending from the senior wife are traditionally allowed to contend for the office of paramount chief. And when they do, they must receive investiture from authorized descendants of the founder's other wives to be accepted as legitimate leaders.

Segments of the chiefdom are subdivided along family lines into smaller units

that are populated by individual families descended from the founders. Their members have free access to the land by virtue of their family membership. Even among those who are eligible for the office of paramount chief by their descent, only family men can become chiefs. The Luba cannot conceive of a chief without a family. Only a strong man can compete for political office. A strong man is a family man first and a wealthy man second. Moreover, the resources necessary to obtain the chief's position is much more than one individual, however wealthy, can take on alone. The cooperation and material support of other family members is indispensable. Thus, access to the chieftaincy is also a family strategy.

The Triple Role of Religion

Enabling

Religion plays three major roles in the life of practitioners: enabling, integrating, and sublimating. The domain of religion includes beliefs in the existence of invisible supernatural forces whose powers make things happen within the human communities. The universe and all that exists in it were created and sustained by the Supreme Being (Mvidi Mukulu), who is the ultimate source of all blessings that human beings enjoy on earth, including health, family, wealth, and power. At creation, God placed a bit of His divine essence in every individual, the principle of life. At death, the principle of life becomes a pure spirit, freed from the limitations of the human body. Thereafter, the principle of life recovers a stronger level of the vital force placed in it by God at creation. Pure spirits therefore occupy an intermediate position between the Supreme God who possesses the highest level of divine power and human beings who possess the lowest level of divine power.

One special category of pure spirits is that of ancestors. Given the greater portions of God's power invested in them, ancestors are closer to God than their living descendants are. Also, as family members and past human beings, the ancestors continue to be involved in the daily life of their earthly relatives. Because of this privileged position of being closer to God yet still involved in the affairs of the living, the ancestors are the immediate providers of blessings for the members of their terrestrial family. The ancestors expect to be recognized by the recipients of these blessings, and they punish the disobedient and greedy ones who refuse to share with relatives.

The Luba value legitimate children and wealth acquired through one's own hard work. The greatest blessings they attribute to the ancestral spirits are the capacity to procreate and to work. Having many children, acquiring wealth through one's own efforts or the work of a son, and the marriage of a daughter are major occasions for sacrificing to the ancestral spirits. Failure to do so can be punished by the ancestral spirits with sterility, miscarriages, unsuccessful harvests and hunts, illness, and inability to work or to find a job.

Integrating

Luba religious beliefs and ancestral veneration rituals foster cohesion among the members of the extended family. In Luba worldview, human life begins as an act of solidarity among several past, present, and future generations of the extended family. For example, a baby's conception may have been enabled by offerings made by the grandfather to the spirit of his own grandfather. Many other acts of solidarity are exhib-

ited in the handling of wealth and the sharing of sacrificial meals.

Handling Wealth. The ancestors obligate those who become prosperous to share their possessions with them through the elders who represent them among the living. Each time a person brings in a present, the recipient elder welcomes him and accepts the gift. He introduces the donor to the ancestral spirits and offers sacrifices for the blessing of the donor's family and all his undertakings. Encouraged by these acts, the donor will pursue his productive activities, confident in the future and determined to succeed. The ancestors have also provided mechanisms for some obligations to be fulfilled symbolically, as in the case of the obligation to transfer the first wife to the elder representing the ancestors. Instead of an actual marriage, the elder symbolically accepts the wife, offers sacrifices to the ancestral spirits, and returns her to her husband.

To prevent exploitative accumulation of wealth by the beneficiary of bridewealth tributes by ancestral right, the ancestors obligate him to transfer wealth from his own work to another, and becoming the beneficiary of a bridewealth creates an obligation to reciprocate. The normal use of bridewealth is to obtain a wife for a family member. The ancestral norm obligates a man whose bridewealth is paid by anyone other than his own father to reciprocate with the bridewealth that comes to him from his first daughter's marriage.

Sharing Sacred Meals. Whenever a sacrifice is made to a particular spirit, it is assumed that the spirit will share the feast with other spirits of his kind, say other male spirits or the spirits of other paternal grandmothers. The Luba believe that these spirits actually partake of the meal mystically. Similarly, the person who offers sacrifices to the ancestral spirits will always invite his others to participate in the meal. Actually, sacred meals are occasions for communion by members of a group even larger than the extended family. In terms of ancestral rights and obligations, a man's extended family includes his paternal grandfather and all his descendants all way down to the man's own grandchildren and those of his siblings and cousins. However, when a man makes sacrifices of roosters to his ancestors, he invites to the feast not only those present from among the members of his extended family, but also representatives from certain families with which he shares common ancestry at a higher level. When he sacrifices a goat, he invites representatives from families with which he is united in a broader context. Women and children consume sacrificial meals prepared in honor of the spirit of the paternal grandmother. In some lineages, all wives and children are authorized to take part in the feast. In others, only the senior wives and their children are.

Ranking

As in other religions, ancestral veneration is a reflection of society in many respects. The Luba society is organized based on descent. The extended family supersedes the nuclear family. Seniority is the major criterion for ordering relationships among relatives. The ancestral spirits occupy a position of preeminence as senior members of the extended family. Ancestral veneration is an extension of the respect that every Luba person owes his or her elders. In other words, ancestral veneration is the elevation of family eldership to a supernatural, divine, rank.

The Luba value procreation. Desirable procreation takes place in marriage. Only through marriage can procreation contribute to the expansion and perpetuation of the lineage. Luba ancestors protect marriage and legitimate procreation by prohibiting

the infidelity of the wife, by forbidding the man to house his legitimate wife, especially the senior wife, in a home he has reviled with extra-marital relations, or to return to her wife the same day he has had sexual intercourse with another woman.

The Luba practice polygamy. Because of the rule of seniority, the first wife occupies a position of preeminence in respect to her co-wives. Ancestral veneration reinforces the preeminence of the senior wife by making her house their headquarters. The shrines for the male ancestors and the tree symbolizing the principal female ancestor are located in her courtyard. She is the only one whose children replace the father in receiving the tributes owed him by his children for their power to work and to procreate.

Marriage stability is a high value among the Luba. When there are serious disputes between spouses, relatives of both sides intervene as counselors in order to prevent divorce. Divorce is only easily accepted in case of adultery (of the wife) and witchcraft. Luba ancestors do not prohibit divorce, repudiation, or abandonment of wife or husband. A man who wants to bring back a repudiated wife must first verbally express his apologies to the ancestral spirits in front of the shrines and pay fines by sacrificing a rooster to them. Likewise, a woman who disrupts the marriage bond by running away cannot reenter the conjugal house without primarily apologizing to the principal female ancestor for her misconduct and paying appropriate fines.

From the preceding discussion, we observe that Luba religion is above all a family religion. The spirits (ancestors), the ministers (elders, senior wives), and the congregation (junior relatives, junior wives, children) are all members of the same family community, notably, the paternal extended family. The matters of faith (belief in the ancestral spirits' power to grant life or to take life from their descendants) and morality (obligation to share one's wealth with one's relatives) are family virtues and good family relations. So are the notions of divine blessing (having many successful relatives, many faithful and fertile wives, and many healthy and prosperous children) and eternal life (going to live with the ancestors in the world of spirits).

The sanctions for violating religious precepts (sterility, miscarriages, and infant mortality) and the reparations required (reconciliation) are also embedded in family life. The occasions for offering sacrifices to the spirits (marriage of the first wife, birth of a child, the release of a relative from prison, the presentation of wives and children to the guardian spirit), are familial events. It thus appears that ancestral veneration is a sublimation of, as well as an instrument for the preservation ad integration of the extended family.

Change and Continuity

Luba culture is not what most Luba people would like it to be. The social fabric of Luba society has been disrupted in many ways by the colonial administration (1885-1960), the South Kasai Government (1960-1965), the Mobutu Regime (1965-1997), and the ongoing political anarchy (1997-present). Other changes came about gradually as people adapted their behaviors to the changing situations and several customs became obsolete. Nevertheless, the Luba still hold on to old ways in many respects.

Structural Disruptions

Changes in the social fabric are among the most disruptive. Before colonization, Luba country was divided into autonomous chiefdoms of various sizes. Colonization put an end to their autonomy by subjecting the customary chief to the authority of

colonial agents, by setting new rules for gaining access to and staying in the position of chief, and by superimposing new administrative structures on those already in place.

To various degrees, the chiefdoms lost part of their major sources of power, that is, control over the land. The colonial administration expropriated indigenous lands for the benefit of European companies, Christian missionary organizations, and the colonial administration itself. In connivance with colonial companies, the colonial administration also imposed new land uses designed to benefit the European colonizers at the expense of the indigenous populations. This was the case with the cultivation of certain crops, particularly cotton, and a new land tenure system called *paysannat*.

The end of the colonial rule in the Congo (1960) is perhaps most remembered for the bloody conflicts in many regions of the country. The Luba were victims of these conflicts in parts of the Kasai Province and in the Katanga Province. Forced to seek refuge in their own homeland, but refusing to give up their leadership status, some Luba leaders from the troubled areas established autonomous villages, thereby undermining even further the authority of some customary chiefs. Going even further, Kalonji Albert, the architect of the Autonomous South Kasai State (1960-1963), proclaimed himself *Mulopwe*, Chief of Chiefs, an imposition the Luba people of Kasai had never experienced. His attempts to legitimize himself by arranging a post-factum investiture by customary chiefs still violated the traditional rules and procedures of power transfer. In the traditional system, the authority to hand over power to any candidate was the prerogative of certain notables, particularly the *Ntite*, rather than chiefs. Kalonji appointed customary chiefs to head his newly created administrative entities, *arrondissements* and *communes*, thereby creating inequality among the chiefs by assigning some chiefs to higher functions than others. This policy also impinged upon the preexisting hierarchies by elevating some sub-chiefs to functions similar to those assigned to their paramount chief.

The advent of the Mobutu Regime in 1965 undermined the traditional structures further. Mobutu's regime was so centralized that even customary chiefdoms came to be controlled from the central government in Kinshasa, the capital. Locally, customary chiefdoms were administered by appointed officials. Some chiefdoms were organized into administrative entities headed by customary chiefs who were recognized and installed by government officials. Others were regrouped into territorial units headed by elected officials also recognized and invested by government representatives. Today, chiefdoms constitute administrative entities called *groupements* and headed by customary chiefs without any particular administrative function. Their position is primarily ceremonial.

Gradual Change

As time went on, the Luba adopted new behavior patterns in response to new situations. Highly motivated to achieve but confronted by resource limitations in their homeland, the Luba learned very early to migrate to other lands in search of better opportunities. Agriculture is everyone's pursuit in Lubaland, but arable land is limited. As the population increased and the prospects for achieving higher status through farming decreased, many people moved farther away onto the lands of neighboring ethnic groups, notably, the Kanyok, the Kete, the Luntu, and the Lulua. Thus, Luba villages were established in these lands far before the era of colonial exploration in Kasai, the

1870s. Further Luba migrations to other territories occurred in response to the demands of the colonial administration. Luba territory was an important reservoir of manpower for colonial recruiters. Through this recruitment, the Luba participated in the opening of administrative stations, missions, and military camps. They contributed to the building of the Irebu-Katanga-Dilolo railroad. When colonial mining companies needed miners in Katanga *(Union Minière)*, in Lubaland itself *(Minière de Bakwanga)*, and in other parts of Kasai *(Forminière, Cikapa)*, Luba workers were brought in along with recruits from other regions.

The Luba unreservedly embraced these colonial innovations. Before long, they voluntarily migrated to other colonial towns, as the Luba perceived in them opportunities for social mobility through wage labor and education. In Luba villages, the populations welcomed the new methods of cultivation introduced by the colonial administration when these methods proved more profitable than the traditional ones.

The Luba spirit of achievement includes the ambition to exercise political power. The colonial regime was an obstruction to this ambition. Its interference with traditional rules for ascending to the position of chief forced some candidates, previously powerful, into exile where they had to accept reduced power. When the idea of the Congo becoming politically independent came about, the Luba embraced it enthusiastically. At the dawn of independence, faced with rejection by their fellow countrymen almost everywhere, the Luba created their own state from the ground up. When the Congo reunited from the splits of the early 1960s, the Luba fought to gain the status of province for their former state. When the new province was enlarged to include neighboring regions belonging to different ethnic groups, the Luba fought to keep the provincial capital in their own territory.

Cultural Obsolescence

Some Luba customs have phased out with the passage of time. In the betrothal system, parents no longer give their daughters to grooms before at least a substantial part of the bridewealth has been paid. The nature of the goods used in the bridewealth has changed as well. The necklaces and the cowrie shells (once used as currency) had already disappeared by the 1950s. Today, even the goats are rarely used for payment. Likewise, the belief that the achiever should pay his elder his first returns from chicken and goat farming is now subject to reinterpretation. A gift from one's work suffices to meet the obligation. Nowadays, husbands separate from their wives away and bring them back in reconciliation without paying any fines to the ancestors. Likewise, wives return to husbands they have deserted without paying fines to the family guardian spirit for having disrupted the conjugal bond.

Cultural Continuity

The Luba culture has changed in many respects but it has also remained the same in many others. *Bukola*, the ability to realize great things throughout one's life through hard work, continues to dominate in the Luba conception healthy living. Today, as in the past, the Luba separate possessions from achievement. For instance, wealth from inheritance or from a gift brings glory to the benefactor who created it rather than to the beneficiary who exhibits it. At the consecration of an achiever the sources of his accomplishments are meticulously examined to make sure that he actually owes his success to his own hard work rather than somebody else's. The Luba have embraced

wage labor wherever they have had a chance to do so. However, agriculture remains in high esteem in Luba villages where yields are judged high enough to justify the effort. Extension agents are amazed by the enthusiasm among Luba farmers for successful experiments with new crop varieties. The ancestral lands are still the object of emotional attachment. Individuals claim membership in their villages of origin even if they have never lived there. Family and lineage building still stand out as the most culturally valued contribution one can make to the community. For a Luba man, marrying a Luba woman and having many children remains the ideal. Since they came to the Kasai in the latter part of the 19th century, Christian missionaries have fought to impose monogamy. For the Luba, polygamy is still a morally normal form of marriage, although no longer widely practiced as before. Missionaries introduced Christian marriage; the colonial administration authorized the official (civil) marriage; but the Luba, baptized or not, still hold on to traditional marriages that involve the payment of the bridewealth by the groom's family to the bride's family. Actually, traditional marriage is a prerequisite for Christian or civil marriage. One has to prove that the bridewealth has been taken care of in order to obtain permission to proceed with the Christian or civil marriage.

In spite encroachments by the colonial administration and the post-colonial governments of the Congo, the Luba continue to fight for the position of the customary chiefdoms. Many still evoke the traditional criteria as the only legitimate form of access to the chieftaincy. Among other things, only members of lineages that descend from the chiefdom founder and his senior wife can legitimately compete for the chief's position. The birth order of the founder's sons, through whom descent is traced, is still used to establish rights to rule.

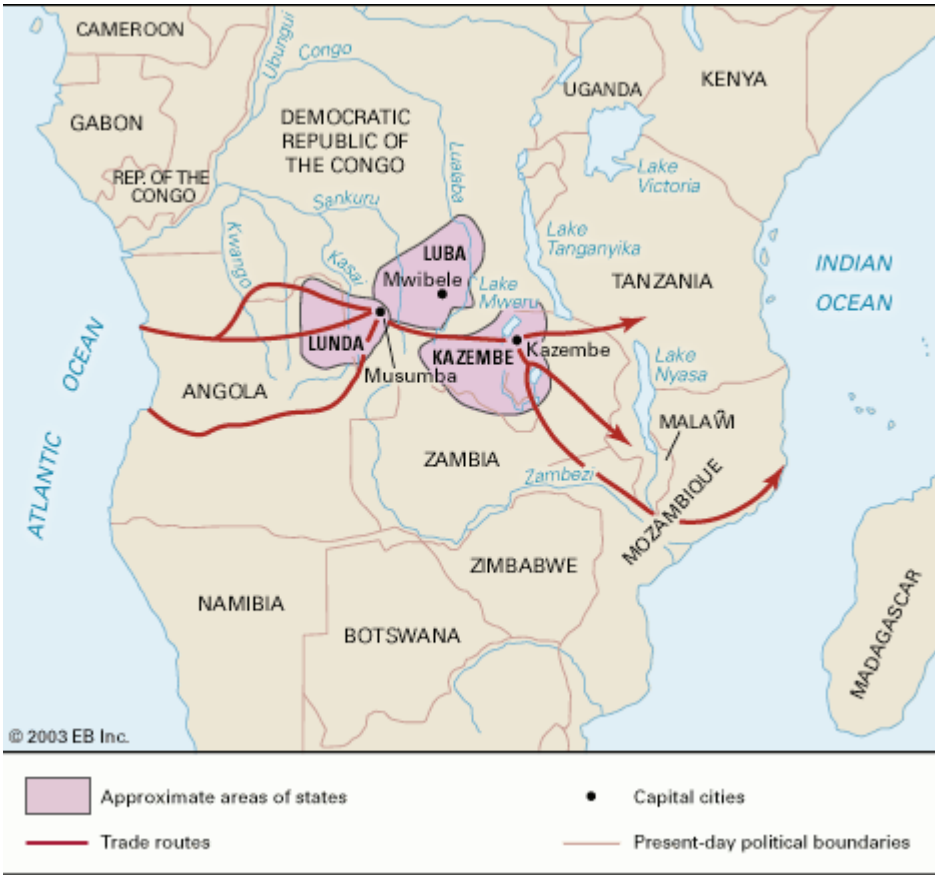
Old forms of supernatural beliefs persist as well. Chickens and goats are still the only animals acceptable in rituals. Herbalists and shamans continue to be called upon to heal the sick, especially those suffering from diseases for which modern medicine has no cure. Diviners, sometimes called by honorific modern professional titles such as "Doctor," are regularly consulted by for help with their personal problems or those of their loved ones.

Double Allegiance

When given a chance or when forced to, and depending on the circumstances, people have combined new ways of doing things with old ones. For instance, today in the Congo, people marry by the payment of the bridewealth, the performance of Christian ceremonies, and including the spouse's name on official documents as required by law. Sometimes they have moved between the two realms to various degrees. Some have striven to excel in agriculture in the countryside, moved to the city seeking to excel in paid jobs, and returned to agriculture in the village when success in urban centers appeared problematic. They have venerated the ancestral spirits secretly, while attending a Catholic mass, a Protestant service, or a community prayer group, which is the most recent novelty. When they could afford it, they have sought the services of herbalists or shamans as well as those of trained medical professionals. The belief in witchcraft seems to have increased. The evangelical pastor is now the seer who discovers the witch during trance and removes the witchcraft from the victim by performing exorcism. More people than before pursue opportunities for social mobility in entrepreneurship, professions and in all fields and at all levels of labor market, but have not given up on com-

peting for political office in the traditional system. Today, as in the past, stories are still being told about bloody fights for the position among rival chiefdom segments. And, as a relatively recent case suggests, ambitions for the office of traditional chief is not confined to people who lived all their lives in their native homeland or those without any other avenue for socio-economic mobility. A case in point is that of a university professor and lawyer who gave up his professions and abandoned his wife and children to go back to his village for a lengthy competition for the position of chief of his home chiefdom. These incidents speak to the nature of culture in human history.

The Luba Empire*



*Retrieved June 12, 2011 from http://media-2.web.britannica.com/eb-media/85/77385-004-D9B3790E.gif.

End Note

1. The Lubilanji (Sankuru) is the largest of four major rivers crossing Luba territory, hence their designation Luba Lubilanji, which distinguishes them from other Luba groups who live in Kasai (Luba Kanyok, Luba Songye, Luba Luntu, and Luba Luluwa) and in Katanga (Luba Hemba, Luba Lolo and Luba Kalundwe or Luba of Mutombo Mukulu). All these groups claim descent from the Luba Empire of the 16th to the 19th centuries. See the map at the end of the article.

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Organizational Membership and Business Success: The Importance of Networking and Moving Beyond Homophily

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Abstract
The homophily principle is that similarity breeds connection and affects the structure of personal networks in all kinds of social structures. The result is that networks become very homogeneous. The "birds of a feather flock together" limit social worlds because they restrict the movement of information received by people, the attitudes they form, and the interactions in which they engage. Research has shown that homophily is strongest in race and ethnic interactions, followed by divides in age, religion and gender. This paper examines organizational membership, business networking and homophily among entrepreneurs engaged in classic enterprises such as retail and service industries. The search for information and resources to improve entrepreneurial enterprises is a major task of the self-employed. Using a sample of black entrepreneurs, this work examines the impact of networking outside of the structure of homophily. We ask if this networking is perceived as improving the overall operation of the business. We examine the characteristics of entrepreneurs and how these characteristics affect the decisions to move outside of familiar homophily networks. Granovetter's network theory of strong/weak ties is used to describe the process of networking in both types of voluntary organizations.

Homophily, which captures networks among people who are similar along a certain dimension, has added significantly to our understanding of why and how "birds of a feather flock together" (McPherson, Miller and Smith-Lovin 1982 1986; Woodard 1988) and influence social structure. This literature is expansive, and can be divided into scholars concerned with status homophily and value homophily (Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954). Our work falls into the value homophily, since we are concerned with how breaking "sameness" networks leads to better value creation for firms. This is measured by their membership in a black or white voluntary organization and the networking opportunities that emerge from their choice of affiliation.

Entrepreneurs who own classical enterprises, such as retail and personal services, experience many competitive challenges. Research has shown that when race is a variable, black entrepreneurs choose to network in non-black voluntary organizations to acquire support, contacts, useful information and credibility (Ostgaard and Bach 1996), and to find out about new products and when to enlarge a market (Falemo 1989). Networks are organized systems of relationships that can be defined as a specific kind of relationship that links sets of persons, objects or events (Nelson 1988; Szarka 1990). Most network research has been conducted on large owner manager manufacturing firms (Golden and Dollinger 1993; Human and Provan 1997) which conduct business in local and regional markets. Little research has been conducted on networking by small

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entrepreneurial firms in rural and low population urban areas, who sell a large variety of products in more varied markets and rely on primary groups and close personal ties, or homophily, for information and resources. Research has shown the importance of homophily on the structure of founding entrepreneurial teams; it has its greatest impact on the composition of the group (Ruef, Aldrich and Carter 2003).

An entrepreneur may be defined as an individual who, when he/she sees an opportunity will manage risks to establish and maintain a business (Bygrave and Hofer 1991). Although the findings have implications for all entrepreneurs, a black sample allows us to draw on the rich literature that stresses issues of homophily within the context of ethnic enterprises. This literature examines interaction between defined "ethnic" firms and organizations of the larger society.

A voluntary organization is defined as a formal organization irrespective of size in which membership is optional (McPherson, Miller and Smith-Lovin 1982; 1986; Woodard 1988). These organizations are classified by purpose into instrumental or task oriented, and expressive or social oriented.

The purpose of this paper is to develop conceptual characteristic frameworks that are associated with a black entrepreneur's membership in a black or non-black voluntary organization and how the ethnicity of voluntary organizational membership influences the type of social and business networking.

Theoretical Considerations

The entrepreneurship literature has many examples, or cases, of the importance of "birds of a feather" flocking together, or homophily. For example, research on ethnic enclaves shows how people with the same nationality produce enclaves where interdependency among a broad range of businesses satisfies their mutual needs and furthers coordination and cooperation to reduce competition. This enclave effect has been prominent in America, where immigration has been one of the defining elements of the country (Butler 1991; Butler and Wilson 1988; Greene 1997; Portes and Bach 1985; Rhodes and Butler 2004). Many enclave communities are often at the pre-enclave stage where there is not a broad representation of businesses for interdependency among firms to occur. These communities have sub-economies that range in their development between enclave and pre-enclave economies (Butler and Wilson 1988). Despite the stage of development, there are protected market advantages based on ethnic loyalty that produces a captive market for labor and customers, facilitates ease of communication, encourages financial networking and creates trust in business dealings (Light and Rosenstein 1995).

An entrepreneur may have dense strong expressive tie networks composed of immediate family, relatives, and friends who share known information. There are also extended, less dense networks, with indirect weak ties to other aggregations and individuals in distant areas of a social system where new information is available (Dubini and Aldrich 1991; Granovetter 1973; 1983; Light and Rosenstein 1995). Membership in non-ethnic voluntary organizations may lead to instrumental weak tie contacts and new resources; membership in ethnic voluntary organizations may lead to both instrumental tie contacts and expressive strong tie contacts. The latter is more likely to provide access to widely known resources (Lin, Ensel and Vaughn 1981; Marsden 1988; McPherson, Miller and Smith-Lovin,1986).

A debate exists over when strong and weak ties offer network advantages or disadvantages. Lin et al (1981) argued that since weak ties may link individuals to persons of higher social status, they could provide more and varied resources to individuals of lower social status. Other researchers contend that weak ties are not as effective for persons in vulnerable positions or those of lower socioeconomic status in society (Burt 1992; Granovetter 1983; Ibarra 1993). Both Burt(1992) and Ibarra (1993) have pointed out the advantage of weak ties may not apply to minorities networking in non-ethnic voluntary organizations because bias may limit the instrumental value of bridging ties to other parts of the social system that are linked to more densely connected individuals in the network. Other researchers found business owners who had strong tie networks with fewer diverse secondary networks had higher performing businesses than those in less dense weak tie networks with access to diverse information (Larson 1990; Ostgaard and Bach 1996).

Educational attainment of an entrepreneur affects network structure. Better educated entrepreneurs look outside their immediate environment to seek a broader set of network relationships from which to acquire information and resources (Aldrich, Reese and Dubini 1989; Donckels and Lambrecht 1997); diversity of networks are associated with greater profitability (Ostgaard 1996). Blacks who have more education and higher status occupations are more likely to join voluntary organizations than their co-racialists of lower SES status (Woodard 1988). In addition, the more educated are even more likely to join non-black organizations.

Through investing in interpersonal relationships with family and friends, a person acquires social capital (Coleman 1988) that may be tapped when assistance is needed. The provision of advice and help to an individual indicates prior exchange relationships that create network resources (Hofferth and Iceland 1998). Ethnic entrepreneurs, as do those from the majority group, acquire social capital in the employment of family members, friends and co-ethnics as paid, low paid or unpaid employees whose involvement is influenced by the degree of mutual solidarity among family and community members (Butler and Greene 1997; Greene and Butler 1996). American entrepreneurs of Chinese (Zhou 1992), Cuban (Portes and Bach 1985), Korean (Min 1988), Pakistani/ Ismaili (Greene 1997) and Japanese (Levine and Rhodes 1981) ancestry rely on the employment of family and co-ethnics, or homophily, who make long term contributions to the development of their businesses (Upton and Heck 1997). The employment of relatives is often a necessity when discrimination reduces job opportunities outside the ethnic community (Levine and Rhodes 1981).

Entrepreneurs in the homophily tradition , which gives less emphasis to financial success, maybe more involved in the life and organizations of their community and are more concerned about contributing to the welfare of the community (Chaganti and Greene 2002). Cummings (1999) shows that entrepreneurs who conducted their business outside of the black community were consistently more successful than blacks who limited their business solely to members of the black community.

The customer base of entrepreneurs, in the tradition of homophily, is influenced by their decision of whether to immerse themselves primarily into their community and its organizations or to integrate into the dominant society. Immersion into the culture and institutions of the ethnic community provides ethnic resources and loyalty (Greene

1997) and the trust of co-ethnic customers based on shared experiences (Fukuyama 1995). The protected market theory states that racial communities create ethnic solidarity and ethnic social networks (Cummings 1999; Light and Rosenstein 1995) that encourages an ethnic entrepreneur to fulfill the special needs of their co-ethnic customers. In contrast Dyer and Ross (2000) found black entrepreneurs operating in a homophily tradition had an ambivalent attitude toward co-ethnic customers. This is because they perceived those who, on the one hand provided the benefit of ethnic loyalty and, on the other the drawback of expected preferential treatment. When upwardly mobile immigrants, as self-employed Japanese, became more culturally integrated in American society they were more likely to attract white customers and to improve business performance by joining mixed ethnic organizations (Woodrum, Rhodes and Feagan 1980).

The type of business strategy employed influences the kinds of scanning behavior entrepreneurs use to make contacts. A marketing strategy that emphasizes service to the customer requires an external focus by acquiring information on customer needs (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Pineda, Lerner, Miller and Phillips 1998; Slater and Narver 1994). The type of information sought and most frequently found come from person-to-person networking (Brush 1992) through individuals affiliated with different organizations (Falemo 1989). We bring this literature to bear on our modeling of homophily entrepreneurship, including fund raising, resources from governmental agencies, customer generation outside of the homophily group, and paid or non-paid employers.

Methods

Sample

The respondents are black American small business owners living in Texas. They were initially selected from lists of entrepreneurs recorded with the Black Chambers of Commerce. Eighty percent of the sample of 133 respondents was collected from two neighboring cities forming a total metropolitan area population of 237,132 (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). In city 1 the total population is 121,123, with a black population of 5,593, that represents 4.6 percent of the population of the city and 45 percent of the total black sample. In city 2, the total population is 116,009, of which the black population number is 8,101 or 7 percent. This represents 35 percent of the sample. Four percent of the sample came from a city of 242,628 with a black population of 18,602 or 7.6 percent of the population of the city. The remaining 16 percent came from small rural communities of 25,000 or less, where the black population was less than 1 percent. In cities 1, 2, and 3, the black business was located primarily in areas with large black populations where most of the customers were black with a geographically adjacent Hispanic population.

In the rural communities of 25,000 or less, the small black population did not form a community. They were dispersed in different sections of the towns where black entrepreneurs did business with a variety of ethnic groups. The samples were drawn from numerically and proportionally small black populations that do not represent the overall percentage of the U.S. black population seen in urbanized areas and in the emerging black high tech and manufacturing industries in large cities. The businesses in the sample represent the traditional lines of retailing and personal service businesses.

The demographic characteristics of the sample included 62 percent males and

38 percent females, marital status, 65 percent married and 35 percent single, and a mean education level of 13.7 years.

Instrument

A self-administered survey was distributed to the respondents. The survey consisted of 80 questions that included multiple indicators of concepts ranging from family background and socialization to business ownership, organizational affiliation, and involvement. The survey also measured motivation for going into business, personality characteristics, community, and family support for business activity, prior entrepreneurial experiences of respondents, and those of family members.

Factors associated with successful business operation, strategies used in business and subjective perceptions of business performance were included.

Dependent Variables

There are two indicators of networking through voluntary organization membership based on the ethnicity of the organization. The first indicator reads, "Do you currently belong to any organizations that are predominately composed of members who are African American?" The response categories were yes and no with 51 percent answering yes and 49 percent answering no and 9 no responses. The second indicator of networking through voluntary organizations reads, "Do you currently belong to any predominately non-African American organizations? Since all the non-African American organizations were white, we will hereafter refer to them as white voluntary organizations. The respondent categories were yes and no with 35 percent answering yes and 65 percent answering no and 20 no responses.

Independent Variables

Statistical analyses were performed on the relationship between all the measures in the survey with the organizational affiliation measures. Among the statistically significant measures used in the analysis, the following concepts and their indicators predicted variations in one or both of the dependent variables. An item that reads, "How many years of schooling have you received?" measured level of educational attainment. The response was number of years of education. One relative assistance measure reads, "Do any of your relatives assist you in cooking and/or doing housework?" "Yes" and "no" were the response categories. Another relative assistance measure reads, "Do any of your relatives work in the family business as paid employees?" The response categories were yes and no. The following three questions have response categories of much help, some help, and no help. "Any help you may have received from immediate family members?" "Any help you received from friends that are a member of your ethnic group?" "Any help from government programs in the United States?" "Thinking of your customers, in general, about what percent of your customers fit into the following groups?" The response categories are African American, Caucasian, Mexican American, Asian, and other. "Considering how long you have been in business, how successful do you think you have been so far?" The response categories are very successful, moderately successful, moderately unsuccessful, and very unsuccessful. "Which best describes your business strategy, low prices, better service, better selection, better quality, better advertising, target customers, superior location, better facilities, unique service/product?" The response categories are one for the most important, 2 for the second most important and 3 for the third most important.

Statistical Analysis

The two dependent variable response categories are yes and no and are coded 0 and 1. Binary dependent variables make logistic regression an appropriate type of analysis. The independent variables were measured either on a continuous scale or when dichotomized by yes or no responses were made into dummy variables.

The cultural context of this study provides insight into how the race of voluntary organizational membership affects group social interaction. This study was conducted in a small to medium sized West Texas towns with a black population of 7.6 percent or less where the cultural context included a strong historical business enclave that flourished during the decades of legal segregation. This business legacy, especially for middle age blacks, represents a strong community enterprise model. Because of historical and current experiences, including the end of legal segregation, social networking through predominately white voluntary associations has increased. Therefore, larger numbers of black entrepreneurs belong to white voluntary organizations.

Results

We begin the analysis by examining the characteristics of entrepreneurs associated with the choice to move from homophily, or continue to flock with the familiar group. This is done in Figure 1, which presents the characteristics of two conceptual models designed to describe the relationships of independent variables that are associated with the choice of the race of voluntary organizational affiliation.

In Model A, the dependent variable is membership in a white voluntary organization. The first characteristic shows that entrepreneurs with a higher educational level have an increased likelihood of joining a predominantly white voluntary organization than a predominantly black voluntary organization. The second characteristic shows that entrepreneurs who received help from immediate family members have an increased likelihood of joining a predominately black voluntary organization than a white voluntary organization. The third characteristic shows that entrepreneurs who received help from black friends have an increased likelihood of joining a white voluntary organization than a black voluntary organization. The fourth characteristic shows that entrepreneurs who received help with cooking and housework from relatives have an increased likelihood of joining a white voluntary organization than a black voluntary organization. The fifth characteristic shows that entrepreneurs who received help from government agencies have a decreased likelihood of being a member of a white voluntary organization than a black voluntary organization. The sixth characteristic shows that entrepreneurs whose relatives worked as paid employees have an increased likelihood of joining a white voluntary organization over a black voluntary organization. The seventh characteristic shows that entrepreneurs who have a higher percentage of Caucasian customers have an increased likelihood of belonging to a white voluntary organization than a black voluntary organization.

In Model B, membership in a black voluntary organization is the dependent variable. The first characteristic shows a weaker positive association between less education and membership in a black voluntary organization than a white voluntary organization. The second characteristic shows that when customer service is a primary marketing strategy respondents have an increased likelihood of belong to a black voluntary organization than a white voluntary organization. The third characteristic shows

that a higher percentage of black customers are associated with an increased likelihood of belonging to a black voluntary organization than a white voluntary organization. The fourth characteristic shows that respondents who perceived their businesses as not too successful have an increased likelihood of belonging to a black voluntary organization than a white voluntary organization.

Figure 1. Characteristics Associated With Membership In A Voluntary Organization According To Ethnicity

Model A. Characteristics Associated With Membership In A Predominately White Voluntary Organization

1. Higher educational attainment (+) ----------
2. Help from immediate family (-) ----------
3. Help from friends in ethnic group (+) ----------
4. Help in cooking & housework from relatives (+) ----------
5. Relatives work as paid employees (+) ----------
6. U. S. government programs (-) ----------
7. High percentage of Caucasian customers (+) ----------

Membership in Predominately white voluntary organizations

Model B. Characteristics Associated With Membership In Predominately Black Voluntary Organization

1. Lower level of educational attainment (+) ----------
2. Marketing strategy of service to customer (+) ----------
3. High percentage of black customers (+) ----------
4. Perception of business success (-) ----------

Membership in predominately black voluntary organizations

These early results can be grounded in the Granovetter's theory that describes how different social networking contacts are made, and the distinction between strong and weak tie strengths (Granovetter 1973). He argued that social networks are composed of clusters of people who differ by two types of tie strength, weak instrumental ties, or strong expressive ties. He emphasized that weak instrumental ties are efficient only when they form low-density bridges to clusters of low intimacy acquaintances that provide access to new ideas and different information that stimulate innovation and mobility. In strong tie high density (i.e. cohesive) networks, composed of family and friends, there is ease of interaction because they are motivated to help each other with specific contributions and information that is widely known (Granovetter 1973 1983). Strong ties provide most of the influence, speed, and credibility of information flows and are the primary factor in decision-making; weak ties provide novel information. Individuals will use the interplay of both weak and strong tie networks of unequal strength to attain results and to mediate the demands of competing political, professional, and ethnic groups for their allegiance.

In a community where homophily is high, there can be structural restraints on opportunities which affect success. The racial characteristics of the voluntary organization membership and its tie strength may affect the benefits an entrepreneur receives. Black Americans who join a predominantly white voluntary organization are more likely to acquire weak instrumental tie networks with whites. This links them to members of

a social system that crosses bounded groups and social categories that can provide them with new information and resources. Black entrepreneurs who remain in networks of homophily may prefer membership in black voluntary organizations. This will enable them to have a mixture of weak instrumental ties and strong expressive tie relationships, the latter from which they are more likely to acquire commonly held information. Further analysis reveals interesting theoretical predictions.

Table 1 presents the independent variable characteristics measures associated with the dependent variable "Do you currently belong to any predominantly white voluntary organizations?" The findings indicate that for each additional year of education, the respondent is 1.38 times more likely to be a member of a predominately white voluntary organization. Those respondents who received help from immediate family members are only .189 times as likely (or 5.28 less likely to be a member of a predominately white voluntary organization). Similarly, those who receive help from government programs are .216 times as likely (4.63 times less likely) to be a member of predominately white voluntary organizations. Respondents who report they receive much help from friends who are members of their ethnic group are 4.57 times more likely to belong to predominately white voluntary organizations. Respondents who indicated that they received help with cooking and/or housework from a relative are 4.11 times more likely to be members of predominately white voluntary organizations. Respondents who have relatives working in the business as paid employees are 4.35 times more likely to be a member of a predominately white voluntary organization.

Table 1.
Determinants of Membership in Predominantly White Voluntary Organizations by Self-Employed Black Americans

Independent variables	B coef Model	Odds ratio
Education	.321***	1.379
Help from immediate family	-1.664**	.189
Friends in ethnic group	1.559**	4.754
U.S. government programs	-1.533*	.216
Received assistance in cooking and housework from relatives	1.414*	4.114
Relatives work as paid employees	1.469*	4.346
Percentage of white customers	.014*	1.014
R2 (Nagelkerke)	.420	
N	133	

***P=<.0001 **P=<.001 *P=<.05

The percentage of white customers has a positive effect on joining a predominately white organization. For each percentage increase in the proportion of white customers there is a 1.4 percent increase in the odds of the respondents being a member of a predominately white voluntary organization. This is a multiplicative term, meaning

that 50 percent difference in the percentage equates to a 2.02 times increase in the odds (e.0141*50 = 2.02). The accuracy of the model indicates that because of disproportionate respondents in each group, we should compare our modest prediction accuracy to the maximum by-chance accuracy rate. This simple guessing should enable us to guess at least 70 percent of the group membership accurately (the size of the largest group). Our model has an accuracy rate of 81.2 percent; that is an increase of approximately 16.2 percent and is much better at predicting the non-membership group (90.3 percent) than it is the membership group (60 percent). The full model has a modified R square (Nagelkerke) of .420.

Table 2.
Determinants of Membership in Predominantly Black Voluntary Organizations by Self-Employed African Americans

Independent variables	B coef. Model	Odds Ratio
Years of schooling	.1374**	1.147
Service	.7261*	2.067
Percentage of black customers	.0112**	1.011
Perceptions of business success	-.7738**	.461
R2 (Nagelkerke)	.169	
N	133	

*P=<.1 **P=<.05

In Table 2 the dependent variable, membership in predominately black voluntary organizations, is regressed on years of education, business strategy of providing service, percentage of customers who are black and perceptions of business success. Fewer years of education has a significant positive effect on being a member of a predominately black organization. Each year of education increases the logistic odds by 14.73 percent of belonging to a predominately black organization. This is a multiplicative term, so to compare two people, one of whom has four more years of education, we take the original coefficient from the model (.1374) and multiply it by 4, which equals .5496. To determine the odds ratio we exponentiate this value, e.5496 = 1.73. Thus, a person with four additional years of education is 1.73 times more likely to be a member of a black voluntary organization.

Respondents who value service as a key component of their business strategy are 2.06 times as likely to be a member of a predominately black voluntary organization. For each percentage increase in the proportion of respondents who have a higher percentage of black customers, the odds of the entrepreneur being a member of a predominately black voluntary organization increases by 1.01. This is a multiplicative term meaning that a 50 percent difference in percentage of customers who are black American translates into an increase in the likelihood of 1.75 times (e (.0112*50) =1.75).

Perceptions of business success is coded into a dummy variable where, “if the respondents consider their business very successful” is coded 1, and coded 0 if the

respondent answered moderately successful, moderately unsuccessful, or very unsuccessful. Missing values are also coded 0. Respondents who state that they consider their business very successful are 2.17 times less likely to be a member of a predominately black voluntary organization.

The by-chance accuracy rate for this model is just over 50 percent. Our model has an accuracy rate of 66.92 percent, which is an increase of about 33.6 percent--a very respectable increase in accuracy. The full model has modified R square (Nagelkerke) of .169.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings show the characteristics associated with a black entrepreneur's grounding in volunteer organizations that are characteristic of homophily or the movement away from homophily. We examined whether or not they had membership in a black or white voluntary organization and, how Granovetter's theory of strong and weak ties can apply to social and business networking in these voluntary organizations (Granovetter 1985: 95) (Johansson and Monsted 1997) that differ by race.

Social capital is a group level sociological measure which in the present study shows that social resources and advice are provided for a black entrepreneur by a self-help network of supportive kin, peers and community subgroups (Fratoe 1988). The findings show a positive association between black friends who provided help with the business and membership in white voluntary organizations. Friends encouraged black entrepreneurs to expand their networks outside of the black community to further their business. Relatives who worked as paid employees in a respondent's firm are associated with an entrepreneur's membership in a white voluntary organization. Ethnic minority entrepreneurs acquire important social capital in the use of family members, friends and co-ethnics as paid, low paid or unpaid employees that furthers community mutual solidarity (Butler and Greene 1997; Greene and Butler 1996). Relatives and friends in an entrepreneur's social support network recognized a black group's inequality in social capital resources in comparison to other ethnic groups (Fratoe 1988) and encouraged networking in a white voluntary organization. Lin et al (1990) observed that a segment of black entrepreneurs who wished to achieve social mobility outside the black social structure joined white voluntary organizations to acquire contacts that could provide them with new opportunities.

In contrast, help and advice from immediate family members is associated with an entrepreneur's affiliation with a predominately black voluntary organization. Immediate family members may encourage offspring to join strong expressive-tie high density black voluntary organization networks where connections between co ethnics provides ease of access to information and opportunities, and to avoid possible rejection and discrimination that may occur with membership in white voluntary organizations.

A positive association existed between increased education and membership in white voluntary organizations. Better educated black entrepreneurs have a wider network, which allows them to rely less on the information and resources only from of co-racialists in black voluntary organizations. Some post-secondary education and increased public school integration has led to greater interaction with whites, which by definition lead to increase racial interaction. . Better educated black entrepreneurs use instrumental weak tie connections through membership in white voluntary organi-

zations because they are more efficient in acquiring bridges to new contacts and new information outside the black community. Lower educational levels have an association with membership in black voluntary organizations. Less educated blacks may not have interacted with whites in post secondary educational institutions and would feel more comfortable in black voluntary organizations where expressive strong ties and instrumental weak ties provided access to information to assist in serving customers in the ethnic community. The mean educational level of respondents is 13.7 years. The lack of college degrees among the respondents suggests persons with higher educational levels are likely to leave a small, limited resource, black community for large metropolitan areas where there are greater opportunities in emerging high-capitalized black information technology and manufacturing businesses (Bates 1993;1997).

The findings showed black entrepreneurs who had received help from the U.S. government were less likely to belong to white voluntary organizations. Black entrepreneurs who turned to government agencies for help did not feel it was necessary to network in white voluntary organizations for new opportunities. Since there was no significant association between receiving help from the government and membership in black voluntary organizations, this suggests that assistance from the government reduced the need to network in voluntary organization whether white or black. While we did not ask on the survey what type of government aid was given, the researchers observed that the government gave technical advice, but provided few financial loans. In small black communities with traditionally underfinanced retail and personal service businesses the government was often hesitant to provide loans because of high failure rates (Bates 1993).

Blacks who reported their businesses were unsuccessful were more likely to have membership in predominantly black voluntary organizations than white voluntary organizations. Most respondents were reluctant to provide financial information on their survey. A reviewer may dismiss self-reports of success without supporting annual sales and financial returns; however, no consensus exists over whether objective measures are sufficient to define business performance (Murphy, Trailer and Hill 1996). Some researchers contend that subjective evaluations do not differ much from much from objective measures (Venkatraman and Ramanujam 1986) and they remove response bias due to participants not answering sensitive financial questions (Besser 1999). Among the objective definitions are staying in business (Van de Ven, Hudson and Schroeder 1984; Reid 1991) the amount of sales and financial returns (Duchesneau and Gartner 1990; Kalleberg and Leicht 1991; Tigges and Green 1994) and the introduction of new and quality products (Venkatraman and Ramanujam 1986). Objective financial measures are criticized because small business owners may be unwilling to reveal accurate and specific information related to their financial condition and they do not always equate financial performance with business success (Kotey and Meredith 1997). Subjective views of success include personality characteristics and managerial skills (Ibrahim and Goodman 1986), an internal focus and belief that one has control over business results (Brockhaus 1980) and the personal satisfaction of owning a business (Solymossy 1997) irrespective of financial returns (Cooper and Artz 1995).

The respondents in the present study operated small, under-financed, traditional personal service and retail businesses located primarily in small black communities

including some mixed racial areas with a clientele of moderate socioeconomic status. Respondents had a limited opportunity to grow and improve business performance. Under these conditions objective measures of financial success are less important than subjective perceptions (Bates 1993).

Black entrepreneurs whose marketing strategy was to provide personal service to customers are more likely to belong to black voluntary organizations. Membership in a co-racial organization provided greater ease of communication and trust across a wide range of strong and weak tie networks that could contribute to customer loyalty and a statement of ethnic communal solidarity. Since small black business owners and members of black voluntary organizations had many shared cultural experiences, they could identify with and through personalized service satisfy their particular needs. No significant relationship exists between one particular marketing strategy and membership in a white voluntary organization. It may be a black entrepreneur will satisfy white customer needs through a variety of marketing strategies with not one standing out as important.

When black entrepreneurs have a large percentage of white customers, they are more likely to join predominantly white voluntary organizations. In this environment they can make instrumental weak tie contacts to more distant parts of the social system to acquire new information, new resources and attract more customers by learning of the needs of their white customers. A drawback is that interaction in white voluntary organizations may put constraints on ease of interaction leading to superficial and less dense expressive relationships. Black entrepreneurs who have a high percentage of black customers are more likely to join black voluntary organizations where they have both expressive strong tie and instrumental weak tie relationships that produce information and resources widely known in a small black community.

The future of black business growth is for entrepreneurs to enter the emerging markets. However, there is still a role for small traditional black businesses. Boyd (1990) has pointed out that the presence of traditional small undercapitalized business in communities where blacks represent a small proportion of the population has important non-economic value because they act as role models for youth and aspirant entrepreneurs and support the value of work. Wilson (1987) viewed traditional black business as moderating the impact of economic down turns by supporting customary norms and reducing the psychological impact of separation from the larger society.

This study has shown that a large number of black small business owners have membership in white voluntary organizations, a situation that would have been unheard of in the recent memory of older respondents. Formerly, whites could do business within the black community while blacks were restricted to the black community. Since a number of respondents had a large percentage of white customers this would suggest there is some degree of social and economic racial integration in the communities studied. This is not to deny that when engaging in traditional black business enterprises, institutional discrimination continues to limit black business development in comparison to other ethnic groups (Butler and Wilson 1988; Butler 1991; Woodard 1988; 1997).

Implications for Further Research

Scholarship has recognized a need to conduct further research on the prospective dimension of membership in a voluntary organization and entrepreneurial networking; where a researcher would actually follow an entrepreneur in their acquisition and use of contacts; and how these contacts would affect the kind of resources acquired (Beggs and Hurlbert 1997). Of course, variation by homophily groups would also be important.

For all groups grounded in homophily, gross dollar revenue data should be collected to supplement self-report perceptions of business success. This will allow financial comparisons to be made of businesses owners who had membership in expressive homophily voluntary organizations with those who had membership in instrumental voluntary organizations in a larger context.

Further research should determine what type of help is received by entrepreneurs from the U.S. government, whether technical assistance or loans or both, and what were the requirements to receive help. These issues should all be wrapped around the theoretical concept of homophily, and how the movement away from homophily affects the success of the enterprise.

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