Gender roles and relationships

Pahl and Vogler (1994) – Decision-Making and Financial Control

Findings:
Pahl and Vogler investigated the relationship between financial control and decision-making within households. They identified two main systems of financial management:

1. Pooling: Where both partners share income and make joint decisions about spending.
2. Allowance System: Where one partner (typically the male) provides an allowance to the other (typically the female) to manage household expenses while retaining control over the remainder.

They found that pooling was more common in dual-income households, but even in these arrangements, men often retained greater influence over major financial decisions, reflecting persistent gender inequalities in decision-making.

Methodology:
The researchers conducted survey-based research, collecting data from a sample of couples to explore how they managed their finances and made decisions about spending and savings.

Why might Pahl and Vogler have used surveys to explore financial control?

Pahl (1989) – Money and Marriage

Findings:
Pahl's earlier research focused on how couples allocate and use money within marriage. She identified patterns in how money was distributed and found significant gender differences. Women often bore responsibility for managing day-to-day household budgets but had limited access to surplus funds for personal use. This "invisible inequality" often left women financially dependent on their husbands, particularly in single-earner households.

Pahl also highlighted the emotional aspects of financial control, noting that unequal access to money could lead to resentment and conflict within relationships.

Methodology:
Pahl used a combination of qualitative interviews and surveys to examine financial arrangements in a range of married and cohabiting couples, allowing her to explore both statistical trends and personal experiences.

Why might Pahl have choosen to combine surveys and interviews for this study?

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Edgell (1980) – Decision-Making and Power in Marriage

Findings:
Edgell examined the distribution of decision-making power in married couples and found that decisions varied in terms of their importance:

- Very Important Decisions (e.g., buying a house, major financial investments): Typically made by men or jointly, but men had more influence.
- Important Decisions (e.g., child education, family holidays): Often made jointly, with a more equal balance of influence.
- Less Important Decisions (e.g., daily household purchases): Usually made by women.

This division of decision-making power reflected broader gender inequalities, with men retaining dominance in high-stakes areas.

Methodology:
Edgell conducted in-depth interviews with married couples to explore how decisions were made and who held the most influence in different areas of family life.

Why might Edgell have focused on in-depth interviews for this study?

Hardill et al. (1997) – Power and Career Prioritization in Dual-Earner Couples

Findings:
Hardill and her colleagues studied decision-making in dual-earner households, particularly in couples where both partners were in professional or managerial roles. They found that in many cases, men's careers were prioritized over women's when it came to decisions about relocation, job opportunities, or major life changes. Women often subordinated their career aspirations to support their male partner's professional advancement, even when both partners earned similar incomes.
The study revealed that traditional gender norms persisted, even in households that appeared more egalitarian due to dual incomes.

Methodology:
Hardill et al. conducted qualitative interviews with professional and managerial couples to investigate how career priorities influenced decision-making within the family.

Why did Hardill et al. focus on professional and managerial couples for this study?

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