

Residential Mobility, Fertility and Pregnancy Outcomes: Evidence from the Household and Welfare Study of Accra

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Introduction

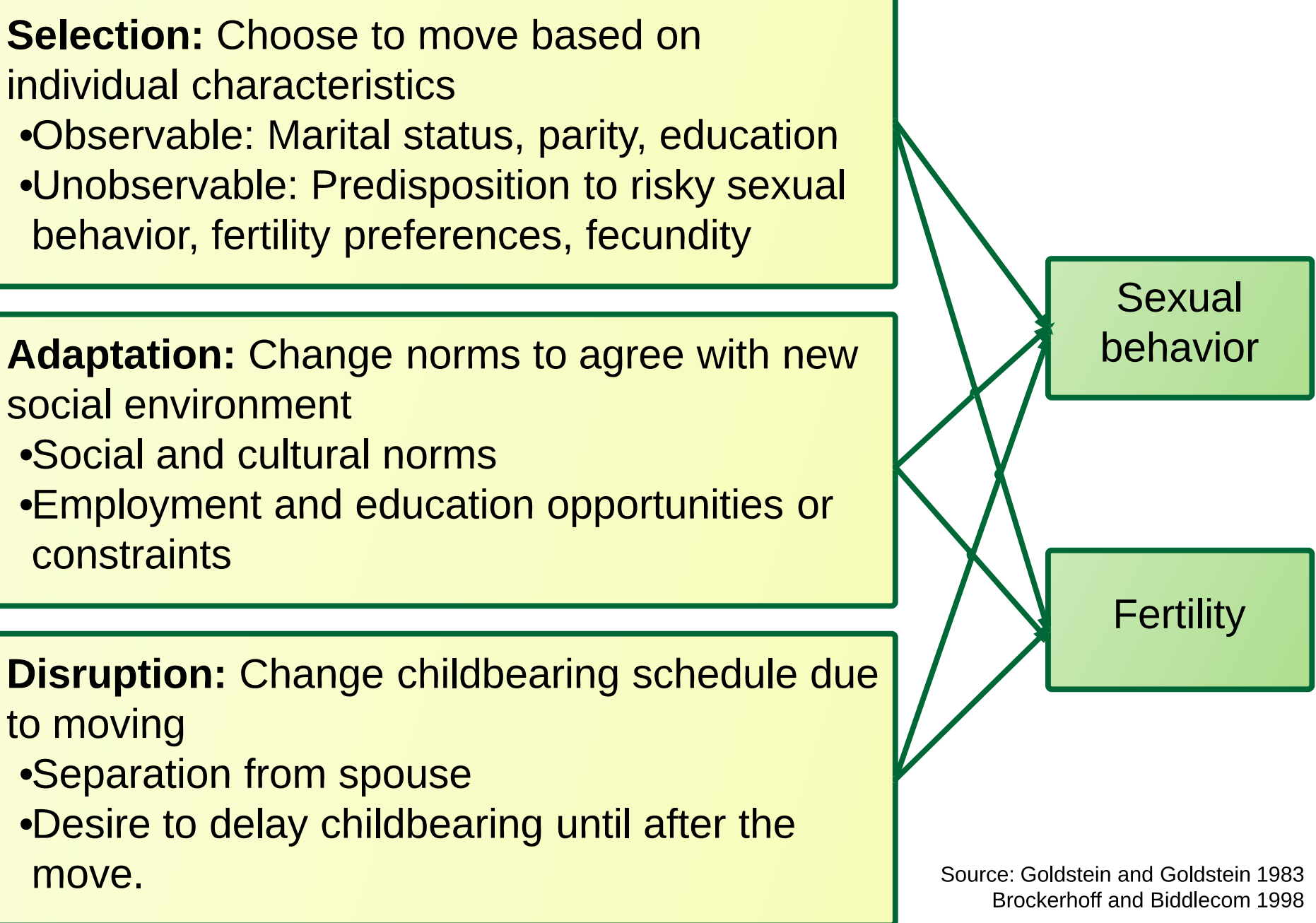
- Residential mobility can lead to disruptive changes in the social and physical environment
- Mobility can affect fertility desires and sexual activity
- Previous research found that fertility declines in the context of urban mobility in the long term.

Research Questions

- What is the effect of residential mobility on the probabilities of pregnancy, live birth, and abortion in the short term?
- What is the relationship between the distance moved and probability of pregnancy and abortion?

Theoretical Model

- What mechanisms account for fertility differences among migrants and non-migrants?

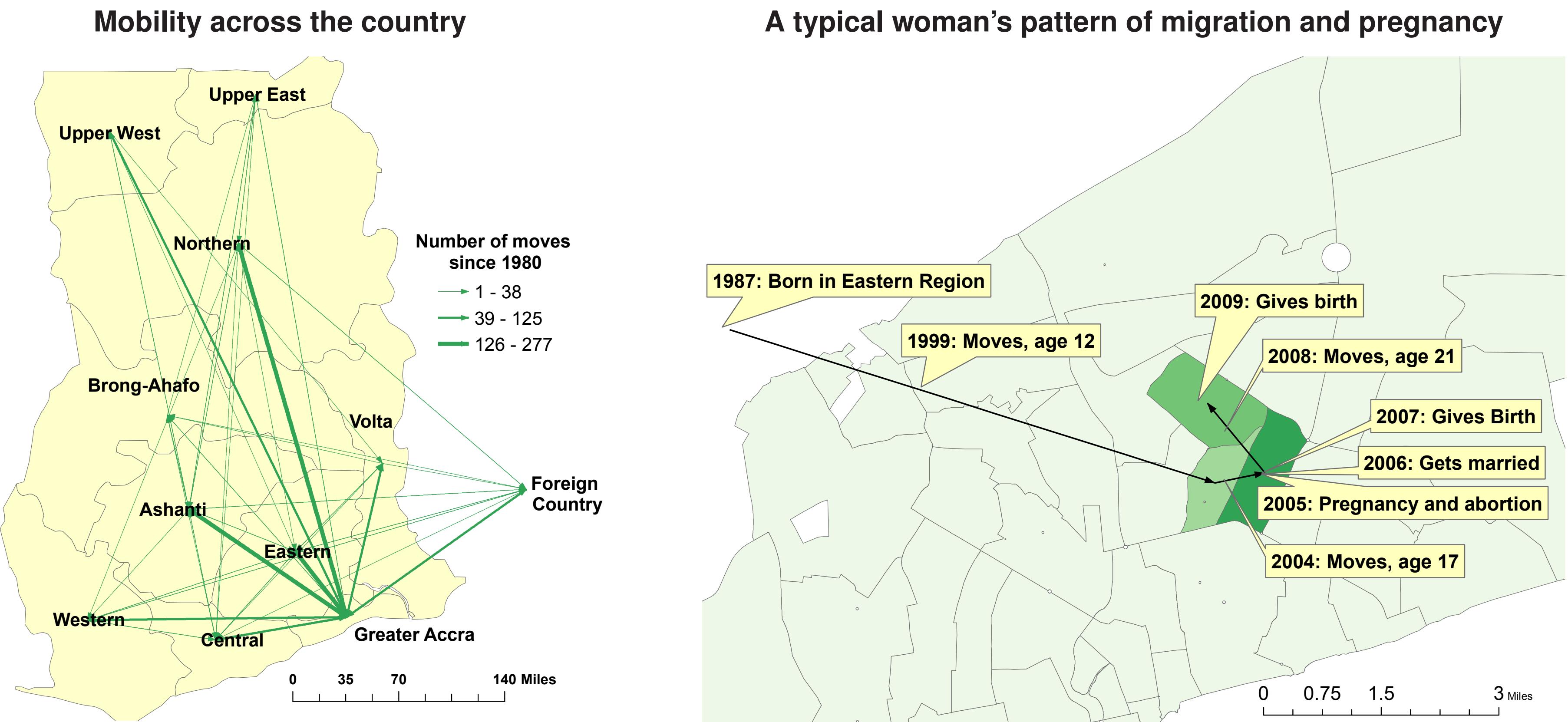


Data

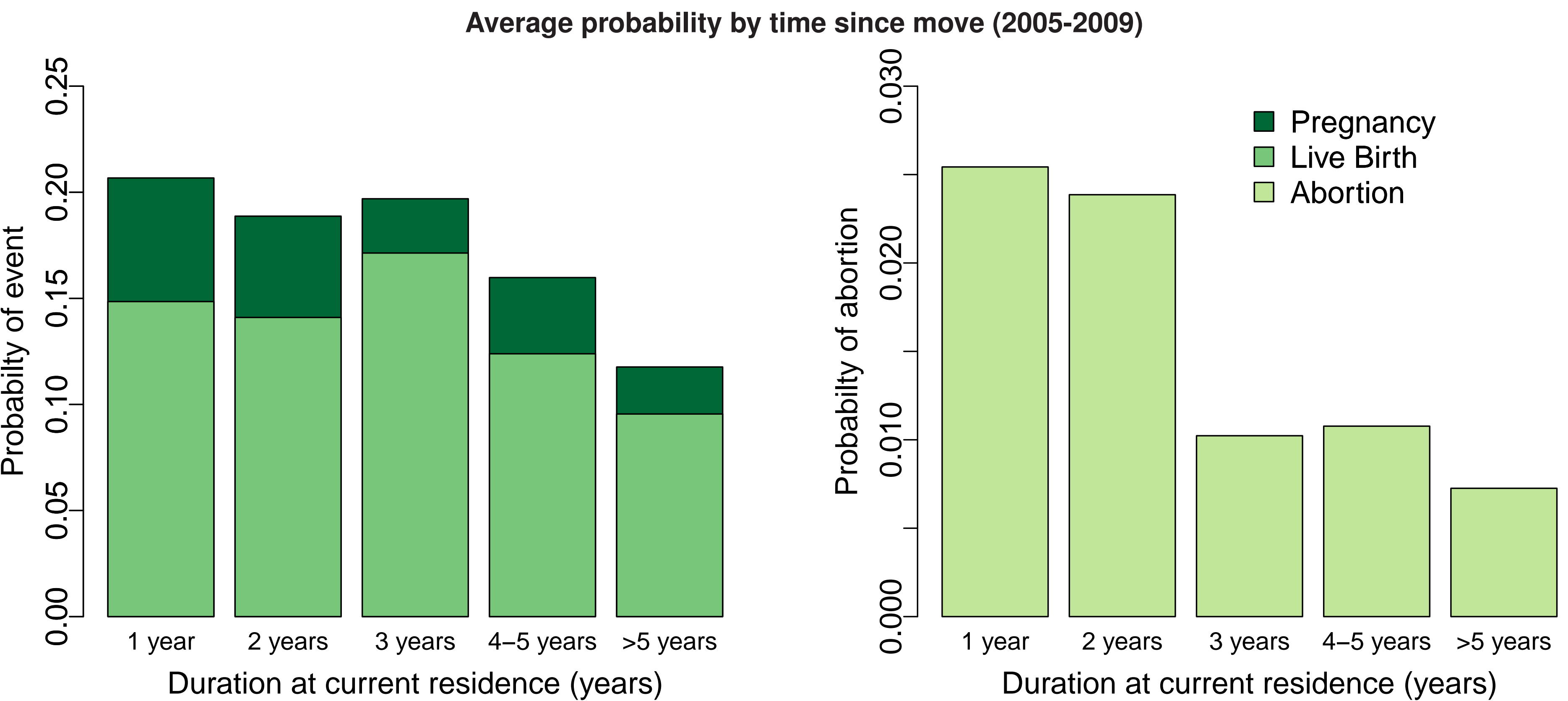
- Housing and Welfare Study of Accra (HAWS)
- Interviewed women over 18 living in slums of Accra in 2009-2010
- Analysis restricted to women who had ever moved and who had been pregnant at least once
- Constructed panel data set with person-years restricted to child bearing years, 15-49
- Mobility includes all moves, including those within a city

Number of women	1,185
Number of person-years	22,084
Number of pregnancies	3,398
Number of live births	2,856
Number of abortions	174

Mobility patterns in Ghana



Descriptive Analysis



Fixed Effects Analysis of Residential Mobility on Fertility and Abortion

Analysis by time since move (in % points)					Analysis by distance (moved 2-3 years ago, in % points)				
Model		Pregnancy	Live Birth	Abortion		Pregnancy	Live Birth	Abortion	
(1)	Moved 1 year ago	1.91** (0.913)	0.978 (0.847)	0.394* (0.224)	Moved locally	0.523 (0.9)	0.689 (0.84)	-0.081 (0.22)	
(2)	Moved 1-3 years ago	1.82** (0.63)	1.28* (0.585)	0.289* (0.155)	Moved between regions	2.65** (1.22)	1.98* (1.14)	0.564* (0.3)	
(3)	Moved 2-3 years ago	1.26* (0.742)	1.13* (0.689)	0.141 (0.182)					
N		22084	20832	2181	N	22084	20832	2181	
FE analysis, adjusted for age, age ² , parity, marital status, & year					FE analysis, adjusted for age, age ² , parity, marital status, & year				
** p<0.05, * p<0.1					** p<0.05, * p<0.1				

Contribution

- Conducted longitudinal rather than cross-sectional analysis with individual fixed effects to address heterogeneity concerns.
- Analyzed separately the effect of moving on probability of pregnancy, live birth, and abortion, using detailed pregnancy histories.

Conclusions

- Residential mobility is associated with an increase in fertility in the short-term, after controlling for individual fixed effects and time varying covariates including age, marital status, parity, and year.
- Probability of abortion is highest in the years immediately post mobility and decreases over time.
- Risk of abortion is especially high for those who moved between regions compared to local moves - evidence of adaptation to new environment.
- No effect of mobility was found for stillbirth, miscarriage, or infant or child mortality.

Policy Implications

- Providing easier access to contraception could prevent unwanted pregnancies among new arrivals.
- Increasing breastfeeding awareness campaigns could increase time between births and prevent higher order unwanted pregnancies.

Limitations

- HAWS data is representative of women living in slums in Accra, no information on those who moved away from slums.
- Lack of month specification for birth and move date, leading to unclear causal effect relationship in first year.
- Some women may not report abortion due to stigma, which can lead to reporting bias.
- No data on why women decided to obtain an abortion or where abortion took place.

Acknowledgements

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