

**Donatien BEGUY: Female employment and fertility in urban area in Africa :  
Dakar (Senegal) and Lomé (Togo)**

Dakar in Senegal and Lomé in Togo are two African capitals where the women economic participation doesn't have the same sociological meaning. In Dakar where the Muslim religion is largely prevailing, female economic activity outside the domestic sphere clashes with the tenacious model of a clear separation in husband's and wife's roles, and with the ideal of wives economic dependency on their husbands. Whereas in Lomé where Christianity and Animism are dominant, the economic dynamism of the women and their consequent contribution to the incomes of households is an old, developed and highly encouraged reality. Female employment is thus more widespread in Lomé than in Dakar but it is far from being negligible in the latter. Moreover, if reproductive life seems to be more intense in Dakar than in Lomé, fertility tends to decline in the two cities. Our aim in this work is to investigate the relationships between professional and reproductive life of women in these two societies, by using data from two retrospective surveys carried out in Lomé (2000) and Dakar (2001). The two surveys collected the biographies of three generations of individuals aged 25-59 on their residential, professional and family trajectories. Findings show that it's only in Lomé that employment has a significant effect on fertility. But both in Dakar and Lomé, a longer work experience has a negative impact on fertility. The negative effect of education seems to be more important in Lomé than in Dakar. Moreover, whereas fertility has a significant effect on paid employment in Dakar, in Lomé, self-employment is affected by fertility. Finally, it appears from these results that the relationships between professional and reproductive life depends on the specific characteristics of each society, such as gender relationship and men's and women's roles.

**Keywords:** women, employment, fertility, conflict of roles, event history, urban area, Africa, Senegal, Dakar, Togo, Lomé