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SOCIO-CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF FERTILITY AMONG THE MATENGO AND MWERA IN MBINGA DISTRICT, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to establish the socio-cultural determinants of fertility among Matengo and Mwera in Mbinga District and to investigate how the differences in the modes of life reflect the variations in fertility between them. The sample used was women aged 15-49 years, and men aged 18 years and above, with a sample size of 141 respondents. Data were collected through interviewing and documentary review. Tables and cross tabulation, and graphs have been used for data analysis and presentation. The analytical frameworks used have been adopted from Davis and Blake, and Bongaarts. The study demonstrates that there are differentials in fertility between Matengo and Mwera. The differences are in the average number of children ever born and the differences in the sex preferences. The study concentrated in rural areas, and the results obtained are of rural perspective. It concludes that, the most important proximate factor for the differences in fertility between them is the age at first Marriage, type of marriage, remarriage rates, and husband's age at first marriage as they are influenced by such socio-cultural factors like parity (desired number of children), the value of children and the power relations. Finally the study recommends that there is a need to collect more information in order to expand the understanding of other fertility determinants in the district. Also it recommends the need for an in-depth study on the most effective cultural values and norms influencing the proximate fertility in the area.

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

Fertility varies from culture to culture, geographical areas and also within the people of the same culture too. Fertility differentials may be caused by socio-cultural and environmental together with socio-economic variables differentials that affect fertility through the intermediate fertility variables or proximate determinants that are biological and behavioural factors. Socio-economic and cultural variables like education, religion, ethnicity; customs, norms and taboos, primary economic activity (activity status), and wealth status are considered to have major influence on the differences.

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Socio-economic and cultural variables indirectly influence fertility levels through the intermediate fertility variables (Davis & Blake's, 1956:221-235) or the proximate determinants (Bongaarts, 1978:105-132). In Tanzania the level and trend of fertility is not uniform all over the country. There are sub-regional differentials that are associated with socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors. According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (URT, 2010) the TFR in Tanzania is 5.4 births per woman and among rural women on the Mainland 6.1 births is higher than among urban women with 3.7 births. The focus of this study was on rural populations with different modes of life; in this case the Matengo and Mwera were concerned. The Matengo are predominantly agricultural involving in coffee (Arabica), which is one of Tanzania's major agricultural exports, they also cultivate food crops mainly for commercial and consumption while Mwera who are among the Lake Nyasa people (dwellers), they practice shifting cultivation, mixed crop farming, forest burning as well as fishing activities.

Problem Statement

There is a widely relationship between culture, population and fertility. Culture and fertility are interconnected, thus the change in one may influence the change of the other. The proximate variables are thus affected differently by different socio-cultural practices, and these also determine the differentials in the preference of children between communities leading to differences in fertility levels. The differences in the modes of life that exist between Matengo and Mwera may be reflecting the variations in the fertility levels between them. Therefore, in understanding fertility patterns at present and future, the analysis of socio-cultural variables affecting fertility through the intermediate variables or proximate determinants of biological and behavioural factors to individuals and society was crucial.

Objective of the Study

General Objective

To establish the fertility patterns on the basis of existing socio-cultural differentials

Specific Objectives

i.   To compare fertility levels and child preference between the two communities
ii. To establish the existing socio-cultural differences which have influence on proximate determinants
iii. To compare the influence of socio-cultural practices on family planning methods

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. Are there differentials in fertility levels and child preferences in the district?
2. What specific factors (socio-cultural) that influence fertility?
3. Are there any traditional methods of fertility control?

Conceptual Framework

The cultural factors affect fertility only indirectly through the proximate (behavioural and biological) determinants. Davis and Blake (1956) proposed an analytical framework for the study of fertility and explained eleven variables (proximate or intermediate variables) and classified these variables into three groups:

i.   Exposure to intercourse (Intercourse variables)
•   Those governing the formulation and dissolution of unions in the reproductive period.
•   Those governing the exposure to intercourse within unions.
ii. Exposure to conception (conception variables)
ii. Gestation and successful parturition (Gestation variables)

Cleland, et al. (1984) however explained that the Davis and Blake's variables have missed lactation, which is an important determinant of duration of postpartum amenorrhea and a main cause of variations in fertility levels. Fertility differences are also the result of background variables or indirect determinants, which determine the behaviour on proximate determinants. These consist of socioeconomic, cultural, environmental, health and institutional factors, such as education, employment, religion, ethnicity, occupation, income, nutrition and residence of parents. Also important are the status of women, the value parents attach to children, the cost of children to parents, the family size desired, the family systems and customs, norms and taboos (Ntozi, 1995). As shown in figure 1, the indirect factors operate through the proximate determinants to cause variations in fertility levels. Thus, changes in fertility are necessarily due to the changes in one or more of the intermediate variables (Bongaarts and Potter, 1983).
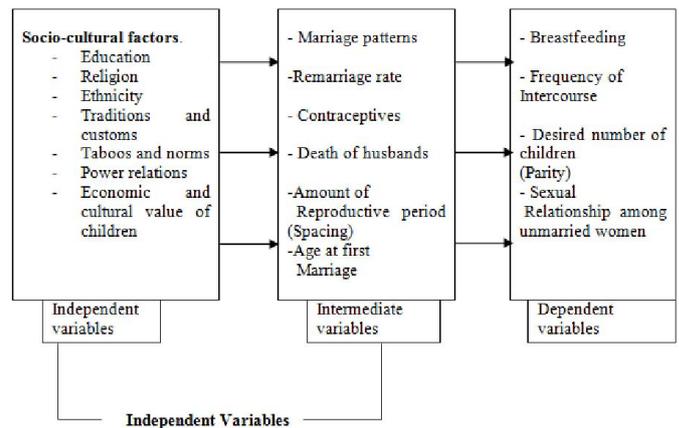

Figure 1. Analysis Framework Adopted from Davis and Blake (1956) and Bongaarts (1978)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Target Population

The aim of this study was to obtain data that enabled to understand how socio-cultural differentials influence fertility in Mbinga District. It involved interviewing women of child bearing age 15-49 years and men with 18 years and above (married and unmarried) with different demographic, socio-economic and cultural status. The study interviewed a total number of 141 respondents. The respondents interviewed were mainly from rural areas in the district. The selection of Mbinga District was based on the fact that it is among areas of Tanzania where very few studies if any studies had ever been carried out.

Sampling Procedures

The study used random sampling method to obtain the required number of households. This was because it avoids bias and gives each unit in the population the probability of being selected. The respondents were obtained after getting the list of households from the village offices from each neighborhood "kitongoji". Simple random sampling of picking every fifteenth (15th) household was used to get the number of households from which the respondents were obtained.

Sampling of the Target Population

Multistage cluster sampling was applied whereas four villages were subdivided into small administrative clusters called the

hamlets and from these clusters respondents were obtained. The study interviewed 70 Matengo and 71 Mwera respondents; four (4) traditional midwives, three (3) modern midwives, the registrar for death and births and one UMAT ("Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania") staff in Mbinga District making a total of 150 respondents.

Data Collection

In the process of data collection the main instrument used was structured and unstructured interview. Documentary review was a proper method in the collection of secondary data and interviewing was proper in the collection of primary data.

Interview and Elite Interviewing

A single questionnaire was administered to all respondents. Also data were obtained through special unstructured interview with midwives, UMAT staffs and Registrar Officer in the district. The questionnaire was designed to include fertility questions as well as some socio-cultural related characteristics. Elite interviewing was also applied where Key Informants such as traditional and modern midwives were contacted and interviewed as well as UMAT staffs were all contacted.

Documentary Review

Data obtained through this technique were taken as secondary, since they enabled this study to get relevant information from the documented sources. Documentary research was also used to enrich the primary data obtained from the interviews.

Data Processing and Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were employed in the study. This included cross tabulation and bivariate procedures of data analysis. Quantitative analysis was done through computer system using SPSS++ program, which processed the data and presented in the form of graphs and tables. Percentage rates were used to present data in order to establish a convenient comparative tool, while the qualitative data was analyzed during the research process. There were some questions that were formulated by the researcher during observation while some important themes were noted throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics and Fertility of the Matengo and Mwera

Social and Demographic Characteristics

The Social and Demographic characteristics of respondents presented in this part are age, marital status and type of marriage as well as remarriage rate, education, occupation, religion affiliation and ethnic base.

Socio-Economic Groups

Most of the respondents in this study were farmers, constituting 75.9 percent where 43.3 percent were Matengo and 32.6 percent were Mwera, and 11.3 percent were

fishermen who were mainly men from the Mwera. There were 7.8 percent businessmen where 5 percent and 2.8 percent were Mwera and Matengo respectively; teachers marked 4.3 and finally 0.7 percent of Mwera respondent were carpenters. These last four groups also engaged on fishing and crop cultivation.

Age and Sex Composition

Age is an important variable in socio-demographic studies. Due to the nature and culture of these two ethnics, the age group of 15-19 represent a small proportion of respondents 10.1 percent for the young girls this is because according to their culture and customs which prohibit young girls explaining their views concerning child bearing before marriage publically. But the age group 40-49 was represented in big proportion where it had 35.3 percent of respondents followed by age groups between 30-39 and 20-29 constituting 27.7 and 26.9 percent respectively. Sex is also another important variable to be considered for it is among the key determinants of fertility. This study comprised by 71.6 percent women and 28.4 percent men.

Marital Status and Type of Marriage

In the survey, 73.8 percent of the respondents were married, 9.9 percent were single while concubine (*madaba*) and divorced constituted 11.3 percent and 5.0 percent respectively. "*Madaba*" is a type of woman concubine who lives with a man illegally (consensual unions), in this a woman can be found sometimes to have more than one man and also she depends on them economically. This distribution can also be shown into segments considering only women; there were 13 percent single, 64 percent married, 16 percent concubines (*Madaba*) and 7 percent were divorcees. From the graph above which shows women distribution according to their marital status, it was observed that among the married and those who were once married and they are divorced during the survey 47.5 percent were under monogamous marriage and 43.3 percent were under polygamous marriage. The rate of re-marriage is also the main determinant of fertility levels. Among all respondents in the survey there were 11.3 percent of women who were reported to have been re-married more than once.

Evidence from the survey showed that; 19.5 of the Matengo and more than 12.5 Mwera were practising polygamy. Similarly, 10.2 percent of Matengo males were practising polygamy where there were only 4.7 percent of Mwera males who were under monogamy. The total percent of Matengo who were engaging in polygamy is 29.7 percent and 17.2 percent of Mwera while only 18.7 percent of Matengo are in monogamous compared to Mwera who constituted 34.4 percent. Matengo engage much in polygamous marriages because of high labour demand in coffee production, where most of the work is done by women. This can be one of the reasons for men to get married to more than one woman. Another factor is the desire of getting many male children; whereby the man can decide to marry another wife if the woman gives birth only to female children. Age at first marriage is also a principal determinant of the number of birth. Women who get married at the earliest age ultimately will have many children on the average than those who marry the latest (Bongaarts and Potter, 1983).
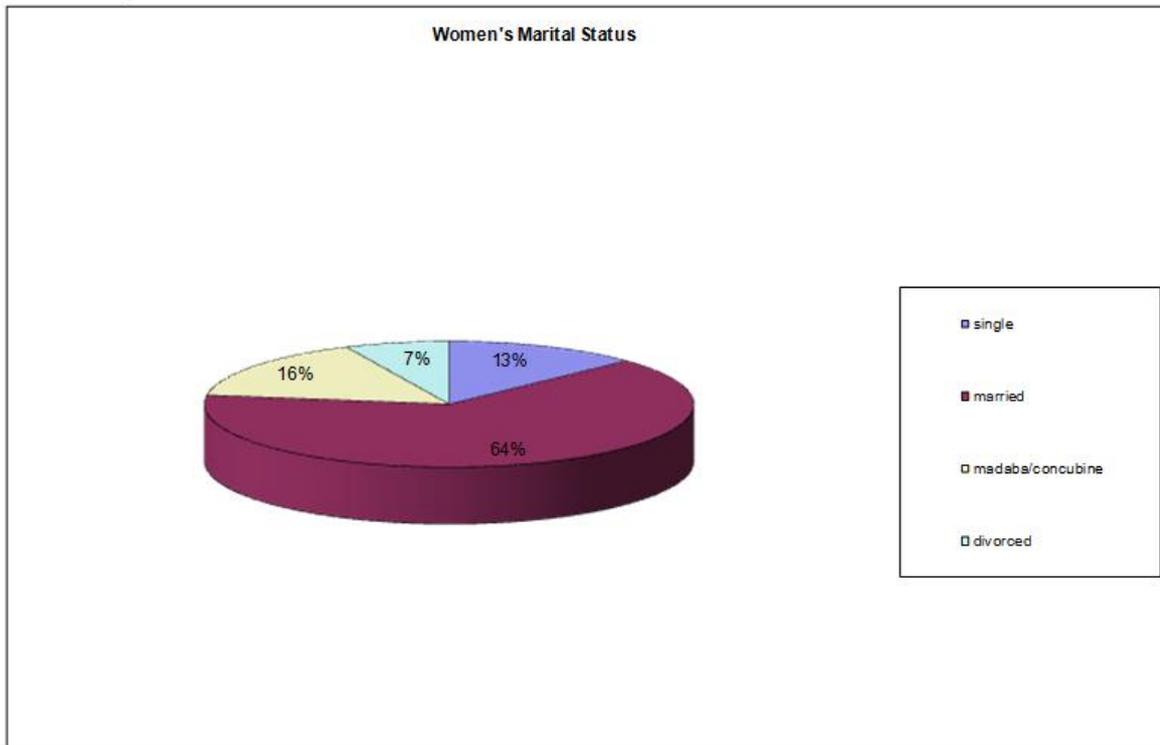
Graph 1. Women's Marital Status

Table 1. Matengo and Mwera Age at First Marriage

Ethnic Group	Sex	Age at First Marriage			
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34
Matengo	Female	24.8%	5%	12.8%	0.7%
	Male	0.7%	8.5%	3.5%	0%
Mwera	Female	11.4%	15.6%	1.4%	0%
	Male	1.4%	7.8%	5.7%	0.7%
Total		38.3	36.9	23.4	1.4

Table 2. Respondents' Education Levels

Sex	Education Level	Matengo	Mwera
Female	No education	2.1%	-
	At least primary Ed	7.1%	5%
	Completed primary Ed.	24.8%	29.1%
	MEMKWA	-	-
	Secondary education	2.8%	-
	Technical school	-	0.7%
Male	No Education	-	-
	At least primary Ed.	-	1.4%
	Completed primary Ed.	9.2%	10.6%
	MEMKWA	0.7%	-
	Secondary Ed.	2.8%	1.4%
	Standard four	-	2.1%

The age at first marriage between the Matengo and Mwera has different implication in fertility within them. This automatically makes the difference in fertility levels and trends. According to this study, the Matengo women get married earlier than Mwera. Among respondents who have tried to enter into marriage and are in a marriage couple, the Matengo have great number of those who had entered into marriage union between 15-19 years of age while a large number of Mwera respondents got married at the age between 20-24 and others got married at late ages, this simply implies that, Mwera women get married at late age as compared to Matengo women.

Education

The person's level of education is related to social demographic behaviours, and this determines knowledge, attitude and practice that influence fertility. The level of education differs among men and women, it was difficult to determine the exact number of higher education graduates in the area of the study since it was rural based, and as it is known that in African context, educated people prefer to live in concentrated urban areas rather than living in rural areas.

Religion

Most of the interviewed respondents were Christians occupying 45.4 percent and they were Matengo, while 31.3 percent of all respondents were found to be Muslims and they were from Mwera. Among the Matengo there were only 2.8 percent of Muslims and 19.2 percent Christians while paganism occupied 1.4 percent. Fertility analysis in this study focused mostly among the two religious groups, namely Christianity and Muslim with no regard to specificity of affiliation like being a protestant or catholic.

Fertility Differentials and Levels

In most of the African countries the estimation of fertility levels and trends is done by indirect demographic techniques. This is because there is a lack of most viable vital registration information. In this study the considerate of fertility levels were attained through direct method by asking the number of children ever born alive.

Fertility Differentials

Fertility differs with different associated socio-economic and socio-cultural factors within both women and men. The survey

shows that the variation in children ever born and sex preferences with consideration to different factors that were found to exist among the Matengo and Mwera. The differences considered in this analysis are mostly the number of children ever born to individuals and couples as well as the parents' sex preferences. The differences in fertility between these communities have been looked into both sides of male and female parents. There is a wide observed difference between these two ethnics to both sexes in both the number of children ever born and the parents' sex preferences over the children that are born and expected to be born. On the children ever born, it was observed that, Matengo (both men and women) have high fertility rate in most of the ages that have been analysed between respondents as compared to Mwera who were found to have low fertility rates. The total parity within the female respondents during the survey was 4.5 to Matengo 3.4 to Mwera respondents giving the range of 1.1, and for male respondents the parity was 5.9 and 4.2 for Matengo and Mwera respectively with the range of 1.7.

The factors associated to these differences are both proximate such as age at first marriage, type of marriage, breastfeeding, and postpartum sexual practices and socio-economic and cultural factors such as women's status, demand for children, the value of children, preference on the family planning methods, and power relations (sexual decision making). Furthermore, it has been explained before by several authors and researchers like (Bongaarts, 1978; Mzezele, 1992; Ngallaba, 1972; few to mention) that, the early woman is married the early is exposed to sexual intercourse and hence risk of pregnancy, also the difference in time for breastfeeding may reduce time to a woman to enter sexual intercourse and hence exposed to early pregnancy. Women's status may be into level of education and the type of occupation one has and hence to be exposed to the knowledge on birth control and child spacing.

There is a difference in the children's sex preferences between the Matengo and Mwera. The differences are mainly due to the differences in the modes of life that are existing within these two communities thus giving the differences on the social and economic importance that are given between male and female children (Differences in the Value of Children). It was therefore found that the Matengo prefer male children than the girls as compared to Mwera who have at least slightly equal preference between male and female children. A part from that in some cases Mwera was found to prefer female children than male. Factors associated with the differences in the children's sex preferences are both socio-cultural and socio-economic that make the variation in the value of children and also the power relations between males and females. The information concerning this was obtained by asking the importance of children in the family and the type of a child one preferred to have to all ethnic groups.

Women Fertility

There are women with large number of children and those with a few among the Matengo and Mwera. The differences in fertility as was taken by children ever born can be seen in table 3 whereas at the age of 15-19 the 5.9 percent of Matengo women have parity of 1.0 while 2.9 percent of Mwera have the parity of zero. At the age 20-29 the parity for 15.8 percent of

Matengo is 2.4 with small parity to Mwera of the same percent of 15.8 with parity of 1.7. as the age increases also the parity distinctions increase as can be seen at age 30-39 where 14.9 percent of Matengo women have the parity of 5.0 while the 13.9 percent of Mwera have the parity of 3.4 and at the age of 40-49 the parity is 7.8 and 5.9 for Matengo women with 14.9 percent and 15.8 percent of Mwera respectively.

Table 3. Children ever born Matengo and Mwera Women by age

| Age Group | Number of Women | | Living children | | | |
| | Matengo | Mwera | Matengo | | Mwera | |
			CEB	Parity	CEB	Parity
15-19	6	3	6	1.0	0	0.0
20-29	16	16	38	2.3	27	1.7
30-39	15	14	75	5.0	47	3.4
40-49	15	16	117	7.8	95	5.9
Total	52	49	236	4.5	169	3.4

The study found out that, fertility differentials between the Matengo and Mwera is mostly influenced by socio-economic and socio-cultural beliefs, like time at which a woman firstly engage into sexual intercourse, age at first marriage, breast-feeding and frequency of intercourse.

Age at first Marriage

The most important factor that influences fertility among these societies is the age at first marriage where Matengo are found to have early marriage than the Mwera. Women married at the age of 15-19 have the average number of 5.7 children for Matengo and 5.3 for Mwera. Women married at 20-24 have the average number of 2.7 and 2.4 children for Matengo and Mwera respectively (table 4).

Table 4. Women Age at First Marriage and the Average Number of Children

| Age at first Marriage | Average number of children | |
	Matengo	Mwera
15-19	5.7	5.3
20-24	2.7	2.4
25-29	3.0	2.5
30-34	2.0	0

Breast-feeding and Postpartum Sexual Practices

The widespread practice of breastfeeding and associated extended periods of amenorrhea have long been advanced as explanations for variations in the levels of fertility among the societies. The survey found out that old women have the behaviour to breast-feed intensively and for longer period than the young ones. The given reason was that, old women are more bound to traditional norms and values than the young women. Several studies like (Bracher, 1992; Mpete, 1994; few to mention) have demonstrated a strong relationship between breast-feeding and the duration of amenorrhea and between breast-feeding and the birth interval at both individual and national level. The incidence of breast-feeding, duration and the type of suckling is determined by; socio-economic and socio-cultural factors in a society or to an individual person. The study found both women and men who have experienced from their wives that few of them used to breast-feed for less than 12 months. The time taken for breast-feeding was between 12-36 months giving a range of 24 and a mean of 23

months for breast-feeding among these societies in general. More than 45 percent of respondents have tendency to breast-feed for 24 months. This distribution varies with ethnic groups and thus making the differences in fertility as far as breast-feeding is concerned. Also the survey found that to both tribes, the duration for breast-feeding is the same where a mother is required to breast-feed for not less than two years. In Matengo the child is stopped from breast-feeding until he/she is capable of walking. While through experience it takes only eighteen months for a child to start walking thus this may be the right time for a woman to get pregnant. For the Mwera the child is supposed to stop breast-feeding when a child starts walking as well however it takes a year after a child has started walking so as for a mother to get pregnant. The Matengo have short time breast-feeding compared to Mwera and this can be one of the reasons for the differences in fertility between these two communities. Furthermore, the study shows that 10.6 percent of respondents are used to breastfeed for less than fifteen months, 7.1 percent and 3.5 percent are Matengo and Mwera respectively. This was remarked to a short period that is used for breast-feeding. The other period was more than thirty months whereas in this 3.5 percent of Mwera were responsible for breast-feeding while only 2.1 percent of Matengo respondents used to breast-feed for this period. This shows that Matengo use to breast-feed for a short period time than Mwera.

There are differences in post-partum sexual practices between the Matengo and Mwera. Matengo start sexual practices after forty days, while Mwera sexual practices is after the birth of a child, one to two years especially after completely stopping child's breast-feeding. This is due to the fact that the Mwera believe that the semen goes direct to the breasts of a mother and hence when a child is breastfed she/he is taking directly father's semen together with mother's milk. During all this time of breast-feeding parents are not supposed to engage in sexual practises for this was believed to be one of the factors for delaying child's proper growth. In this case there is a check up mechanism to make sure that parents are not engaging in sexual intercourse early after the baby was born.. One of the check up mechanism involves allowing a mother to go on cooking and with all the processes of food preparation. However, when she has started engaging in sexual intercourse, she is obliged not to put salt in the food she is cooking therefore she has to ask for a neighbour or mother in law for assistance to put salt for her. By asking others to put salt for them reveals the secret that the partners have started practicing sexual intercourse before allowed time. Another check-up mechanism for postpartum sexual practices among the Mwera is to get separated of the beds while some other families get separated in bedrooms and also husband and wife are living as if they are enemies especially in sexual practices.

About 34 percent had reported to have a tendency to resume sex for less than 12 months. Where 21.3 percent were the Matengo and 12.8 percent were the Mwera. Others, 58.2 percent resume sexual intercourse for more than a period of 12 months, being 25.5 percent of Matengo and 32.6 percent Mwera, the remaining 2.8 percent Matengo and 5 percent Mwera are those who have not attempted child bearing for different reasons such as barren and others still have not decided to have children and some are still not married.

Education and Fertility Differentials

Data in table 5 present the educational levels of women respondents and their fertility levels.

Table 5. Education and Fertility Matengo and Mwera Women

Education Level		Number of Women	CEB	Parity
no education	Matengo	3	22	7.3
	Mwera	0	0	0.0
At least primary education	Matengo	10	71	7.1
	Mwera	7	33	4.7
Completed Primary Education	Matengo	35	140	4
	Mwera	41	135	3.3
Secondary and above	Matengo	4	3	0.8
	Mwera	0	0	0
Technical Education	Matengo	0	0	0
	Mwera	1	1	1

It shows that the level of education of a woman may influence fertility of an individual woman as well as an entire society. Table 5 shows the parity of 7.3 among respondents with no education among the Matengo where no Mwera woman was found to have no education. For those with at least primary education there was a parity of 7.1 for Matengo and 4.7 for Mwera, while for those who completed primary education there was a parity of 4 to Matengo as compared to 3.3 for Mwera. As the level of education increases also the average number of live births decreases, there was no Mwera woman among respondents with secondary education and above but for the Matengo there was a parity of 0.8 but the Mwera respondents with technical education had a parity of 2.0. Similarly the study shows that there were no women who had gone through standard four (the colonial education, where the highest class was standard four) and those with MEMKWA ("*Mpango wa Elimu kwa Waliokosa*") system of education also were not found.

The Value of Children and Sex Preference

It was found in the study that there are differences in values of children between the Matengo and Mwera. There is a slight preference for boys to girls mostly among the Matengo than Mwera who are likely to have at least equal preferences between boys and girls though in actual Mwera prefer girls than boys. According to the nature of the mode of life in coffee production among Matengo where female labour power is depended the Matengo like male children as when they get married, they increase labour in the coffee production and other farm productions. Most of Mwera prefer both sexes this is because the distribution of labour depends on the nature of their life mode, for men engage much in fishing activities and women engage in the farm works. Women prepare farms after harvesting and during cultivation men may sometimes join women in cultivation and seedling. Most of Mwera respondents had agreed to have preferred daughters than sons. This is due to the fact that, in this community women are the ones taking care of their parents most compared to sons. The survey found that, both ethnics like male children for clan perpetuation and as well as for security at old age. This is due to the fact that the wealth flow among these communities is still basing on upward flow "children to parents". Generally, even sending of children to school especially secondary school, the Matengo prefer to send male children than female

children. The survey found many daughters in the household while male children were said to be in schools. It was also found that female children themselves were not interested for further studies because of marriage. This has been also one of the reasons seen that cultivates many female children to have their first children or sometimes even second children before marriage. For men are considered to be as heir of the families. In all communities especially among the Matengo, even most of the legal issues are given to male children than females. Similarly Most of the registration especially for births is concentrated to men among the Matengo as compared to Mwera where the registration data showed to have been for both male and female children.

Power Relations and Fertility Differentials

Furthermore culture has an aspect of power relations between wife and husband that may have an influence in several matters concerning decision in fertility and couples relationship. Both tribes have patriarch system though differ to some degrees of extent. The Matengo completely base on men decision in all matters in a family while to Mwera though are patriarch the decision in a family may sometimes involve women. To Matengo men have power to decide the time for sexual intercourse, time to have next child, ideal number of children to have as well as on the use of contraceptives. Among Mwera though they are too patriarch dominated the decision making in the family is sometimes shared among couples. It was reported by UMATI Staff that Matengo men do not like women to involve in family planning program. Many of Matengo women who involve in family planning and the use of contraceptive are doing that without the permission from their fellow couples. Among Mwera though the problem of patriarch arises, men sometimes involve in family planning and allow their wives to do so and they themselves involve in family planning program.

Generally there were about 46.1 percent of respondents who said they have discussion, while 53.9 percent don not discuss with their fellow couples or partners all matters concerning family planning issues. About 55.3 percent had a discussion concerning when to have next child and 44.7 percent had not even tried to discuss about child spacing for different reasons. There were 67.4 percent who had discussed with their partners on the matters concerning the specific number of children to have just before and during marriage unions. Even those who involve in Madaba type of marriage have their limits and agreements on the number of children to have during there relationship as it can be noted that this type of marriage though is always not permanent. A total of 14.2 percent of Matengo respondents have agreed to discuss with their husbands, wives and partners on family planning. While 31.9 percent of Mwera partners have agreed to have discussion concerning family planning during their sexual relationship. This result shows an inference on the actual situation concerning family planning within the two communities. Furthermore, Matengo women engage in family planning methods without the concession with their husbands since most men don not like women to engage in family planning. The major reason given was the jealousy of a man if his wife does not get pregnancy, she may become prostitute and also the need to have as many children as possible. This is because once a wife does not reproduce a man is ashamed in a society as well as in the family for not

functioning well; this is according to what they believe. The difference can be seen on the discussion concerning an ideal number of children to have within couples as to most of Matengo decision is on a man while for few Mwera the discussion can be found. And wherever there is a discussion the one who initiates the discussion in most cases is a woman, though not so free as it is expected.

Desired Additional Children

Respondents with at least one living child were asked whether they wanted to have any more children. Most of the respondents both men and women indicated a desire for additional children. There is equal distribution among those who were anxious to have additional children and those who had decided to stop child bearing. This means that among those 92.2 percent of respondents, who already had children, 46.1 percent had said to have a need for additional children and 46.1 percent had decided to cease child bearing. The percentage of men and women who wanted no more children is 14.2 percent and 34.6 percent respectively. Majority of women 23.8 percent who had a desire to have additional children were Matengo women compared to 13.1 percent for Mwera. This is due to the fact that in order to make a stable marriage union to Matengo women and to prevent a man from having another wife it is a must for a woman to be ready to have as many children as possible. This could not depend on the number of children that a woman had but the most important thing is a woman to make her husband happy by having many children. Thus this shows that the decision concerning on the number of children to have among the Matengo is on men and not women who are principal child bearers.

Men's Fertility

It is important to analyse some indices of paternal (male) fertility among the Matengo and Mwera communities as far as African societies are concerned. This is due to the fact that in most Sub-Saharan African societies men influence fertility decision to a greater extent than women do (Ntozi, 1995). Males' fertility levels and the desire for children may differ significantly from that of women especially when polygamous (multi-paternal) are mostly practiced in the societies. Most of the surveys in Africa have not collected data on men's fertility. The few countries with the requisite data were all collected from francophone and North Africa. These data have been used to estimate levels and patterns of male fertility and compared the estimates to those in some developed countries (Ntozi, 1995).

Table 6. Children ever born among Matengo and Mwera Males by age

Age Group	No of Men		Living children			
	Matengo	Mwera	Matengo		Mwera	
			CEB	Parity	CEB	Parity
20-39	8	9	25	3.1	19	2.1
40 +	11	12	88	8.0	69	5.8
TOTAL	19	21	113	5.9	88	4.2

Men play a big role in influencing fertility in a society through several factors. Among them is the way men prefer and allow the practice of polygamous, and the way men influence to

have a certain number of children for different reasons as far as their interests are concerned as well as the sex preference (Male or Female children). Also, men have much influence on decision making of the proper time for intercourse between couples which is one of the proximate in determining fertility of a woman, in a society where male power and decision making is dominated, women have no influence in fertility rather the power is either on men or men's relatives. Men with more than one wife, seems to have influence on reduced number of children, but to some societies the vice versa is true due to the fact that there is competition among women so as to make a man or man's relatives happy by having many children. The system of having more than one wife is influenced by socio-cultural and socio-economic practices. Such socio-cultural factors are like; religion and some cultural values like that. The superiority of a man is tested by the ability to take care of many wives and children and thus influencing polygamy and large number of children. Among the Matengo for example since coffee production needs a great labour force and female as a source of labour, therefore influences men having more than one wife. Therefore, men wanting to have like having many children especially males they will marry and increase the labour power. From this survey, there was large number of men who had polygamous marriage and with a large number of children as compared to males with monogamous marriage.

Conclusion

In the analysis several cultural variables have shown significance association with fertility. Such variables are like age at woman's first marriage, breastfeeding, type of marriage, remarriage rates, desired number of children, the value of children and power relations. The study found that the Matengo have high fertility as compared to Mwera in both Male fertility and Female fertility. Early marriage is dominant among Matengo women as compared to Mwera women and this can be considered among of the reasons for the differences in fertility between Matengo and Mwera women in the average number of children ever born per woman, as it was observed low fertility among Mwera as compared to Matengo. It was also found that Matengo practiced sexual customs that enhance high fertility as compared to Mwera. These included the couples resuming sexual relations few months after birth than Mwera who can stay even for more than two years. Another effect was that of power relation between Matengo couples where most of the sexual and fertility decisions are men oriented among Matengo as compared to Mwera where sometimes there is a discussion involved between couples. The survey also found differentials on the duration for breast-feeding and also on the value for children, where most respondents were found to breastfeed for more than 12 months. The only thing makes for the difference in this is that Matengo while still breast-feeding they can continue to have

sexual intercourse after child delivery while for Mwera it is strictly restricted. For the value of children, with different reasons given the main being cash crop production the Matengo prefer to have male children who will get married and thus increase the working force while Mwera prefer both sexes though much preference is put to female children for bride wealth as well as they are regarded to be good carers of parents' old age than male.

Recommendations

The findings in this study will allow an extensive study of various factors of fertility and given us a deep insight into the interactions of socio-economic and cultural variables. However, there is still need to collect more data to help in better understanding of most of determinants of fertility in the District as well as in Ruvuma Region at large. Also there is a need for an in depth study on the most effective cultural values and norms that influence the proximate determinants of fertility in the area. There is need for studies in the areas especially concerning the effects of the observed fertility trends on the available resources such as land and water resources.

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