

Family Demography in sub-saharan Africa: Systematic Review of Family Research

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Abstract

Background Families in Africa have been undergoing changes recently. The objective of the study was to review published literature on the types, determinants and consequences of family changes in Africa and highlight research gaps in the area.

Methods Sixty-nine journals from 1976 to date that were downloaded from databases such as Pub Med, J Stor, Google Scholar and Science Direct were systematically reviewed.

Results There are family transition in Africa due to socio-economic factors, religious, health and political changes. Seventy-two percent of the studies employed a quantitative approach, 20% qualitative and 7% mixed method approach. There are research gaps on topics such as same-sex marriages, cohabitation and father only households.

Conclusion Families in Africa are responding to socio-economic and other changes that are happening around them. Family research is still under studied in Africa. There is need for more mixed method studies that explain the quantitative findings.

Keywords: Africa, family transition, systematic review

Introduction

The traditional family in African societies is an institution that contains a husband with his wives and children, as well as blood or marriage relatives (Okon, 2013). In the African context, family is based on lineage, kinship and reciprocity (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2006). It is the basis of social organizations in Africa which gives primary care to the young and the aged as well as the agent for social control (Takyi 2001). The institution is resilient in sub-Saharan Africa but responding to general socio-economic and political changes (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2006). Furthermore, HIV has played a pivotal role in the recent changes in family in sub-Saharan Africa because of adult mortality of people in their prime age (Dintwat, 2010).

One could argue that sub-Saharan Africa is going through the second demographic transition which is characterised by increase in divorce, increase in contraceptive effectiveness, change in abortion legislation decrease in marriage and increase in

cohabitation. Furthermore, this “second demographic transition” brings a plethora of living arrangements other than marriage, the disconnection between marriage and reproduction, and migration (Lesthaeghe, 2010).

There is a growing body of literature on family transition in Africa; studies have been conducted on a variety of forms of family changes such as family formation, family size, family structure, family dissolution, living arrangements and the effects of family changes. This review argues that family in Africa is in resilience and it is reacting to global changes. This paper seeks to review the documented studies on family changes in Africa.

Research question

What are the types, determinants and consequences of family changes in Africa?

Method of review

A systematic approach to all literature was used to identify studies on family change in Africa. This review included academic peer reviewed journals from Pub Med, J Stor, Google Scholar and Science Direct. The key words used for search were “family research”, “family dynamics”, and “family transitions”, “family changes”. The following specific words that represent family changes in Africa were also used in the search; “orphanhood”, “single motherhood”, “divorce”, “family formation”, “same gendered families”, “child headed households”, and “nuclear and extend families”. The reviewed studies were only limited to African studies. To develop a comprehensive review, journal articles published from 1976 to date were included. Sixty-nine journal articles fitting the inclusion criteria that analysed the determinants of family changes and the consequences of family changes in Africa were reviewed.

Findings

Family formations

Changes in family size

Studies have established that family size in Africa has changed and people are having fewer children in general (Ikamari 2005, Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006, Dintwat, 2010, Madhavan & Schatz 2011, Mturi & Kembo 2011). Shapiro & Gebreselassie (2008) analysed fertility behaviour of 24 countries with multiple Demographic and Health Surveys in sub-Saharan Africa and found that fertility transition had commenced in almost of these countries. The study further highlighted that fertility decline is still ongoing in 65% of the countries (Shapiro & Gebreselassie, 2008). Factors such as delayed marriage, female education, female labour force participation, migration, fear of HIV/AIDS as well as the high costs of living lead to reduced fertility and consequently smaller families in sub-Saharan Africa (Ikamari 2005, Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2008, Dintwat 2010, Lachaud et al 2014). Four reviewed studies noted that use of modern contraception has contributed to fertility decline (Heaton & Hirschl 1999, Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2008, Dintwat 2010, Mturi & Kembo 2011). There has been a decline in extended family support leaving child rearing costs as the responsibility of the biological parents so couples now want fewer children (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006). However one study by Heaton & Hirschl (1999) found that Hausa women in Nigeria still preferred larger families and married early because childbearing confers social status in their culture. This shows how some ethnic groups are less susceptible to changes due to their cultural beliefs.

Premarital child bearing

Marriage is the context in which child bearing is socially acceptable in most countries (Ikamari, 2005). Family formation has changed in Africa in that there is an increase of women who have children out of wedlock (Calves 1999, Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006, Mokomane 2006, Palamuleni & Adebowale 2013). Palamuleni & Adebowale (2013) studied the levels and patterns of premarital child bearing in sub-Saharan Africa and the study revealed that premarital child bearing was highest in Namibia (26%) and lowest in Nigeria (5%). Furthermore their study revealed that premarital child bearing was higher among women who had no formal education compared to those who were educated. The odds of having a premarital birth significantly decreased with an increase in wealth quintile in Nigeria, Rwanda and Namibia. Women who had early sexual debut had higher odds of having had a premarital birth in Nigeria, Senegal, Congo and Namibia (Palamuleni & Adebowale, 2013). Premarital child bearing is one of the features of the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe, 2010). Hence, we argue that sub-Saharan Africa is undergoing the second demographic transition.

Delayed marriages

The other noted change in family formation is the issue of increase in age at first marriage in Africa. Marriage has traditionally been universal and early in sub-Saharan Africa but this has changed in most countries. Garenne (2014) studied the levels and trends of age at first marriage for females in 33 sub-Saharan African countries and found that the average age of first marriage was 18 years for a cohort of women born in 1930 and it increased to 22.6 years for a cohort of women born in 1990. Age at marriage has increased for both males and females. For example, Palamuleni (2010) noted that singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) for South African males increased from 31.0 years in 1996 to 32.5 years in 2007 and that of females increased from 28 years in 1996 and to 30 years in 2007.

Research has shown that educated women are more likely to delay marriage because of the years they spent in school and their focus of career advancement first (Garenne 2004, Ikamari 2005, Mokomane 2006, Palamuleni 2011). Ikamari (2005) found that risk of first marriage was 24 % lower for the women with primary education and 46% lower for women with secondary education, all compared with women with no education in Kenya. In addition, delay in marriage has been attributed to increase in bride costs because men will take time to save money for lobola (Dintwat, 2010). Delay in marriage because of education an increase in bride wealth

show that family formation is resilient but changing responding to socio economic changes such as high cost of living as well as women empowerment in the form of increase in female education. Postponement of marriage is linked to the second demographic transition which proposes that further decline in fertility is caused by delay in marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2010).

Cohabitation

Marriage has been traditionally seen as the foundation of family formation and couples had to be married before they started staying together and start child bearing (Calves 1999, Ikamari 2005). There has been a decline in marriages in Africa and there is an increase in alternatives such as consensual cohabiting which is one of the features of the second demographic transition. For example in South Africa, 5% of African women reported that they were cohabiting 1995 and this had increased to 14% in 2008 (Posel et al 2011). A study on cohabitation in sub-Saharan Africa revealed that Southern Africa had the highest proportions of women aged 15-49 years who were cohabiting; with proportion above 10 % in Botswana, South Africa and Namibia (Mokomane, 2006). Seventy percent of the selected countries in East and West Africa had proportions of cohabitants lower than 10 %. (Mokomane, 2006).

There are three common interpretations of cohabitation which are cohabitation as an alternative to marriage, a prelude to marriage and an alternative to being single (Mokomane, 2005). Mokomane (2005) revealed that cohabitation in Botswana can be viewed as a prelude to marriage. Posel (2011) noted a difference in the types of cohabitation between blacks and whites in South Africa. Cohabitation precluded marriage among whites whereas it was an alternative among blacks. Cohabiting has been cited as an alternative to marriage among South African blacks because of the high bride prices men have to pay if they decide to marry (Posel, 2011).

Furthermore, cohabitation has been attributed to unemployment of men, increase in number of educated women who want to establish careers and premarital child bearing (Mokomane 2006, Dintwat 2010, Moore & Govender, 2013). One would argue that this is evident of how nuptiality is responding to changes in the economy leading to high unemployment, changes in culture leading to high cost of bride wealth and women empowerment which is focusing on increasing women's level of education.

Changes in family roles

Four reviewed studies on family roles highlighted that the roles of fathers and mothers in their families are

changing (Smit 2002, Montgomery et al 2006, Kimani & Kombo 2010, Moore 2013). Men were traditionally responsible for economic provision in a household, and women played a domestic role. However, migration of men, unemployment as well as the increasing level of female labour force changed the role of men and women in their families (Smit 2002, Montgomery et al 2006, Kimani & Kombo 2010). The involvement of women in the labour market has led to the change of a man's role in a family as the sole breadwinner and their involvement in domestic work (Smit 2002, Montgomery et al 2006). Corroborating this finding, Montgomery et al (2006) found that in the context of HIV, men responded by performing roles that went beyond economic support in South Africa. Men were observed engaging in activities such as child care, chores in the house and emotional support.

A study by Kimani & Kombo (2010) on the challenges faced by nuclear families with absent fathers in Kenya found that women had to fulfil their role as mothers as well as play the role of the father in order to fill in the gap of their missing husbands. Economic provision was traditionally a man's responsibility but these women were left with that responsibility which was very challenging (Kimani & Kombo, 2010). As a result, women were now playing a triple role specifically the productive role, reproductive role and fulfilling community expectations. A study by Moore (2013) in South Africa revealed that notions of motherhood have changed from the nurturing role towards increased emphasis on achieving goals such as high educational attainment, employment and financial independence. This shows how women's empowerment through increased in female education and female labour force participation has led to changes in family roles.

Types of families

Emergence of same gendered families

One of the non-traditional family forms that have challenged society's notion family is the concept of same-gendered families (Lubbe, 2008). The same-sex marriage legislation and adoption rights for gays and lesbians in South Africa have led to the formation of non-traditional form of families (Rothmann, 2011). Studies have been conducted to examine parenting and experiences of children from the emerging same gendered families in South Africa (Lubbe 2007, Lubbe 2008, Rothmann 2011). All three of the identified studies employed qualitative research methods and they are South African studies. Lubbe (2007) postulated that parenting and family are constructed hence structural variables, such as the gender composition of families and the division of parental roles, are not as important as process variables such

as the quality of relationships and the quality of care the children receive. Another qualitative study by Lubbe (2008) on experiences of children from lesbian headed families revealed that the children disclosed that they were from lesbian parent to their friends after being aware that their friends were uneasy, and they did for their friends to accept them (Lubbe, 2008).

Decline in polygamy

Polygamy which is defined as practice of one man being married to more than one wife at the same time has been a family structure common in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa (Smith-Greenway & Trinitapoli 2014). Reviewed literature shows that polygamous marriages have declined in many African societies (Meere 1976, Hayase & Liaw 1997, Heaton & Hirschl 1999, Mokomane 2006, Fenke 2013). Using Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) from 34 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Fenke (2013) found that about 40% of women who first married in 1970 were in polygamous marriages whereas about 15% of women who married in 2005 were in polygamous unions. Reasons for decline in polygamy include delayed marriage, high bride price and high cost of raising children (Heaton & Hirschl 1999, Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006). Furthermore, increase in females attaining education has also played a pivotal role in reducing polygamy (Hayase & Liaw 1997). Two studies noted that Christianity led to the decline in polygamy in Africa due to its negative moral judgment on polygamy (Hayase & Liaw 1997, Mokomane 2006).

Single motherhood and female headed households

Another aspect of family transformation in Africa is the emergence of single motherhood (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006, Dintwat 2010). The two main pathways into single motherhood are giving birth before marriage and experiencing a union dissolution through divorce or widowhood after having at least one dependent child (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006, Clark & Hamplova 2013). Using survival analysis techniques, Clark & Hamplova (2013) found that approximately 50 % of married women will become single mothers as a result of divorce or widowhood in sub-Saharan Africa. Two studies on the relationship between premarital child bearing and marriage found that premarital child bearing results in women being marginalized in the marriage market hence they remain single (Calves 1999, Hattori & Larsen 2007). Both studies found that women who had a premarital child birth and had been single mothers for four or more years were less likely to get married compared to women who had no children. Two studies noted that the cultural practice of wife inheritance to keep

family ties together is declining in Africa hence some widows remain single (Foster 1997, Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006). The decline of wife inheritance could be attributed to HIV which is encouraging this change in behaviour.

Related to single-motherhood, the phenomenon of female headed households is increasing in sub-Saharan Africa (Siqwana-Ndulo 1998, Madhavan & Schatz 2010). For example Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) surveyed 90 households and found that 62% of them were headed by women. The difference between a single mother and a female household head is that a single mother can be in a male headed household who is not her husband. Moreso, the female head may not be necessarily the single parent for example a grandmother as the head of household. The main causes of the establishment of female headed households are male migration, widowhood, and increase in divorce and pregnancies before marriage (Siqwana-Ndulo 1998, Katapa 2006, Hattorri & Larsen 2007).

Orphanhood and child headed households

An orphan is defined as a child below the age of 18 who has lost at least one parent (Ha et al, 2015). All the 5 studies that examined orphanhood noted that HIV/ AIDS epidemic has contributed immensely to the increase in orphanhood in Africa (Foster 1997, Monasch & Boerma 2004, Hosegood et al 2007, Meintjes et al 2010, Ha et al 2015). Ha et al (2015) noted that there are 14.9 million AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa. This shows how family is responding to the epidemic. Using Demographic and Surveillance Systems from Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa, Hosegood et al (2007) found that the prevalence of paternal orphanhood is higher than maternal orphanhood because men are older than their wives and the sex differences in HIV infection and survival times (Hosegood et al 2007). In Tanzania, 5 % of children under the age of 18 had lost a mother whereas the figure was 9 % for those who lost a father (Hosegood et al 2007).

Four out of the five studies found that even though there is an increase of orphanhood, there is no evidence that there is a high number of child headed households as a result (Monasch & Boerma 2004, Hosegood et al 2007, Madhavan & Schatz 2007, Meintjes et al 2010). A child headed household is defined as a household headed by a person who is less than eighteen years old (Hosegood et al, 2007). Hosegood et al (2007) found no relationship between orphanhood and child headed households in Tanzania, Malawi and South Africa. Buttressing this finding, Meintjes et al (2010) also did not find evidence that child headed households are rapidly growing phenomena in South Africa suggesting that

kinship networks still provide care for AID orphans. On the contrary Foster et al (1997) found that child headed households are a new way of coping as people respond to the impact of AIDS in families in Zimbabwe. Child headed households were established because of reasons such as extended families' reluctance to take them in, death of relatives, refusal of relatives to move in with children.

Child fostering

Child fostering which is defined as the custom of children living outside of the natal home is practiced throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa (Monasch & Boerma 2004, Hosegood 2007, Pillai& Sharma 2013, Gant & Yeatman 2014). There are two categories of child fostering which are crisis and non-crisis situation fostering. Crisis situation fostering is a strategy used by families to cope with unexpected and ongoing difficulties. For example, fostering as a result of death of a parent (Monasch & Boerma 2004, Hosegood 2007), divorce (Gant & Yeatman 2014) and migration (Monasch & Boerma, 2004). On the other hand non-crisis child fostering is a strategy to strengthen kinship ties (Pillai& Sharma 2013) and also sharing cost of children (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe 2006). Wusu (2006) noted that the practice of non-crisis fostering to spread childrearing cost is declining so childrearing is the responsibility of biological parents only. Grant & Yeatman (2012) examined the change in child fostering patterns in 14 sub-Saharan African countries and found that there was a decline in non-orphan fostering and an increase in crisis orphan fostering in countries where there was high HIV prevalence.

Nuclear and extended family

There are three types of families which are nuclear family, single-parent family and extended family (Dintwat, 2010). The sub-Saharan community has been traditionally dominated by the extended family which comprises of generations of close relatives living together as opposed to a married couple and living with their biological children (Wusu, 2006). Two reviewed studies noted that the concept of family in an African setting has reduced in size to become nuclear which consists of only father, mother and children due to urbanization and modernisation (Amoateng & Heaton 1989, Kimani & Kombo 2010). Amoateng & Heaton (1989) noted that Christianity has eroded the basis of the extended family through its encouragement of individual achievement and the introduction of the nuclear family system. In the same vein Adegoke (2010) noted that the extended family system which used to resolve conflicts between couples is no longer operating effectively like in the past hence the divorce rates are increasing. However a study by Siwqana-Ndulo (1998) found that

extended families still exist and black families in rural South Africa are not moving towards the nuclear set up. Buttressing this point, Frantz et al (2015) noted that multi-generational co residence is still a norm and a widely preferred option in South Africa. As mentioned above, extended families are the main care givers of orphans in sub-Saharan Africa (Monasch& Boerma 2004, Hosegood et al 2007, Madhavan & Schatz 2007, Meintjes et al 2010). This shows that extended families are still pivotal in most African societies.

Determinants of family changes

Women's empowerment

Women empowerment can be defined as the extension of freedom of choice and action to a woman's life (Duflo, 2012). It focuses on improving the ability of women to access elements of development such as health, education, economic opportunities and political participation (Duflo, 2012). Women in Africa are becoming increasingly empowered and this has had an impact on family. Progress in increasing women's educational attainment has been identified as one of the key factors contributing to sustained fertility decline across sub-Saharan Africa (Shapiro & Gebreselassie, 2008). Two of the proximate determinants of fertility, use of modern contraception and the percentage in union, are influenced by women's educational attainment (Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2008, Palamuleni & Adebowali 2014). Takyi (2001) & Adegoke (2010) noted that women who attained higher levels of education were more likely to divorce in Ghana and Nigeria. Furthermore, delayed marriages have been attributed to increase in women's education attainment and their preference to advancing their career first before getting married (Ikamari, 2005). Mokomane (2006) noted that educated women prefer cohabiting to avoid the cultural subordination of wives to their husbands that is typical of traditional a marriage in many societies in Africa. This evidence supports the argument that family is resilient but changing due to global ideologies such as promoting women empowerment as it is imperative for development (Duflo, 2012).

Migration and family changes

Three out of the four reviewed studies on migration noted that despite its improvement in the welfare of people, labour migration of a spouse is associated with marital dissolution and consequently a weakened family structure (Modo 2001, Dintwat 2010, Anglewicz 2012). A study in Lesotho found that 10% of married men who migrated to work in South Africa abandoned their wives and remarried in South Africa (Modo, 2001). Dintwat (2010) noted

that labour migration of men from Southern African countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia to South Africa resulted in men having “small houses” which are extramarital relationships where they even had children. Most of these men divorced when they went back home.

In South Africa some mothers migrate to urban areas leaving children with their grandmothers (Posel & Casale 2003, Hosegood et al 2007, Moore 2013, and Tangwe 2013). Posel & Casale (2003) noted that some of the women in rural South Africa migrate to look for employment in urban areas leaving their children with grandmothers when their children get older and they have more expenses such as school fees.

Urbanisation and family changes

Reviewed studies showed that urbanisation has contributed immensely to family change in Africa. For example, urbanisation was associated with fertility decline (Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2008) delayed marriage (Ikamari 2005), cohabitation (Moore & Govender 2013) and decline in polygamy (Mere 1976, Hayase & Liaw 1997). Urbanisation has led to the decline in polygamy in Africa because of high cost of living, shortages of houses, weakened kinship system and high risks of unemployment in the urban areas. A study by Hayase and Liaw (1997) on polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa found that there were lower rates of polygamy in urban areas compared to rural areas in Senegal, Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe (Hayase & Liaw 1997). The study that examined the association between premarital child bearing and place of residence in sub Saharan African yielded inconclusive findings. Premarital childbearing was attributed to residing in urban areas in Nigeria, Senegal, Congo and Namibia but rural women were more likely to have had premarital child bearing in Malawi and Rwanda (Palamuleni & Adebowali 2013).

Marital dissolution

One of the themes on family change in sub Saharan Africa that has been of interest to scholars is divorce. Family is central to African societies hence disruptions in family structure have socioeconomic consequences on the individuals as well as the society at large (Takyi, 2001). A study in Ethiopia found that 45% of first marriages in Ethiopia end in divorce within 30 years, and 65% of women who divorce do so within the first five years of marriage (Tilson & Larsen 2000). All four studies that examined the association between HIV and marriage dissolution established that HIV was associated with marriage dissolution either through divorce or widowhood (Porter et al 2004, Floyd et al 2008, Anglewicz, 2012). A study by Porter et al (2004) in Uganda

found an association between HIV being positive and both divorce or separation and widowhood. Discordant HIV positive couples were more likely to divorce or separate whereas concordant couples were more likely to experience widowhood.

Studies have found that childlessness is a determinant of divorce in Africa (Tilson & Larsen 2000, Takyi 2001, Reniers 2003, Adegoke (2010). The five studies that examined the role of religion found that religious affiliation was significantly associated with divorce in Ghana and Malawi (Amoateng & Heaton 1989, Tilson & Larsen 2000, Reiners 2003, Takyi & Gyimah 2007, Adegoke 2010). Studies that considered the association between age at marriage and divorce found that women who marry young were significantly more likely to divorce (Amoateng & Heaton 1989, Tilson & Larsen 2000, Takyi 2001, Reniers 2003, Takyi & Gyimah 2007, Adegoke 2010). The three reviewed studies that examined the association between polygyny and divorce found that people in polygamous marriages were more likely to divorce compared to women in monogamous marriages in Ghana and Malawi (Takyi 2001, Reiners 2003, Takyi & Gyimah 2007). Two studies found that less educated women were less likely to divorce than their educated counterparts in Ghana and Nigeria (Takyi 2001, Adegoke 2010). Other studies found that women who attained higher education were less likely to divorce compared to women with less education in Ethiopia and Ghana (Amoateng & Hilton 1989 and Tilson & Larsen 2000). Contrasting these findings Reiners (2003) found no association between education and divorce in Malawi.

Outcomes of family changes

Effects of family changes on children's education

The reviewed studies on the impact of family changes on children's education found that parental absence has a negative impact on education (Chuong & Operario 2012, Thiombiano et al 2013, Akanle 2014, Ha et al 2015). Two of the reviewed studies noted that orphanhood had a negative influence on children's education in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Chuong & Operario 2011, Ha et al 2015). Choung and Operario (2011) found that orphaned children were more likely to experience delay in education compared to their non-orphaned counterparts in South Africa. Supporting this view, Ha et al (2015) found that orphanhood significantly affected children's access to education in Zimbabwe. Orphans were significantly less likely to be attending school and they were more likely to be school dropouts compared to non-orphans (Ha et al, 2015).

Moreover, De Wet (2013) found that parent absenteeism was associated with adolescents working for 10 or more hours a week in South Africa. She

further stipulated that even though it is legal for them to work, the long working hours jeopardise their school completion and these adolescents will be unskilled workers who will struggle to find jobs in the long run. A study by Thiombiano et al (2013) in Burkina Faso revealed that children who had divorced mothers had a lower probability of entering school compared to children who had married mothers. Furthermore, Akanle (2014) found that having one parent absent had a negative impact of the children's education and also increased chances of children to commit crime in Nigeria.

Family change and child survival

Reviewed studies showed that family changes have had both negative and positive effects on child survival depending on the type of change. Marital dissolution has been associated with higher likelihood of child mortality for children in Africa (Clark & Hamplova 2013, Thiombiano 2013). Clark & Hamplova (2013) found that children who had a previously married mother had a higher risk of dying relative to children who had married parents in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Corroborating this finding, Thiombiano (2013) found that children of divorced women had higher estimated under-five mortality risks than those living with married mothers in Burkina Faso.

On a positive note, Izugbara (2014) found that female-headed households were less likely to experience mortality among under-5 children than male-headed households in Nigeria. With regards to family size, Izugbara (2014) found that households with a higher number of children even born were more likely to experience child mortality compared to households which had 1 to 4 children only. This shows how changes towards smaller family size increase child survival. Two studies noted that women in monogamous marriages were less likely to experience child mortality relative to women in polygamous marriages (Omariba & Boyle 2007, Smith-Greenway & Trinitapoli 2014).

Family change and risky sexual behaviours

Parents have been traditionally been viewed as having primary influence on health risk behaviour of young people. Four reviewed studies focused on the association between family structure and sexual behaviour of young people. Findings indicated that family transitions were strongly associated with risky sexual behaviour among young people (Operario et al 2011, Defo & Dimbuene 2012, Ntaganira et al, 2012). Defo & Dimbuene (2012) found that living within two-parent families all the time, either nuclear or extended was strongly associated with lower rates of sexual debut in Cameroon. On the contrary,

students from single parent homes were less likely to have multiple sexual partners in Nigeria (Odimegwu & Adedini 2013).

With regards to married people, studies have established that family changes lead to promiscuity which can increase HIV rates. As mentioned above, some men who migrate leaving their wives behind engage in extra marital relationships (Modo 2001, Dintwat 2010). In the same vein, some women who stay behind do the same. For example Kimani and Kombo (2010) found that some married women who had absent husbands had multiple sexual partners in Kenya.

Female headed households and poverty

Four reviewed studies on female headed households and poverty established that female headed households were poorer compared to male headed households. Katapa (2006) found that female-headed households did not have sufficient food and they did not own assets in Uganda. A study in South Africa found that female headed households had lower incomes, lower rates of employment and lower educational attainment than male headed households (Goebel et al, 2010). A study in Kenya found that married women, who had absent husbands faced economic challenges (Kimani & Kombo, 2010). Murreta & Derresa (2014) noted that 35.3% of the sample female headed households in rural Ethiopia were poor. They further established that educational attainment of the head was one of the key determinants of poverty for female headed households.

Family size and resource allocation

Reduced family size results in lower household economic dependency ratio and also relieves some of the resource constraints that may force families hence children are allocated with more resources (Lachaud et al, 2014). Lachaud et al (2014) examined how patterns of parental investments differ systematically between large and small families in the context of fertility decline in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. Results revealed that children from smaller families were more likely to be enrolled in school or attain post-primary school level irrespective of their age and gender compared to children from larger families (Lachaud et al 2014). This shows how children are allocated with more resources if the family size is smaller. Furthermore, Omariba & Boyle (2007) noted that a decline in polygamy improves child survival because families will be smaller. They further stipulated that the advantage of monogamy is that there will be more financial resources available for healthy childrearing (Omariba & Boyle, 2007).

Policies on family

Policies on family

Many countries in Africa do not have an explicit family policy and policies regarding families are embedded within their national population policies. The aspect on family which is mentioned in national population policies is that of reduced fertility which will lead to reduced family size. For example the Ugandan Population Policy 2008 highlighted problems with high fertility, early child bearing and adolescent child bearing hence it came up with a strategy to advocate for affordability, availability and accessibility of family planning (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2008). Similarly, the population policy of Ghana stated that attempts will be made to discourage economic and financial policies that encourage people to have large families (National Population Policy on Ghana, 1994). Furthermore, the national population policy of Ghana (1994) stated that it aimed to increase mean age at marriage from 18 years to 20 years through education. The policy shows how the government wants to delay family formation by as increasing education thus we argue that families in Africa respond to changes that occur around them.

The department of Social Development in South Africa has a white paper on families in South Africa. The white paper views the family as important to development and wants to mainstream family matters into government-wide, policy-making initiatives in order to bring about positive family well-being and socio-economic development. The vision of the white paper is to have families that function well, peaceful, safe, stable and economically self-sustaining. Furthermore the vision is to have families that also provide care as well as financial, spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological, and intellectual support for their members (Department of Social Development, 2012).

Social protection policies and family changes

In South Africa there is a social protection policy known as the Child Support Grant (CSG) that was initiated in 1997 and pays a small monthly cash amount to poor children under the age of 16 years old through their primary caregivers. Two studies in South Africa found child support grant further discourages father's responsibility to pay maintenance and support children (Patel and Hochfeld 2011, Jordan et al 2014). Patel and Hochfeld found that 30% of the women indicated that their children's fathers stopped giving them maintenance since they started receiving the grant.

Studies have also studied whether the child support grant in South Africa influences family formation. Makiwane et al's study (2006) found that

increase of teenage pregnancy was not related to the introduction of the child support grant. However, a study by Hölscher et al (2009) found that 63% of participants in the quantitative study saw a direct link between the introduction of the grant and teenage pregnancy. Jordan et al (2014) conducted some interviews and found that some of the young women were encouraged to fall pregnant so that their families could access the child grant.

The social protection policies have helped in alleviating poverty in families in South Africa. For example Patel & Hochfeld (2011) found that 79% of the women they studied believed that they could take better care of their children with the child grant (Patel & Hochfeld, 2011). There is also an old age grant policy in South Africa whereby people over 60 years old receive a grant which has helped in reducing poverty in their households (Tangwe, 2013). Tangwe (2013) noted that some pensioned elderly black South Africans live in intergenerational households and they are the primary caregivers. They act as breadwinners and provide for their unemployed children, orphans, grandchildren and other relatives. The grant benefits all the family members as it contributes to necessities such as buying food, payment of school fees, transport, rent, electricity and water (Tangwe, 2013).

Responses to change

Scholars have also studied on how individuals respond to family changes in Africa. For example, Kannae and Pendleton (1994) studied the fertility attitudes of Ghanaian government employees and found that most respondents were against government's interference with the number of children a couple should have and they believed that an educated man should have as many children as possible.

Mokomane (2005) researched on the attitude towards cohabitation among women in Botswana. The main finding was that people viewed cohabitation as a disadvantage. Cohabiting men and women generally cited that marriage was better because it has better legal securities, more stable, socially acceptable and receive more support than cohabitation.

Onuche (2009) studied the perceptions Nigerians had on same-sex marriages. His main finding was that Nigerians consider same sex marriage as an insult to the traditional concept of marriage and it should not be legally recognized. Most Nigerians think a marriage without procreation is incomplete hence they are against legalisation of same sex marriages (Onuche, 2009).

Bojuwoye & Akpan (2009) researched on the reactions of children to divorce in South Africa and

found that age when parents divorced, current age, gender and family dynamics such as re-marriage, finance and relationships with custodian and non-custodian parents were important to participant's reactions to their parent's divorce. Most children who had parents who divorced when they were young reported that they had forgotten completely about the divorce. Male respondents viewed their father's absence as not having a role model whereas female respondents saw their father's absence as their mother's deprivation of a helper. With regards to family dynamics, most of the girls did not like the idea of having a step mother (Bojuwoye & Akpan, 2009).

Methodology

Seventy-two percent of the reviewed studies employed the quantitative approach, 20% of studies were qualitative and 7% employed the mixed method approach. Samples of the reviewed studies were sizeable, only two out of the 50 quantitative studies had less than 100 respondents (Foster 1997, Modo 2001) the rest had large sample sizes. Seventy-six percent of the studies had samples sizes that were over 1000. Regarding data sources, 10 out of the 50 quantitative studies made use of primary data, the other 40 made use of secondary data which was mainly large national surveys. Thirty-four percent of the quantitative studies utilized the Demographic and Health Surveys as the data source. Nine of the qualitative studies collected data using methods such as in depth interviews, ethnographies, narratives and focus group discussions whereas six of them were desktop reviews. Four of the 5 studies which used the mixed method approach combined surveys with in-depth interviews (Siquana-Ndulo 1998, Mokomane 2005, Ankale et al 2014, Jordan & Patel 2014). One of the qualitative studies made use of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and surveys as data collection methods (Holscher, 2009). Only five of the studies analysed longitudinal data (Porter 2004, Hosegood et al 2007, Madhavan & Schatz 2010, Lachaud et al 2014, Grant & Yeatman 2014) whereas the rest analysed cross sectional data.

Most of the quantitative researchers employed different measures to test the relationships between independent and dependant variables. Only three of those studies employed a simple bivariate measure of association (Oppong 1977, Smit 2002, Goebel 2010) and the majority (84%) were employing multivariate statistical analysis. Only 6 % of the quantitative studies employed descriptive statistics (Foster 1997, Modo 2001, Monasch & Boerma 2004, Mokomane 2006, Patel & Hochfeld 2006). More than half of the dependent variables (51%) were demographic. These included family size, marital status, age at

marriage and education. Fourteen percent of the studies had outcome variables on family types and relationships. These included orphanhood, child headed households, single motherhood, female headed households, polygamy, same gendered families, parenting practices and copying mechanisms. Four of the studies had health outcomes due to family changes (child mortality) as the dependant variable. Only one study analysed data using a multilevel-model approach (Izugbara, 2014).

Theory

Only 19 out of the 69 reviewed studies (28%) utilized theories. Six of the 19 studies were guided by fertility theories such as Davis/Blake (1956), Caldwell (1982) theory of fertility decline, Bongaarts (1978) proximate determinants of fertility and Easterlin (1975) framework for fertility analysis. Future research on family in Africa could be improved by using theoretical frameworks to guide research design, development of research instruments and interpretation of findings. Esping-Andersen & Billari (2015) proposed a multiple equilibrium framework based on the argument on the importance of the ongoing transformation of gender roles and relations. They posited a return to "more family" as gender egalitarianism gains normative status. The framework helps explain both the past trend of less family and the current reversal. Future studies could utilize this theory in the African context.

Gaps

After reviewing the studies one of the identified gaps in literature is on research on the same gendered families in Africa. Scientific literature on same-gendered families and parenting remains limited in South Africa and Africa at large because homosexuality is illegal in most African countries and is still stigmatised even in South Africa where it is legal. All the reviewed studies on this new type of family were qualitative, quantitative research on such families are needed to test associations with different independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, homosexuality has been studied in the context of HIV /AIDS and has not been given much attention as a family form.

Furthermore, the other identified gap in the reviewed studies is on step families in Africa. Some people remarry after marital dissolution caused by either widowhood or divorce hence blended families are created. Studies in America and Netherlands have shown that children who were staying in original, two-parent households have better well-being than children in stepfather households (Amato 1987, Hanson et al 1996, Spruijt & Goede 1997).

Hence, it will be worthwhile to conduct research on the dynamics in step families in Africa.

Levels and determinants of cohabitation have been documented in Africa but evidence is sparse on how cohabitation influences the child wellbeing. Furthermore, African studies that examined family change and child health mostly looked at the association between single motherhood or female headed households and child mortality. Schemeer (2011) found that child health outcomes are better for children whose parents marry than those who cohabit in America. Given that levels of cohabitation are increasing in Africa, this could be a research gap that needs to be filled.

Another identified research gap is on father only households in Africa. There are emerging father only households in some parts of Africa for example Zimbabwe, where the women migrate and leave their children with their fathers or widowers who stay with their children. There is need to conduct research on such families in Africa. Furthermore, more research is needed on how individuals and the societies are responding to family changes in Africa.

With regards to methodology, more studies which use the mixed method approach are needed in order to get in-depth information on family change in Africa. More multi-level studies should be conducted on family change in Africa. Moreover, longitudinal studies are needed to examine family changes over time.

Conclusion

This review provided an overview of the literature on determinants and consequences of family changes in Africa. The review confirmed that there is family transition in Africa due to a plethora of reasons. Family in Africa is a resilient institution and the changes it is facing are attributed to social and economic conditions such as rising education levels, female labour force participation, economic challenges, urbanisation and migration. Increase in level of education attained by women and their participation in the labour force has not only changed their roles in families but marriage patterns. Furthermore, labour migration has changed a lot of families, resulting in single parent families that are becoming more common. HIV/AIDS related mortality and morbidity has altered the structure of many families as it is leading to increased marital dissolution and orphanhood. New laws on homosexuality have led to an emergence to families that were not previously considered as families in South Africa. Family changes have an impact on children's education, child survival as well as sexual behaviour of the youth. Given that family transition is ongoing in Africa and some of the changes have a negative

impact, there is need for countries to develop explicit family policies that help improve the wellbeing of the emerging types of families. Future research on family in Africa could be improved by theoretical guidance and being methodologically robust with studies using longitudinal data to examine family change overtime, multilevel analysis and mixed method research approach to get richer information.

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Appendices

Table 1: Summary of the studies

Sample size	Frequency	Percentage
Quantitative research > 100	2	4%
Quantitative research < 100	48	96%
Over 1000	38	76%
Research approach		
Quantitative	50	72%
Qualitative	14	20%
Mixed method	5	7%
Design		
Cross sectional	58	91%
Longitudinal	6	9%
Outcome variables		
Demographic	35	51%
Family types and relationships	19	27%
Sexual behaviour	4	6%

Health outcomes	4	6%
Sex roles	4	6%
Attitudes	3	4%
Theory		
Utilized theory	19	28%
Fertility theories	6	18%
Quantitative studies data sources		
Primary data	10	20%
Secondary	40	80%
Demographic and Health Survey	17	34%
Qualitative studies data sources		
Primary	9	64%
Secondary (desktop review of literature)	6	36%
Quantitative statistical methods		
Descriptive	6	12%
Bivariate	4	8%
Multivariate	40	80%

Table 2: Descriptions and findings of research addressing changes in family formation

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Calves A (1999)	Population Studies, Vol 53 pp 291-301	Population Studies	Quantitative, 1991 Cameroon Demographic and Health Survey, 3871 women, multivariate discrete-time logit	Chances of 1st marriage		premarital child bearing significantly jeopardises the marriage chances of single women in the long run	reasons why the chances of getting married are lower were not given, qualitative studies could give more in-depth information
Garenne M (2004)	Southern African Journal of Demography Vol 9 No 2	Demography	Quantitative, World Fertility Surveys and Demographic and Health Surveys of 32 sub-Saharan African countries, multiple regressions	Female age at first marriage		the median age at first marriage increased for women born after the 1950 cohort in most countries, education and income were factors associated with the increase in age at first marriage	Africa is going through a nuptiality transition which needs to be analysed and monitored
Ikamari L (2005)	Demographic Research Vol 12 No 1	Demography	Quantitative, 1998 Kenya DHS, 7881 women ,Cox proportional hazards regression	Timing of marriage		The highly educated women are more likely to delay marriage	pathways through which education influenced timing of marriages were not investigated there is need to qualitatively examine, in the context of Botswana, the impact of this union type on children's psychological, emotional, behavioural and cognitive outcomes comparative qualitative analyses is required to explain the factors that make Botswana's cohabitation levels to so closely resemble those in Latin America and the Caribbean
Mokomane Z (2005)	African Population Studies Vol 20 No 1	Population Studies	Mixed Method , 2001 Cohabitation Survey and the 1996 Botswana Family Health Survey	Cohabitation		cohabitation is a prelude to marriage in Botswana	
Mokomane Z (2006)	Comparative Family Studies,Vol. 37, no. 1	Demography	Quantitative, Demographic Health Surveys of 26 sub Saharan African countries and 8 Latin American countries, descriptive statistics, desktop review	Cohabitation		constant population mobility, shortage of men and premarital childbearing were associated with cohabitation in Botswana	

Hattori M &Larsen U (2007)	Population Studies, Vol. 61, No. 2,	Population Studies	Quantitative, 2002-2003 Moshi Infertility Survey, 2019 women, multivariate discrete time logistic regression	Union formation	Economic theory of fertility (Becker 1960)	Women who had been single mothers for 5 or more years (about two-thirds of women with a premarital birth) were significantly less likely than women without children to enter into a first union.	than it does other sub-Saharan African countries the study did not distinguish cohabitation and marriage analysis, further studies that distinguish between marriage and cohabitation should be considered
Dintwant K (2010)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies,Vol. 41, No. 3	Demography and Population Studies	Qualitative, desktop review	Family structure	Davis/ Blake (1956)	Family structure has been changing because of labour migration, HIV, inheritance patterns , fertility decline and marriage	reasons for the decline in marriages More studies should be undertaken in order to understand the causes and consequences of the changing marriage patterns in South Africa
Palamuleni M (2010)	Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology Vol 7 No1	Sociology	South African censuses of 1996 and 2001, descriptive statistics, singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM)	Marriage		mean age at marriage for men and women in South Africa is high and increasing and more men and women are staying single or not marrying at al	The study did not examine changes in marriage in other black cultures besides the Zulus
Posel D et al (2011)	Agenda Vol 25 No 1		Qualitative, desktop review	Marriage		Marriage has significantly declined among black people compared to white people because of lobola	
Moore E & Govender R (2013)	Comparative Family Studies Vol 44 no 5	Sociology	Quantitative South African Social Attitudes Survey 2005, 3500 respondents, multinomial logistic regression	Cohabitation		Age, education, place of residence, race, employment status were significant determinants of cohabitation	the study did not examine the impact of migration on marriage and cohabitation

Palamuleni M (2011)	International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Vol. 3 No 7	Population Studies	Quantitative 2000 and 2004 Malawi Demographic and Health surveys, 10,600 and 9605 ever-married women from 2000 and 2004 respectively, binary logistic regression	Age at first marriage,	age, region and education are the most important determinants of age at marriage in Malawi	There is need to conduct more studies on the causes and consequences of early marriage in Malawi. These future studies should not only be multidisciplinary but also qualitative in nature
Palamuneli M & Adebowali A (2013)	Scientific Research and essays Vol 9 No 10	Population studies	Quantitative, DHS Nigeria 2008, Malawi 2010, Congo 2007, Namibia 2006, Senegal 2010, Rwanda 2010, binary logistic regression	Premarital child bearing	Identified determinants of premarital child bearing were contraceptive use, education, religion and early sexual debut	The study did not examine regional differences of premarital child bearing in these countries

Table 3: Descriptions and findings of research addressing polygamy

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Mere A (1976)	International Journal of Sociology of the Family Vol. 6, No. 2	Sociology	Qualitative, Review of literature	Polygyny, extended family, parental control, divorce, child marriages	Goode (1973)	a decline in polygyny among the Igbo because of religion, industrialisation women's education and delayed marriages	detailed research is needed on Igbo family change, emphasizing on areas such as kin network functioning

Hayase Y, Liaw K (1997)	The Developing Economies Vol 35, Issue 3	Population studies	Quantitative, married women Senegal(2850), Zimbabwe (2393) Kenyan (4563)Ghanaians(2676) , binary logistic regression	DHS women (2393)	Polygamy	declining trend of polygamy in all 4 countries, female education, Christianity and age were negatively associated with polygamy There are ethnic differences in family change in Nigeria, there was a decline in polygamy among the Yoruba but rates were still high among the Hausa	studies on informal marriage arrangements
Heaton T and Hirschl T (1999)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies,Vol. 30, No. 1	Demography	Quantitative, DHS 1990, women regression, regression	Nigerian 9000 Cox OLS logistic	Marriage, Breastfeeding, Contraception, Fertility	Davis and Blake (1956) , Bongaarts (1985) proximate determinants of fertility	the cultural factors that make the Hausa women less susceptible to change should be investigated

Table 4: Descriptions and findings of research addressing changes in family size

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Oppong C (1977)	Journal of Marriage and Family,Vol. 39, No. 3	Comparative Sociology	Quantitative,393 single, male Ghanaian students, descriptive statistics	Attitude towards family size.		education affects attitude towards family size through the intervention of conjugal and marital relationship	family change was inadequately explained and more models which include more variables should be done

Heaton T and Hirschl T (1999)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Vol. 30, No. 1	Demography	Quantitative, DHS 1990, 9000 women, Cox regression, OLS regression, logistic regression	marriage, breastfeeding, contraception, fertility	Davis and Blake (1956) Bongaarts (1985) proximate determinants of fertility	there are ethnic differences in family change in Nigeria, there are family changes among the Yoruba and the Ibo but not among the Hausa	the cultural factors that make the Hausa women less susceptible to change
Wusu O & Isiugo-Abanihe U (2006)	Demographic research	Demography	Qualitative, 9 FGD groups	Family structure		decline in extended family support leaving child rearing costs as the responsibility of the biological parents so couples now want fewer children	further studies should be done to see how family changes explain fertility behaviour in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa
Madhavan & Schatz (2007)	Scandinavian Journal of Public Health Vol 69 supp August	Public Health	Quantitative, Analysis of three point Agincourt census data for 1992, 1997, 2003, regression	Household structure and composition		average household size decreased and the proportion headed by females increased, decrease in families with foster children and maternal orphans doubled	further studies should focus on how well families and households are absorbing children orphaned from HIV/AIDS
Shapiro & Gebreselassie (2008)	African Population Studies Vol. 22 no2	Population studies	24 countries with multiple DHS in Sub Saharan Africa, SUR regressions	Fertility decline	Easterlin framework for fertility analysis (1975), Proximate Determinants of fertility Bongaarts (1978)	fertility decline is still under way in 65 % of the countries, education, infant and child mortality, modern contraceptive use, the percentage of women in union, place of residence, and time all are significantly related to fertility levels	the study did not project how far might fertility fall in sub Saharan Africa
Mturi A Kembo J (2011)	African Journal of Reproductive Health Vol 15 no 2	Population studies	Quantitative, Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Surveys in 1987/88, 1994, 1999 and 2005/06, logistic regression	total fertility rate	Proximate determinants of fertility (Bongaarts 1978)	the decline of fertility was mainly caused by use of contraception	there is a mismatch between TFR and contraceptive prevalence rate in Zimbabwe which needs to be investigated

Dintwant K (2010)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Vol. 41, No. 3	Demography and Population Studies	Qualitative desktop review	Family size	Davis/ Blake (1956)	family structure has been changing because of labour migration, HIV, inheritance patterns, fertility decline and marriage	reasons for the decline in marriages were not investigated
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Table 5: Descriptions and findings of research addressing same gendered families

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Lubbe C(2007)	South African Journal of Psychology	Psychology	Qualitative, review of literature	Same-gendered families	Postmodern and Social Constructionist perspective	parenting and family are constructed and performed, structural variables such as the gender composition of families and the division of parental performances are less important than process variables such as the quality of relationships and the quality of care given to the children	further scientific studies need to be done on same gendered families and heteronormative factors that influence them longitudinal studies are needed to see if these experiences change overtime, similar studies on gay headed families also need to be conducted
Lubbe C (2008)	Journal of GLBT Family Studies, Vol 4 No 3	Educational Psychology	Qualitative, narrative inquiry, children	8 experiences of growing up in lesbian headed families		children who were interviewed were very aware of the tendency of people to react in different ways to the notion of lesbian-headed families	study did not show the experiences of children with gay parents as it focused on the gay men only
Rothmann J (2011)	Acta Academica Vol 43 No 1	Sociology	Qualitative, 7 in-depth interviews and 5 self-administered questionnaires	parenting practices	Generativity theory (Brotherson 2007, Dollahite et al 1997, Hawkins & Dollahite 1997)	education, skills and support from marital and life partners had influence on paternal involvement of gay fathers	study did not show the experiences of children with gay parents as it focused on the gay men only

Table 6: Descriptions and findings of research addressing changes in family roles

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Smit R (2002)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Vol.33 No. 3	Family Sociology	Quantitative, 400 English/Afrikaner men in Gauteng bivariate analysis test, post hoc tests, pearson product moment correlation , Hottelings	Role of the father/husband	Ritner (1992) and Gerson (1993), Symbolic interactionist approach	role of the father as the head still exist but some has moved to greater equality in marriage men are positively involved with their families and households in various ways such as caring for patients and children, financially support immediate and extended family members and are present at home families with absent fathers had provision crisis, women had to play the productive role, reproductive role and community expectations	the changes in the role of fathers in other ethnic groups in South Africa and well as other African countries research failed to adequately interrogate men's activities, thoughts and challenges in much detail hence there is need for research designed to specifically engage with men
Montgomery et al (2006)	Social Science & Medicine 62 (2006) 2411-2419	Public Health	Qualitative, ethnographic data through non participant observation , 20 households in northern KwaZulu Natal	Men's involvement in families			
Kimani E & Kombo K (2010)	The African Symposium Vol 10 No 2	Gender studies	Qualitative, 100 families with absent fathers were interviewed	Experiences of nuclear families with absent fathers	Structural functionalism theory		

Moore E (2013)	Journal of Southern African Studies, 2013 Vol 39 No 1	Sociology	Qualitative, life history interviews and case studies of women from 3 generations	Mothering practice	examine how state policy concerning women, work and childcare, or 'political motherhood', affects the way mothering is constructed in the everyday experiences of individuals
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Table 7: Descriptions and findings of research addressing orphanhood and child headed households

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
G. Foster et al (1997)	Health Transition Review, Vol 7 No 2 (1997)	Population health	Quantitative , 60 households Quantitative, 23 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and 14 Demographic and Health Surveys, descriptive analysis	Child headed households		child headed households represent a new coping mechanism in response to the impact of AIDS on communities, relatives still support the orphans though they do not live with them	future studies should clarify whether child-headed households are being established in urban areas following parental death and the ways in which such households terminate study employed descriptive statistics, further studies should employ inferential statistics to test level of significance of the results
Monasch & Boerma (2004)	AIDS Vol 18 No 2	Public Health		Child care patterns		the existing child care system is absorbing the increase of orphans on a large scale	

Madhavan &Schatz (2007)	Scandinavian Journal of Public Health Vol 69 supp August	Public Health	Quantitative, Analysis of three point Agincourt census data for 1992, 1997, 2003, regression	Household structure and composition	although there have been increases in both fostered and orphaned children living in households in the Agincourt sub-district, the study did not find an increase in child-headed households	study did not include child-headed or skipped-generation households that might be caused by HIV, future studies could examine how well families and households are absorbing children orphaned from HIV/AIDS
Hosegood et al (2007)	Population studies Vol 61 No 3	Family Demography	Quantitative Longitudinal data from 3 Demographic Surveillance Systems in Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania 1984-2004, Poisson regression	Orphanhood	increase in levels of orphanhood , no evidence that child headed households increased	
Meintjes H et al (2010)	AIDS Vol. 22, No. 1	Care Public Health	Quantitative, General Household Survey (GHS) f 2002 -2006 and the biannual Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2000 -2007, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, chi square	Child headed households	no evidence that child-only households are a rapidly growing phenomena in South Africa, kinship networks still provide care for children affected by HIV	further studies could examine the association between other social phenomena such as parental migration and the establishment of child-only households

Table 8: Descriptions and findings of research addressing single motherhood and female headed households

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Siqwana-Ndulo N (1998)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies Vol. 29, No. 2	Sociology	Mixed method, survey and interviews of 96 respondents	Household structure		62% of the households were headed by women who were widows, never-married women, and wives of migrants	further studies in African urban and rural settings need to look at how individuals and groups are affected by changing social and economic conditions and how they are responding to these changes
Calves A (1999)	Population Studies, Vol 53 pp291-301	Population Studies	Quantitative, 1991 Cameroon Demographic and Health Survey, 3871 women,multivariate discrete-time logit	Chances of 1st marriage		premarital child bearing significantly jeopardises the marriage chances of single women in the long run	reasons why the chances of getting married are lower were not given, qualitative studies could give more in-depth information
Katapa R (2006)	Journal of Biosocial Science Vol 38 no 3	Demography	Quantitative, Tanzania 1996 DHS , logistic regression	Sex of household head		female-headed households were socially disadvantaged when compared with male-headed households	Unmarried female headed households were not disaggregated according to their specific marital status(widowed, divorced, never married), future studies could separate them

Hattori M &Larsen U (2007)	Population Studies, vol. 61, no. 2,	Population Studies	Quantitative, 2002-2003 Moshi Infertility Survey, 2019 women, multivariate discrete time logistic regression	Union formation	Economic theory of fertility (Becker 1960)	women who had been single mothers for 5 or more years were significantly less likely than women without children to enter into a first union.	further studies that distinguish between marriage and cohabitation should be considered
Madhavan &Schatz 2011	African Population Studies Vol 25, 2 (Dec 2011)		Quantitative, Agincourt Health and Demographic Surveillance System (AHDSS) census data, 11524 households present in 2000 and 12077 households present in 2005.	old aged headed households	Altruistic model of household (Becker 1974)	there were more households headed by women compared to men and this difference is increasing	there is need for longitudinal analysis of change in the roles of the elderly, need for focused analysis on households affected by HIV on the changing role of the elderly

Table 9: Descriptions and findings of research addressing the shift towards nuclear families

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Siqwana-Ndulo N (1998)	Journal of Comparative Family Studies Vol. 29, No. 2	Sociology	Mixed method, survey and interviews of 96 respondents	Household structure		Black people are not experiencing a trend of the nuclear family	further studies in African urban and rural settings need to look at how individuals and groups are affected by changing social and economic conditions and how they are responding to these changes

Monasch & Boerma (2004)	AIDS Vol 18 No 2	Public Health	23 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and 14 Demographic and Health Surveys, descriptive analysis	Child care patterns	The existing child care system which is the extended family is absorbing the increase of orphans on a large scale	study employed descriptive statistics, further studies should employ inferential statistics to test level of significance of the results
Madhavan & Schatz (2007)	Scandinavian Journal of Public Health Vol 69 supp August	Public Health	Analysis of three point Agincourt census data for 1992, 1997, 2003, regression	Household structure and composition	Even though there have been increases in both fostered and orphaned children living in households in the Agincourt sub-district, the study did not find an increase in child-headed households	study did not include child-headed or skipped-generation households that might be caused by HIV, future studies could focus on how well families and households are absorbing orphaned children from HIV/AIDS
Hosegood et al (2007)	Population studies Vol 61 No 3	Family Demography	Quantitative Longitudinal data from 3 Demographic Surveillance Systems in Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania 1984-2004, Poisson regression	Living arrangements of orphans	No evidence that child headed households increased despite of high incidence of orphanhood showing that extended families are the caregivers, there was evidence of non-orphans living with extended family	
Meintjes H et al (2010)	AIDS Vol. 22, No. 1	Care Public Health	Quantitative, General Household Survey (GHS) f 2002 -2006 and the biannual Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2000 -2007, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, chi square	Child headed households	No evidence that that child-only households are a rapidly growing phenomena in South Africa, kinship networks still provide care for children affected by HIV	future studies should consider the association between other factors such as parental movement and the establishment of child-only households

Table 10: Descriptions and findings of research addressing marital dissolution

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Amoateng & Heaton (1989)	Comparative Family Studies Vol 20 no 1	Social Demography	Quantitative, 1979/89 Ghana Fertility Survey, 7500 households, life table regression	Divorce	Theory of marital instability (Becker 1976)	age at marriage, education, religion, region, structure of kinship were associated with divorce	the association between number of children and divorce was not examined
Tilson D & Larsen U (2000)	Journal of Biosocial Science Vol 32 no 3		Quantitative, 1990 Ethiopia National Family and Fertility Survey, 8757 women, Cox models	Divorce		childlessness and early marriage were significant determinants of divorce	2 regions were omitted when collecting data because of civil war and a further study could be conducted in those regions
Takyi B (2001)	Sociological Focus, Vol. 34, No. 1	Sociology	Quantitative, Ghana Demographic and Health Survey 1993/4 , 4562 women, binary logistic regression	Divorce	Caldwell (1982) Theory of fertility decline	Divorce was associated with kinship ties, urban residence, religion, parity and education	Studies need to be done on the association between cross ethnic marriages and divorce
Reniers (2003)	Demographic Research	Demography	Quantitative, Malawi Diffusion and Ideational Change Project 1342 ever-married women, cox regression	Divorce, remarriage		childlessness, kinship systems, female empowerment, age at marriage polygyny, religion were associated with divorce	further studies on the association between HIV and divorce
Porter et al (2004)	Demography, Vol 41 no 3	Demography	Quantitative, data from a Random Control Trial, 6433 women , Life table analysis, multinomial regression	Divorce/separation, widowhood		marriage dissolution was found to be more common among HIV-infected women	future studies should examine whether discovery and disclosure of HIV status influences patterns of family formation and dissolution

Takyi G & Gyimah S (2007)	Journal of Family Issues Vol 28 no 5	Social Demography	Ghana Demographic and Health Surveys (GDHS) for 1988, 1993, 1998, and 2003, sample size was 3598, 3593, 3652 and 4049 respectively, binary logistic regression	Divorce	Rational choice theory (Klein & White, 2002)	results indicate a significantly higher risk of divorce among matrilineal than non-matrilineal women	qualitative studies are needed to examine the specific pathways in which matrilineal affects marital outcomes
Floyd S et al (2008)	Tropical Medicine and International Health, Vol 13 no 4	Public Health	Quantitative Population based survey 197 HIV positive people and 397 HIV negative, survival analysis	Remarriage, household structure, widowhood, divorce, migration		26% of the wives of HIV-positive index men experienced household dissolution	the effect of couple concordancy/discordancy on outcomes such as remarriage were not examined
T Adegoke (2010)	Studies of tribes and tribals Vol 8 No 2	Social Work	Quantitative , 226 women of reproductive age, multiple regression	Divorce		Cultural factors, education and childlessness were significant determinant of divorce	Study did not include economic empowerment of women as a determinant

Table 11: Descriptions and findings of research addressing migration, urbanisation and family change

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Modo I (2001)	Comparative Family Studies vol. 32 no. 3	Demography	Quantitative, household heads, descriptive statistics	36 Family structure		labour migration of a spouse is associated with marital dissolution and consequently weakened family structure	the study was restricted to family heads and could not tell us the responses of individuals who are not heads, future studies should be conducted on individuals who may not be family heads

Posel D & Casale D (2003)	The South African Journal of Economics Vol 71 No 3		Quantitative, Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (9000 households) October Household Surveys between 1993 and 1999 conducted by Stats SA,	Labour migration			The increase in labour migration has been driven by the rising proportion of women leaving rural areas to work	future research using good quality data that is produced at a national level is needed
Dintwant K (2010)	Journal of Comparative Studies, Vol. 41, No. 3	Family and Population Studies	Qualitative, desktop review	Family structure	Davis/Blake (1956)		family structure has been changing because of labour migration	there should be more attempts to understand the relations between HIV infection and marital patterns in Africa as well as the collection and examination of longitudinal data on migrants and non-migrants
Anglewicz (2012)	P Demography Vol 49 No 1	Demography	Malawi Diffusion and Ideational Change Project, 4528 people and 402 migrants, binary logistic regression	Migration			HIV positive individuals are more likely to migrate due to marital dissolutions and remarriage	

Table 12: Descriptions and findings of research addressing family change and education

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Kimani E & Kombo K (2010)	The African Symposium Vol 10 No 2	Gender studies	Qualitative, 100 families with absent fathers were interviewed	Experiences of nuclear families with absent fathers	Structural functionalism theory	youth with absent fathers had poor academic performance	

Chuong C & Operario D (2011)	Global Public Health Vol. 7, No. 1	Public Health	Quantitative, South Africa Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) 5592 children, hierarchical logistic regression	Educational delay	Educational delay is largely influenced by changes in family support and structure	clarification of specific pathways that might influence the association between maternal versus paternal absence on children's educational progress
De Wet N (2013)	African Population Studies Vol 27, 1 (Apr 2013)	Demography	Quantitative, Survey of Activities of Young People (SAYP)(2010),17 372 youth, logistic regression	10 or more hours of labour force participation		an association was found between parent absenteeism and working for 10 or more hours a week thus jeopardising school completion
Thiombiano B et al (2013)	Demographic Research Vol 29 No 29	Demography	Quantitative Migration and Urban Integration Survey of Burkina Faso 17,399 children, survival analysis ,Kaplan-Meier & piecewise exponential models	Starting school, Child mortality		children of divorced parents had a lower probability of entering school compared to those with intact parents
Akanle O, Adebayo A, Busari D (2014)	African Population Studies Vol 27, Supp 2	Population Studies	Mixed methods approach, 350 responded to questionnaires and 10 people were interviewed	Spouse absenteeism, copying mechanisms	Modernisation Theory, (Rostow 1953, 1960) & Attachment theory and Parental alienation (Lowenstein 2008)	Children's academic performance is negatively impacted on
						future studies should examine whether there is a difference between married parents and cohabiting couples in terms of child mortality
						further studies should consider the association between spouse absenteeism and HIV

Lachaud J et al (2014)	Demographic Research Vol 31 No 49	Demography	Quantitative, Ouagadougou Health and Demographic Surveillance System, 3,852 children aged 8 to 17 Multi Indicator Monitoring Survey (MIMS)(2009) 18642 children, multivariate analysis	School enrolment	children from smaller families were more likely to be enrolled in school or attain post-primary school level irrespective of their age and gender compared to children from larger families	future in-depth qualitative studies are needed to investigate further family size and school enrolment use of repeated rounds of DHS to see whether education disadvantage of orphans has changed overtime
Ha et al (2015)	International Journal of Educational Development	Education		School attendance, school drop out		

Table 13: Descriptions and findings of research addressing family change and child survival

Author	Journal	Field	Methods	Outcome variable (s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Omariba D & Boyle M (2007)	Journal of Marriage and Family Vol 69	Demography	Quantitative, Demographic and Health Survey data from 22 sub-Saharan African, multilevel regression	Child mortality	The male coercion model, Female choice model	children of mothers in polygynous marriages were more likely to die than those of mothers in monogamous unions	research analysing longitudinal data to compare the health of children before and after a family becomes polygynous

Clark S & Hamplova D (2013)	Demography (2013) 50:1521–1549	Demography	Quantitative , DHS data from 11 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, survival analysis	Child mortality	children of single mothers especially post marital single mothers were more likely to die compared to children of married mothers	reasons why children of single mothers die more were not adequately explored, studies using longitudinal data needed since the data used cannot capture changes in women's wealth status overtime, future studies should include indicators of support from extended kin
Thiombiano B et al (2013)	Demographic Research Vol 29 No 29	Demography	Quantitative Migration and Urban Integration Survey of Burkina Faso 17,399 children, survival analysis Kaplan-Meier &piecewise exponential models	Child mortality , Starting school	children of divorced parents experience higher estimated under 5 mortality risks	future studies should examine whether there is a difference between married parents and cohabiting couples in terms of child mortality and
Izugbara (2014)	South African Journal of Child Health Vol 8 No 1	Demography	Quantitative 2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 33 385 women of reproductive age, multi-level approach	Under-5 mortality	number of children ever born in a household was a significant determinant of child mortality	there is a need for more in-depth studies into household-level factors associated with under-5 mortality

Table 14: Descriptions and findings of research addressing family and risky sexual behaviour

Author	Journal	Field	Methods	Outcome variable (s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Defo B & Dimbuene Z (2012)	African Journal of Reproductive Health Vol 16 No 12	Demography	Quantitative, Cameroon Family and Health Survey 2002, 1,815 adolescents and young adults of both sexes, aged 12-24 years, survival analysis	Timing of sexual debut	Socialization theory, Social control theory, stress theory	family changes that occurred during childhood and adolescence have negative effects on the timing of sexual debut.	further research is needed to examine the gender differences when changes in family structure occurred during the early life course
Ntaganira (2012)	BMC Public Health Vol 12:225	Public Health	Quantitative 692 Youth Household Head aged 12-24, binary logistic regression	HIV/AIDS knowledge and perception of HIV risk infection, sexual experience (ever had sex), condom use		forty-one percent of respondents reported sexual onset before age 15, condom use was low 13%	more research comparing risky sexual behaviour among orphaned and non-orphaned youth in urban or rural areas is needed. A longitudinal study to examine the impact of parental illness or death on sexual behaviour is also necessary
Odimegwu C & Adedini S (2013)	African Journal of Reproductive Health Vol 17 No 4	Demography	Quantitative , 1301 undergraduate students at a Nigerian University, binary logistic regression	Age at sexual debut, number of sexual partners, inconsistent condom use, non-regular sexual partner		students from single parent homes showed lower likelihood of having multiple sexual partners.	future studies should explore further understanding of the relationship between family characteristics, poverty rating and risky sexual behaviour among students

Frantz J et al (2015)	The Open Family Studies Journal Vol 15 No 1	Community and Health Sciences	Qualitative, systematic review was conducted between 2000 and 2014	A Health Risk Behaviours	There was a relationship between family structure and engagement in risky sexual behaviour	there is lack of methodologically rigorous research that can provide empirical evidence and insight regarding the relationship between family structure and engagement in health risk behaviour
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Table 15: Descriptions and findings of research addressing family change, poverty and resource allocation

Author	Journal	Field	Methods	Outcome variable (s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Katapa R (2006)	Journal of Biosocial Science Vol 38 No 3	Sociology	Quantitative, Demographic and Health Survey Tanzania 1996, 7969 households logistic regression	Poverty		female-headed households were poorer than male headed households	variables such as marital status of members of the household, including that of the head of household were not answered in the Tanzania 2000 DHS so future studies could consider these variables
Goebel et al (2010)	Health &Place Vol 16	Geography and Environmental studies	Quantitative , 463 households in Msunduzi Municipality , bivariate analysis	Poverty		Female headed households had lower incomes, lower rates of employment and lower educational attainment than male headed households	more local-level studies that disaggregate data at least to the ward level and by household types are needed
Kimani E & Kombo K (2010)	The African Symposium Vol 10 No 2	Gender studies	Qualitative, 100 families with absent fathers were interviewed	Experiences of nuclear families with absent fathers	Structural functionalism theory	families with absent fathers faced provision crisis, women without a male partner were denied access control of family assets and resources such as family land	

Muleta A & Deressa D (2014)	Science, Technology and Arts Research Vol 3 No 1	Economics	Quantitative, Ethiopian Rural Household Survey from 1999-2009, logistic regression	Poverty	35.3% of the sampled female headed households in rural Ethiopia were poor, female headed households poorer than male headed households	the study did not examine the marital status of female headed households as it has an impact on their wealth status
Lachaud J et al	Demographic Research Vol 31 No 49	Demography	Quantitative, Ouagadougou Health and Demographic Surveillance System, 3,852 children aged 8 to 17	School enrolment	children from smaller families were more likely to be enrolled in school or attain post-primary school level irrespective of their age and gender compared to children from larger families	future in-depth qualitative studies are needed to investigate further on family size and school enrolment

Table 16: Descriptions and findings of research addressing policies

Author	Journal	Field of study	Methods	Outcome variable(s)	Theory	Findings	Gaps
Patel L & Hochfeld T (2011) Vol 19 No 2	Gender & Development	Social Development	Quantitative, 344 women, primary data collection	Gender relations		30 per cent said the fathers of their children no longer provide support now that they get the child support grant	conducting the field work on week-days excluded those with regular employment away from home

Jordan N, Patel L, Hochfeld T (2014)	Social Work Vol 50 No 3	Social Work	Mixed Methods, a sub sample of 37 mothers out of household survey of 343 , semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 young mothers between the ages of 16 and 25 years	Early motherhood	some of the young women were encouraged to fall pregnant so that their families could access the child grant 25% of the women reported that their children's fathers were no longer giving them financial support since they started receiving the grant 63% of participants in the quantitative study saw a direct link between the introduction of the grant and teenage pregnancy, 90% reported that the grant was abused, uses such as empowering women, educating children and starting small businesses were discussed in the focus groups old age grant helps with poverty reduction in the intergenerational families	the study was limited to Soweto the contradictory nature of responses suggest that further quantitative and qualitative –studies into the actual use and possible abuse of the CSG by its recipients, as well as the reasons behind this are needed more advanced national research studies are needed
Hölscher D, Kasiram M, Sathiparsad R (2009)	Social Work Vol 45 No 1	Social Work	Mixed method, 25 semi-structured interviews, 5 focus group discussions, 72 questionnaires, primary data collection	Perceptions on the use of child support grant		
Tangwe P (2013)	Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences Vol 4 No 13	Social Work	Qualitative, 25 in-depth interviews with Old Age Grant recipients, primary data	Poverty households	in Social Exchange theory	