

NUPTIALITY PATTERNS AND TRENDS IN BOTSWANA

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Abstract: This paper derives from data obtained from census and other secondary sources of data on marriage patterns and trends in Botswana over the past 4 decades.

The 2011 census marital data was specifically examined in relation to gender, education, residence, religion, citizenship, occupation, household size, household headship and economic activity. The marital status of the population of Botswana has changed considerably over the past 4 decades, reflecting a significant change in social relations and family structure. Data from the previous censuses indicate that the institution of marriage is declining in Botswana between 1971 and 2001. However a slight increase in the proportion of married men was noted between 2001 and 2011 while for females it remained constant. Since 1971, the proportion of the population never married increased while a decline in the proportions 'married' was experienced. Furthermore, the proportion of the population cohabiting has increased since 1991, when this marital status was first introduced into the census. Cohabitation seems to be more appealing to males than females with increasing age.

Based on the analysis conclusions and recommendations for the establishment of a family policy might be a relevant intervention if the vision pillar of 'A united and proud nation' is to be realised. In order to maximise on quality statistics, the definition of marital status need to be revisited to incorporate both the legal and socio-cultural frameworks.

1.0 Introduction

The importance of nuptiality and its relationship to the formation and dissolution of families cannot be over emphasised (Newell, 1998). It also ideally prescribes the age at which sexual relations begin. Marriage in most societies represents stable unions in which reproduction is socially acceptable. The stability of such unions is paramount to the formation of societal values.

In Botswana, there are two types of marriages; customary marriage and marriage under the Act (or under the "common law"). Customary marriages are performed at a customary court ("kgotla") and require the approval of the local chief. Marriages under the Act are officiated by civil authorities and require registration with the National Registration (Oman) office. Although some people still choose to have a customary marriage ceremony, most people marrying in Botswana will register a marriage under the Act (a "common law" marriage) to ensure that they receive the full legal benefits of marriage.(www.usembassy.com)

Marital status in Botswana has been categorised into four (never married, married, separated, divorced and widowed) from 1971 to 1981. However since 1991, the category 'living together' has been introduced as a marital status (Mukamaambo; 1995).A change in marital status is the prelude to the formation or dissolution of a family or subfamily. The frequencies observed in the marital status categories depend not only upon demographic factors such as age- sex structure and mortality, but also upon legal and cultural factors. The definition of marriage also varies across countries, depending on the law governing the civil contract or the tribal and customary rules governing the union (Siegel; 1976).

Literature Review

Data from past censuses show that 17.1% of males and 19.9% of females were reported married in 2001 as compared to 44.4% and 41.5% respectively, in 1981. As the institution of marriage is less appealing, an increase in the proportion of people cohabiting has been noted. Statistics show that cohabitation increased from 12.2% to 16.8% among males and 12% to 17.1% among females from 1991 to 2001. The proportion of the never married population over the years steadily increased (Mukamaambo; 1995, Mookodi, 2004).On the one hand, an increase in divorce cases has been noted in recent years.

Gaisie (1995) attributes the gradual transformations from the traditional Tswana nuptiality patterns and universal marriage into different types of sexual unions and relationships to the political, social and economic changes that have taken place in the country. Among factors that have shaped the prevailing nuptiality patterns are abandonment of polygyny, labour migration, formal schooling and certain legal structures relating to rights to property, the author argues.

Corroborating with Gaisie, Dintwa (2010) also argues that the socio-economic and demographic factors experience by Botswana has fuelled the changing family structure. Furthermore, the author argues that the labour migration has brought about single parent families that characterise contemporary Botswana. One of the demographic factors that have brought about the disruption of the family structure is HIV and AIDS since it has had the negative impact of high mortality, poverty, lack of investment in the child and increase in the dependency burden (ibid).

Polygynous marriages are rare in contemporary Botswana; instead they seem to have been replaced by serial monogamy and concubinage (www.everyculture.com). Since 1991 the proportions in the category 'living together/cohabiting' increased. Cohabitation has grown in recognition or significance in Botswana over the years.

Childbearing is however embedded within the African culture. The value of childbearing, which has now spilled from the confines of marriage to out of wedlock in Botswana, can be traced back to its value within the context of marriage. Ellece (2012) accounts for the importance of motherhood in marriage in Botswana. From her accounts of Tswana marriage ceremonies (especially in Patlo or marriage negotiations) premise that in Botswana, motherhood is constructed as a compulsory and indispensable aspect of feminine identity, crucial for success in marriage. The payment of Bogadi or the bride price is formal request for conjugal rights by the groom and also a symbol of female fertility. The Bride price is in the form of a mokwele (the special bride price animal, usually a sheep), whose significance is that it 'opens' and 'cleanses' the birth passage to facilitate the birth of children. The author further argues that the symbolism of sheep to a woman's fertility is engendered as only the female anatomy is referenced. Ellece concludes that the compulsion to procreate does not necessarily suite anyone and to many it denies them the freedom to choose not to have children without the fear of stigmatisation.

Mookodi(2004) observes that anthropological accounts on customs and traditional practices in Bechuanaland during the early part of the early twentieth century, ascribed marriage as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood, a basis for the formation of alliances between families and communities, and an integral part of the moral fabric of societies. Citing Schapera and Comaroff 1991, the author further notes the importance of bride wealth, which was used as a tool to unite families and consolidate assets within the extended family system.

The author further illuminates the changes brought about by male migration; this increased the age at marriage for men and saw the establishment of extra-marital pregnancies which became the basis of female headed households.

However contrary to popular opinion that high cohabitation levels exhibited in Botswana are due to factors like male labour migration to South Africa, decline in polygamy and Botswana women's access to education and enhanced legal status of unmarried women, Mokomane (2006) attributes these high levels as partly due to socio-demographic factors like constant population mobility, population's response to the marriage squeeze and high prevalence of pre-marital childbearing. A recommendation by the author is for further study involving comparative analysis to explain the factors that make Botswana's cohabiting levels to be so closely resembling of those in Latin America and the Caribbean than other Sub-Saharan countries. The study found Botswana to be having high cohabitation levels when compared with other Sub-Saharan countries.

Mokomane (2005) asserts that cohabitation in Botswana is a prelude and not an alternative to marriage since cohabiting relationships do not provide the socio-economic and legal security that marriage provides. Participants in the study intend to get married in future; hence the author premises that there is little chance that cohabitation will pose a widespread challenge to marriage as an institution in the foreseeable future. Findings from the study however resonates with others (Mookodi;2004;Mukammambo; 1995;Gaisie and Majelantle;1999) which confirm that cohabitation tends to delay marriage and has an influence on the marriage patterns as evidenced by higher ages at first marriage. The author further recommends the impact of cohabitation on children's psychological, emotional, behavioural and cognitive outcomes.

Baker (2003) also notes a decline in marriage prevalence among the Tswana in the Gaborone and Kgatleng districts of Botswana. Furthermore, the author argues that marriage is a doubtful proximate determinant of fertility since first births commonly occur out of wedlock. An interesting finding is that unlike in the past women with higher than secondary levels marry at higher levels, this suggesting that marriage is increasingly becoming a privilege of the educated.

In a study of pre-marital childbearing in Thamaga (Botswana), Pitso (2003) resonates with Baker on the fact that out of wedlock childbearing is common in Botswana. Findings from the study reveal that among older women, childbearing is often strategic and goal directed, providing a sense of self-worth, labour and old age security. It was also noted that societal attitudes to pre-marital motherhood became less condemning after about age 25, as a woman is considered to have waited long enough for marriage. Further to this, the author attributes premarital childbearing to spontaneous sexual activity generated by the undermining of societal controls and inauspicious economic circumstances.

In recent years there has been concern over the high divorce rates experienced in the country. Kgalemang (2010) reported that Francistown alone registered 288 and 349 divorces cases in 2009 and 2010 respectively. The author concluded that such is an indication that the value and importance of marriage is reducing with time. Seitshiro (2010) asserted that adultery and desertion of partners were major factors in the increase in divorce cases in Botswana in 2010. The author further quotes a legal practitioner who said;

"There is no stigmatisation of adultery and therefore there is no retribution. The society is so permissive and adultery charges are also affordable to a lot of people"

Social and cultural barriers are also attributed as other major factors. He further quotes lawyers who indicated that three out of five women experience violence in their lifetime. Against this background, the author raises sentiments regarding the country's experience in the decline in marriage rates.

Shabani(2013) concurs with other authors as he quoted the Chief Justice's concern at the opening of the legal year on 5 February 2013. The Chief Justice raised concern over increasing registered divorce cases which stood at 971 and 1, 172 in 2009 and 2010 respectively, while in 2011 and 2012 there were 1, 118 and 971 respectively. The Chief Justice further cautioned that Botswana should be worried about the quality of the next generation families as well as the place of the social unit called 'family' in the future. He further reiterated the need to bring together all the main stakeholders to seriously introspect on the causes of high divorce rates, dysfunctional families and how to arrest the situation so that the national vision of 'A united and proud nation' could be realised.

3.0 Methodological Issues

The difficulties in defining marital status cannot be underestimated.

Mokomane (2006) argues that there is a possibility of an underestimate of the cohabiting population. The author quotes the explanation of the 'Living Together', according to the 2001 census;

A man or woman may "live together" like husband and wife (even if they do not stay in the same locality) without having gone through any formal marriage ceremony.

The basis of the author's argument is that non-consensual sexual relationships/visiting unions could be classified as living together. Furthermore, she cites Pitso, 1997 who also raised the same sentiment. Citing (Carmichael, 1996) the author further posits that the phrase 'like husband and wife' could also result in underestimation of cohabitants since it implies that the union must be perceived as marriage-like to be relevant. For the enumerators to be required to tick the respondent's current marital status is another form of possible underestimation of cohabitants. An example is given where current cohabiting partners have formally been married/divorced, they could report that they are divorced (their legal status), rather than regard themselves as 'living together', which will in turn underestimate the number of cohabitants. The author therefore advocates for a more standard operational definition of cohabitation, given that variations in the definition of concepts can impede comparability of results at national level and make comparisons over time and difficult. A further recommendation is to have two separate questions, asking first the legal marital status and second whether or not the respondent cohabits with someone he or she is not married to. Another recommendation is for consensus and surveys to have separate relationship codes for spouses (to be used to classify married people only) and partners (to be used for classification of cohabitants only).

4.0 Policies Relating to Nuptiality in Botswana

The Revised National Population Policy has identified the considerable change in the marital status of the population as indicative of significant changes in the social relations and family structures in the country (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2010). The decline in the value of marriage

in Botswana has also been noted as a worrisome development over the years. In order to achieve its goal of 'improved quality of life and standard of living of all people in Botswana', one of the objectives is to promote the institution of marriage and strengthen the role of the family in providing protection and social security. On the one hand NDP 10 states that the family as a primary social unit is threatened by the pace of change, urbanisation, the high degree of migrant labour and unfriendly family policy (e.g. Government transfer policy which separates spouses and restriction on maternity leave to women), Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2009.

Against this background, Botswana envisions to be a 'A united and proud nation' (Vision 2016.). This vision pillar puts emphasis on a strong family unit that is reinforced in the response to the rapid social changes experienced within the country, the region and the world. The vision further encourages strong emphasis on a strong family unit, which will in turn encourage responsible parenting and the institution of marriage. A strong family unit will also provide a foundation for the eradication of problems such as high incidence of teenage pregnancy, adultery, prostitution, street children and the spread of HIV.

5.0 Analysis of Results

5.1 Marriage Trends over the Past Five Censuses by Gender

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Population of Marital Status by Sex

Marital Status	1971		1981		1991		2001		2011	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Never Married	44	37	51.7	44.5	54.8	49.5	51.7	46.5	58.1	53.4
Married	47.1	42.9	44.4	41.5	29	27.2	17.1	17.9	18.8	17.9
Living Together	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12.2	12	16.8	17.1	20.6	20.8
Separated/Divorced	5	6.6	2.1	3.3	1.7	2	1.2	1.8	1.1	1.7
Widowed	2.1	11.9	1.8	11	1.5	8.5	1.3	6.5	1.3	6.2

Source: CSO, 2004 (Mookodi, 172)

5.1.2 Never Married

Evidence has shown that the proportions of the population classified as 'never married' increased substantially over the past five censuses. While proportional increases were slightly higher among males (7.7%) than females (7.5%) between 1971 and 1981, the trend was reversed between 1981 and 1991 (in favour of females; 5.0% vs 3.1%). Between 1991 and 2001 there was a decrease in the proportions of both males and females who never married, still with higher proportions among males (same pattern as for 1971 to 1981). However between 2001 and 2011 higher increases were noted among females (6.9%) as compared to their male (6.4%) counterparts (Table 1).

5.1.3 Married

The proportions of married males have been declining from 1971 to 2001 (47.1%, 44.4%, 29.0% and 17.1% respectively), and a slight increase of 1.7% was noted between 2001 and 2011 (17.1% to 18.8%). Conversely for women the proportion of those married decline between 1971 and 2001 (42.9% to 17.9%), while between 2001 and 2011 there has been no change.

5.1.4 Living Together

Ever since the introduction of the category 'living together' in 1991, there has been a proportional increase in the people reporting to be cohabiting among both males and females. This implies that the people belonging to this category have been either classified as married or never married prior to 1991 (Mookodi, 2001)

5.1.5 Separated/Divorced/Widowed.

The proportions separated, divorced or widowed have been declining for both males and females between 1971 and 2001. However for the censal period 2001 to 2011 there was no change in the proportions of widowed males, while for females the decline was maintained like for the other periods.

Regarding widowhood, women have been disproportionately affected when compared to their male counterparts (Mookodi, 2001). This resonates with the fact that females have higher life expectancies than males.

Table 2: Singulate Mean Age at Marriage in Years by Sex: 1971, 1981,1991, 2001,2011

Sex	Census Years				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Males	29.4	30.8	30.8	30.9	36.1
Females	24.8	26.4	26.7	26.5	32

Source:CSO, 1995(Mukamaambo;59); 2001 figure from www.chartsbin.com

5.2 Marital Status by Age and Sex

The singulate mean age at marriage (an estimate of the mean number of years lived by single persons who ultimately marry) has been increasing over the years, with higher mean years of singleness experienced among men than women (Table 2).

5.2.1 Never Married

According to the 1981 census, the proportion of never married males has been higher than for females up to age 39 years. However from age 40 onwards, the trend was reversed, females dominated the marital status. The same trend was experienced in 1991. However for 2011, higher rates of 'never marrying' males than females was experienced up to age 34. From age 39 onwards, the proportion of never married females was consistently higher than for men.

5.2.2 Married

In 1981 the proportions married have been higher among females than males up to the age of 34 years, thereafter the trend reversed in favour of males. The same trend was experienced for 1991. However for 2011, the proportion married was higher among females than males up to the age of 39 years. From the age of 40 and above, higher proportions of the married was experienced among males and females. (Table 3, 4&5)

5.2.3 Living Together

In the 1991 census, more females than males were classified as cohabiting up to the age of 29 years. From the age of 30years onwards, more males than females were cohabiting. The same trend was experienced for 2011. Thus higher proportions of men than women were cohabiting with increases in age. (Table 3 & 4)

5.2.4 Separated and Divorced

For the separated and divorced, although the proportions have been consistently below 7.5 % in 1981, 1991 and 2011 censuses, higher rates experienced among women than men. There has been a rise in proportions with age up to age 60 – 64 in 1981; a decline was experienced at 65+, however with females still dominating. In 1991, the rise in proportions separated/divorced was up to ages 55-59 years for men while for women it was up to 60 -64 years. There was no change for men for the ages 55-59 and 60 -64 years. For the 2011 data, there is evidence of a rise in proportions separated /divorced up to 55-59 years; thereafter a decline is experienced, however still in favour of women. For all the 3 censuses, a decline in the proportions of this marital status is experienced between the ages 60-64 and 65+ (Table 3, 4 & 5).

5.2.5 Widowed

Increases with age in the proportions widowed have been experienced for 1981, 1991 and 2011 censuses, in favour of women. Higher proportional increases were noted over the years in the ages 60-64 and 65+. For example in 1981 the proportions widowed increased from 34.9% to 58.8 % (23.9% increase) among females from age 60-64 to 65+. Comparatively for males it was from 4.7% to 10.2 % (5.5% increase). In 1991, for the same advanced ages, for females the increase was from 30% to 50.7% (20.7% increase) while for males it was from 4.7% to 10% (6% increase). In 2011 for the ages under review, the proportion of females widowed increased from 23.6% to 43.8% (20.2% increase), while for males it was from 5.5% to 11.4% (5.9% increase).

5.3 Marital Status and Residence

Equal proportions of never married males and females resided in cities and towns, while for the rest of the settlements males dominated.

Amongst the married, males were predominantly found in cities, urban and rural villages, while for the rest of the settlements women dominated. More males than females cohabiting were found in cities/towns. For the rest of the settlements, the proportion of cohabitants was higher among females than males.

The stata separated/divorced and widowed had lower rates than the rest of the marital stata. For the separated/divorced, women dominated in residence across the different settlement, except for mixture of lands and cattle posts where there were more separated/divorced men than women.

Among the widowed, women dominated their male counterparts across the different settlements.(Table 6&7)

5.4 Education, Marital Status and Sex

5.4.1 Never Married

Higher proportions of never married females had secondary education (70.5%) when compared to their male counterparts (63.5%). These were followed by those with brigade (59.9% males and 58.1% females) and primary education (59.5% males and 49.6% females), with male dominating (Table 8). About 46.3% of male tertiary education holders were never married, when compared to 47.9% among females.

5.4.2 Married

Higher proportions of married males were recorded among those with formal education (37.9%) while their female counterparts recorded 27.8%. A higher proportion of married males were also found among those with tertiary education (34.4%), while females of the same status recorded 31.1%. Still more males than females had technical/vocational (29.3% males and 24.4% females) and apprentice (29.2% males and 25.5% females) levels of education. The lowest proportions of those married were registered among those with secondary education (9.7% males and 11.3% females).

5.4.3 Living Together

Among the living together, higher proportions of cohabitants were found among those with apprentice (29.0% males and 26.1% females), non-formal (28.7% and 18.6% females), pre-school (27.3% males and 15.9% females) and brigade (25.4% males and 26.2% females). In all the cases males were dominant with the exception for brigade level of education. The educational level that recorded the least cohabitants was tertiary(17.0% males and 16.3% females).

5.4.4 Separated and Divorced

For the separated/divorced, males with non-formal education recorded the highest rates, with females surpassing their male counterparts. These were followed by those with tertiary (1.9% males and 2.5% females). Separated/divorce females with technical/vocational and apprentice surpassed their male counterparts. The least rates for this marital status were found among those with secondary education (0.5% males and 0.9% females).

5.4.5 Widowed

Among the widowed, more females (70.1%) than males (56.7%) reported to be having primary education. However among those with secondary and tertiary, the pattern reversed in favour of males.

Across the different marital stata, lower proportions were reported among those with pre-school, non-formal, apprentice and brigade level of education.

5.5 Marital Status and Religion

The proportion of female christians who reported on the different marital stata was higher (81.3 – 88.3%) than for their male counterparts (67.3 – 78.8%). This was followed by those with no religion, where the proportions were in favour of men. More males than females across the different marital stata reported that their religion was 'Badimo'. (Table 9).

5.6 Marital Status and Citizenship

In comparison to other countries under consideration, Botswana had the highest proportions of never married individuals, with males dominating. Regarding those married, Botswana experienced the lowest rates when compared to other countries, with more males than females reporting to be married. Cohabitation was more prominent among Botswana and those from Central Africa. (Table 10).

Table 11 : Percentage Distribution by Marital Status, Household Headship and Sex

Marital Status	Headship	
	Male	Female
Never Married	24.2	28.7
Married	78.7	34.5
Living Together	56.8	36.8
Separated/Divorced	71	71.7
Widowed	77.6	78.1

5.7 Marital Status by Household Headship and Sex

About 29% of female household heads were never married, when compared to about 24% male heads of households. Among the married, a higher proportion of households were male headed than female headed. For the living together there were more male headed households than females ones. More female household heads reported to be separated, divorced and widowed.

5.8 Marital Status by Economic Activity and Sex

5.8.1 Never Married

Among the never married, males actively seeking work formed the majority. These were followed by those who declared to be in the category 'unpaid family helper', and males dominated. The third most prominent group were those categorised as employee 'paid in kind, male dominance was still experienced. Male students formed the larger part of the never married economically inactive group. Those classified as 'other' were the second dominant group, with females in the majority. Male homemakers formed the third largest group.

5.8.2 Married

For the married, those self-employed 'with employees' formed the majority of the economically active group, and females dominated the group. Those working at their own lands and cattle posts were the next largest group, however with males in the majority. The third largest group was those self-employed 'with no employees', and males were dominating.

Among the economically inactive group, male retirees were in the majority. The next group was the sick, and males still dominating. Homemakers were the third largest group, and females were in the majority.

5.8.3 Living Together

Cohabiting males formed the highest proportion of those self-employed 'with no employees'. Employees 'paid in cash and in kind followed respectively, males dominated for those 'paid in cash', while females dominated for those 'paid in kind'. For the economically inactive, a higher proportion of cohabitants were those classified as 'unknown', and females were in the majority. Homemakers were the second in majority and females were still more than their male counterparts. Those classified as 'others' were third in majority, and male dominance was experienced with this group.

5.8.4 Separated and Divorced

Among the separated and divorced, female employees 'paid in kind' were the dominant group for the economically active. The second and third dominant were the 'self-employed' with employees 'and those working at their own lands and cattle posts respectively. For both groups there were more females than males. Regarding the economically inactive, female retirees were in the majority; these were followed by the sick, however with males dominating. The third largest group was those classified as 'unknown', and females dominated.

5.8.5 Widowed

For the widowed, the predominant group for the economically active was females working at their own lands and cattle posts. These were followed by those classified as employee 'paid in kind'. The third in majority were those classified as self-employed 'with employees', and females were still in the majority. Among the economically inactive, the majority were the sick males. The second group with the highest proportion was retired females. Female homemakers formed the third group in majority. (Table 13)

5.9 Occupational Status, Marital Status and Sex

Among the never married, higher proportions were found among those implicated as having other occupations other than the ones enumerated. While higher proportions of never married males indicated to be holding elementary occupations, females dominated the service work. Clerical work was the second popular type of work among males, while for females it was Craft and related works. Lower proportions of the never married were found among legislators. (Table 12)

Among the married, legislators dominated all occupations, with males in the lead. The second most reported type of occupation among the married was professionals, with males still dominating.

For the living together, the most dominant form of occupation was plant and machine operators and assembly, with males in the lead. The second most dominant occupation among the cohabiting males was elementary. Nonetheless elementary dominated among females, followed by service work.

With the separated and divorced, the most dominant type of occupation was among male legislators, followed by service work. For females, the highest proportions of cohabitants were among legislators, followed by those with technical and associate professionals.

The highest proportions of widowed males was from the skilled agricultural, followed by legislators and those who declared other occupations. Among females, the highest proportions of widowed females were found among those with skilled agricultural works, followed by those who declared other occupations.

5.10 Marital Status and Household Size

Smaller households (1-2 members) were more associated with never married males than females (48.1% vs 47.4%). These were followed by households with 3-4 members however in favour of males; the difference between the sexes was small. Among the married, more females than males has smaller households (1 -2 members) – Table 14. The pattern however reversed for households with 3-4 members, where more married females than males had 3-4 members in their households. Among the cohabiting, higher proportions of females than males had 1-2 members (68.8% vs 56.1%). However more males than females reported to be have having 3-4 members in their households. For those separated /divorced, all interviewed reported to be having 1-2 members in their households. However for 3-4 members and 5-6, the trend was in favour of women. Thus more separated/divorced males than females had a higher burden of household size (3+ members). Households with 7+ members were not found among the separated/divorced. For the widowed, more females than males had smaller households, and none reported to be having 3-4 members in their households. But more widowed males than females reported to be having 5-6 members. Like for the separated/divorced, households with 7+ members were not found in this marital status.

Table 15: Percentage Distribution of Age Specific Fertility Rates by Marital Status

Age	Age Specific Fertility Rates				
	Never Married	Married	Living Together	Separated/Divorced	Widowed
<15	0.1	0	17.4	0	0
15-19	0.1	27.6	82.3	59.4	18
20-24	34.9	63.5	79.7	40.9	60.2
25-29	39.5	70	65.5	44.3	36.7

5.11 Marital Status by Age Specific Fertility Rates

Higher age specific fertility rates (ASFRs) were experienced among those cohabiting and those married. Across the different marital status, fertility rates were increasing with age up to 25 – 29 years, thereafter a decline was experienced. Those cohabiting experience higher ASFR at age 45 – 49 when compared to other marital status. Those cohabiting experience higher total fertility rate, followed by those married, while the lowest was among the never married. (Table 15)

Conclusion/Recommendations

The marriage institution in Botswana is not thriving due to demographic, socio-economic and globalisation effects. Marriage is no longer attractive as evidenced by the higher proportions never married. There is gender disparity in marital patterns. While the proportions of males married are declining, divorce seem to affect more females than males. More men are therefore opting for cohabitation. The years spent single has also been increasing over the years. This calls for stakeholders to engage in dialogue, including the traditional leadership over the preservation of this important unit so that Vision 2016 could be realised. These developments threaten the existence of the family unit, which is the core of any society.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Population by Age, Marital Status and Sex ,2011

Age	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<15	98.4	98.8	0.6	0.5	1	0.8	0	0	0	0
15-19	96.8	92.9	0.8	0.9	2.3	6.1	0.2	0	0	0
20-24	84.9	67.1	1.8	3.9	13	28.5	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
25-29	64.7	50.2	5.9	11.8	29	37.2	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.2
30-34	47.7	42	15	21.8	36.3	34.1	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.8
35-39	36.9	37.2	26.5	29.6	35.1	29	1.1	2	0.4	2.1
40-44	29.2	34.3	37	34.3	30.9	24	1.9	3.1	1.1	4.2
45-49	24.2	32.3	42.9	36.4	28.5	20.1	2.6	4	1.8	7.1
50-54	19.7	31	49.3	37.4	24.6	15	3.5	5.1	2.9	11.4
55-59	15.9	28.9	54.2	37.5	21.6	12.1	4.3	5.2	4.1	16.3
60-64	14.1	26.1	56.3	36.4	20	9.1	4.1	4.7	5.5	23.6
65+	14.5	21.6	55.8	26.1	14.7	5.4	3.6	3.1	11.4	43.8

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Population by Age, Marital Status and Sex ,1991

Age	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
15-19	96.8	89.1	1.3	1.8	0.9	3.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
20-24	90.4	78.3	3.1	10.7	5.7	15.6	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.4
25-29	70.5	51.9	11	26.1	17.4	19.7	0.3	1.2	0.1	0.8
30-34	46.1	38.3	29.2	39	22.6	18.2	1.3	2.4	0.2	1.8
35-39	29	31	46.1	45.6	21.5	16.2	2.4	3.7	0.5	3.2
40-44	19.9	25.2	55.1	49.9	19.9	13.9	3.5	4.7	0.9	4.6
45-49	14.8	22.4	61.1	50.1	17.8	12.7	4.2	5.2	1.6	9.3
50-54	10.7	19.9	56.5	49.7	13.8	10	3.8	5.6	2	14.4
55-59	9.6	17.5	68.5	47.5	13.4	7.8	4.7	5.7	3.5	21
60-64	8.4	15.5	69.5	42	11.9	6.1	4.7	5.9	4.7	30
65+	10.1	11.7	64.1	28	10.3	4.5	4.2	4.3	10.7	50.7

Source:CSO, 1995(Mukamaambo;59)

Table 5:Percentage Distribution of Population by Age, Marital Status and Sex ,1981

Age	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
15-19	99.1	92.7	0.8	7			0	0.2	0	0.1
20-24	93.4	86.8	6.4	29.8			0.1	1	0	0.3
25-29	69.4	46.9	29.9	49.7			0.6	2.4	0.2	1
30-34	42.4	32.4	55.3	61.4			1.9	3.9	0.4	2.4
35-39	27.2	25.2	69	65.2			3.2	5	0.6	4.7
40-44	19.3	21	76	65.7			3.6	5.8	1.1	7.5
45-49	14.2	17.4	80.5	64			4.1	6.4	1.8	12.1
50-54	11.4	14.6	81.2	59.8			4.5	7.2	2.9	18.4
55-59	10	12.1	81.8	55.5			4.3	6.7	4	25.7
60-64	8.4	10.5	82.1	47.7			4.7	6.9	4.7	34.9
65+	7	7.8	78.3	28.7			4.5	4.7	10.2	58.8

Source:CSO, 1995(Mukamaambo;58)

Table 6 :Percentage Distribution of Population by Locality Type and Marital Status

Locality Type	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
City/Town	53.8	53.8	23	20.9	21.5	20.7	1	1.7	0.7	2.8
Urban Village	62.5	57.3	17.9	17.3	17.4	17.6	1	1.5	1.2	6.2
Rural Village	60.4	51.9	16	15.3	20.6	22.2	1.2	1.9	1.8	8.7
Lands area	49	34.3	21.2	21.5	26	32.7	1.6	1.8	2.2	9.9
Cattle Post	51.4	27.4	14.5	19	30.3	44	1.8	1.5	2	8.1
Freehold Farm	42	31	18.7	19.3	37	44.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	3.6
Mixture of lands and Cattle Post	47.6	28.9	17.6	19	30.6	42.1	1.6	1.5	2.4	8.6
Camp or Other Locality Type n.e.s	51.4	51.2	21	22.2	25.6	23.4	1.2	1.6	0.7	1.7

Table 7 :Percentage Distribution of Population by Locality Type and Marital Status

Locality Type	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Urban	59.3	56.1	19.8	18.6	18.9	18.7	1	1.6	1	5
Rural	56.1	47.9	17.1	16.5	23.6	25.3	1.4	1.9	1.8	8.5

Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Population by Education, Marital Status and Sex, 2011

Highest Education	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pre-School	43.1	35.9	25.5	21	27.3	15.9	0.5	3.6	3.7	22.6
Primary	59.5	49.6	18.5	20	19.1	17.3	1.2	2.1	1.7	10.6
Secondary	70.5	63.5	9.7	11.3	18.9	23.2	0.5	0.9	0.3	1.2
Non Formal	26.7	29.9	37.9	27.8	28.7	18.6	2.8	3.6	4	20.1
Apprentice	39.6	44.6	29.2	25.5	29	26.1	1.3	2.6	0.8	1.2
Brigade	59.9	58.1	13.4	13.5	25.4	26.2	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.1
Technical/Vocational	45.3	48.9	29.3	24.4	23.2	22.9	1.5	2.1	0.7	1.8
Tertiary	46.3	47.9	34.4	31.1	17	16.3	1.9	2.5	0.6	2.2
Level Unknown	49.3	46	26.3	29	22.5	17.4	1.1	2.9	0.9	4.7

Table 9 : Percentage Distribution of Population by Religion, Marital Status and Sex

Religion	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Christian	57.8	53.9	20.4	18.5	19.5	19.8	1	7.3	1.2	6.1
Muslim	43.6	33.9	38.8	46.7	13.4	11.1	2.5	7.4	1.6	4.4
Bahai	22.9	24	46.3	46.7	20.9	21.1	3.9	7.8	5.9	6.1
Hindu	24.4	15.6	71.5	77.6	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.3	1.3	3.7
Badimo	48.4	39.3	16.8	16.2	30.3	31.2	1.7	1.9	2.7	11.4
No Religion	63.6	56.1	11.4	10	22.8	27.3	0.9	1	1.2	5.5
Rastafarian	60.2	41.5	13.2	41.9	22.3	8.8	3.2	4.9	1.1	2.9
Other Religion	30.7	20.6	57.7	65.4	7.7	4.4	2.4	4.8	1.5	4.7

Table 10 : Percentage Distribution of Population by Citizenship, Marital Status and Sex

	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Botswana	60.1	54.6	16.4	16.2	21.1	21.2	1.1	1.6	1.4	6.3
Other SADC	33.8	32.6	47.2	46.3	16.7	14	1.5	2.9	0.8	4.2
E.Africa	35.7	38	52.9	52.2	8.9	4.2	1.4	2.9	1	2.8
N.Africa	43.3	55	37.8	24.2	15.7	14.2	2.4	0.8	0.8	5.8
C.Africa	43.5	56.4	30.4	17.9	24.6	17.9	1	0	0	7.7
W.Africa	34.4	37.3	52.9	53.5	10.3	5	1.7	1.6	0.8	2.6
Africa Islands	64.2	64.4	20.8	9.6	15.1	20.5	0	1.4	0	4.1
Asia	32	17.2	61.8	79.9	5.2	1.2	0.6	0.4	0.4	2.2
Europe	22.9	20.5	59.9	61.8	9.7	7.8	5.5	4.9	2	5.1
Oceania	27	34.5	56.3	48.2	3.2	12.7	3.2	2.7	0.8	1.8
Unknown	60	68.8	25	15.8	0	10.5	5	0	10	5.3

Table 12 : Percentage Distribution of Population by Occupation, Marital Status and Sex

Occupation	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated/ Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Legislators, Administrators, Managers	20.1	15.2	59.5	48	16.6	15.2	2.4	4.9	1.5	3.9
Professionals	31.9	16.6	46.4	40.9	19.4	16.6	1.7	2.9	0.6	1.6
Technicians and Associate Professionals	38	18.7	34.7	36.3	25	18.7	1.5	3.2	0.8	3.1
Clerks	47.3	25.8	22.5	21.3	28.2	25.8	1.2	2	0.7	1.9
Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers	45.3	29.7	21.5	18.3	31.6	29.7	1.1	2.1	0.9	3.1
Skilled Agricultural and Related Workers	34	26.8	33.2	29	28.5	26.8	2.2	3.1	2.2	9.7
Craft and Related Trade Workers	41	29.4	24.8	21.5	32.3	29.4	1.1	2.2	0.9	5.5
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	32.2	27.5	33	24.6	33.4	27.5	1.3	2.5	1	4.3
Elementary Occupants	51.4	30.1	13	16.5	32.9	30.1	1.3	1.3	1.2	4.7
Occupation not Classified	40.6	26.8	28.9	22.5	28.4	26.8	1.5	0	0.6	0
BDF	40.6	26.8	28.9	22.5	28.4	26.8	1.5	0	0.6	0
Occupation Unknown	76.2	59.4	10	14.5	11.5	17.7	0.8	1.2	1.5	7.2

Table13 : Percentage Distribution of Marital Status by Economic Activity and Sex

	Never Married		Married		Living Together		Separated/ Divorced		Widowed	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Economically Activity										
Employee(Paid in Cash)	42.5	46	25.1	21.9	30.2	26.6	1.3	2.4	0.9	3.2
Employee(Paid in Kind)	50.4	41.7	19.2	18.7	26.3	28	2.2	3.6	1.8	8
Self Employed(with no employees)	35.5	33.3	29.6	29.1	32	27.7	1.5	3.1	1.3	6.9
Self Employed(with employees)	24.3	20.7	50.1	52.8	21.9	17.4	2.3	3.6	1.3	5.5
Unpaid Family Helper	68.1	42.5	9.6	19.9	20.6	29.1	0.7	1.7	1	6.8
Working at Own Lands/Cattlepost	32	22.2	38.4	35.4	23.8	22.9	2.3	2.8	3.4	16.8
Actively Seeking Work	75.6	61.6	5	8.2	18.4	28.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.8
Economically Inactivity										
Homemaker	60.4	36.1	17.3	26.7	18.2	24.8	1.4	1.7	2.8	10.7
Students	97	94.9	0.9	1.4	2.1	3.6	0	0	0	0
Retired	8.4	22.9	68	33.9	9.6	3.9	4.2	5.8	9.9	33.6
Sick	45	34	28.2	16	13.4	8.5	3.6	2.8	9.8	38.7
Other	73.1	83	5.3	5.7	19.6	2.3	0.6	1.1	1.4	8
Unknown	47.4	37.3	22.6	22.1	26.2	27.3	1.6	2.6	2.2	10.8

Table 14:Percentage Distribution of Population by Marital Status and Household Size

Marital Status	Household Size											
	1_2		3_4		5_6		7_8		9_10		10+	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Never Married	48.1	47.4	22.9	22.8	14.7	15.8	6.9	7.3	4.3	3.8	3.1	2.8
Married	49.2	53.5	26.2	27.9	14.8	0	6.6	4.7	3.3	0	0	0
Living Together	56.1	68.8	22.7	15.6	10.6	6.3	6.1	6.3	3	3.1	1.5	0
Separated/Divorced	100	0	0	66.7	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Widowed	66.7	100	0	0	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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