

L'enfant et ses proches.
Dynamiques familiales en Afrique Subsaharienne
Children and family dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa

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Institut national d'études démographiques (Ined)
133, boulevard Davout, 75020 Paris

Effects of family structure on child mortality in SADC countries: Insights from Health and Demographic Surveillance System (HDSS) /

Les effets des structures familiales sur la mortalité des enfants dans les pays de la Communauté de développement d'Afrique australe (SADC) : enseignements tirés des systèmes de surveillance démographique

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Quels réseaux de parenté sont mobilisés autour des enfants ?

The role of extended kin in the life of children

Effects of changes in family structure on Risk of child mortality In SADC Region: Insights from HDSS: A case of Malawi

Family Dynamics and Children in Sub Saharan Africa Conference
Paris, France

by

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Brief Background

- Children in sub-Saharan Africa commonly live apart from one or both of their parents.
- Mali with lowest 8% while highest in Swaziland 30 %
- In Malawi
18.1% with both parents absent

Source: National Bureau of Statistics and ICF Macro, 2011

Causes of changes in Family Structure

- Parental Death
death of the parent(s)
- Parental migration
movement of the parent out of the household
- Child relocation
movement of the child out of the household

Cont..

- Union dissolution

a move out of the household (by the parent or the child) due to divorce

- Union formation

a move out of the household (by the parent or the child) due to marriage/remarriage

Objectives of Study

General Objective

- In general this study aims at examine the **effects of changes family structure** on **risk of child mortality** in Malawi

Specific Objectives

- Examine if **parental absence impacts risk of child mortality**
- Examine if it matters **which parent is absent on risk of child mortality**

Data Description

- Karonga Health Demographic and Surveillance System (KHDSS)
- Sample : 38 000 (baseline census 2002)
- The surveillance system **collects data on vital events and migration** from the selected sample
- Data obtained from INDEPTH REPOSITORY after permission through email help-data@indepth-network.org .
- Downloaded from <http://help-data.indepth-network.org/otrs/customer.pl> link

Methods of Analysis

- Employs two survival analysis methods

1. Kaplan-Meier estimation

To investigate children's risk of parental absence

2. piecewise exponential regression

To yield estimates of the hazard function

STATA 13 used for analysis

RESULTS

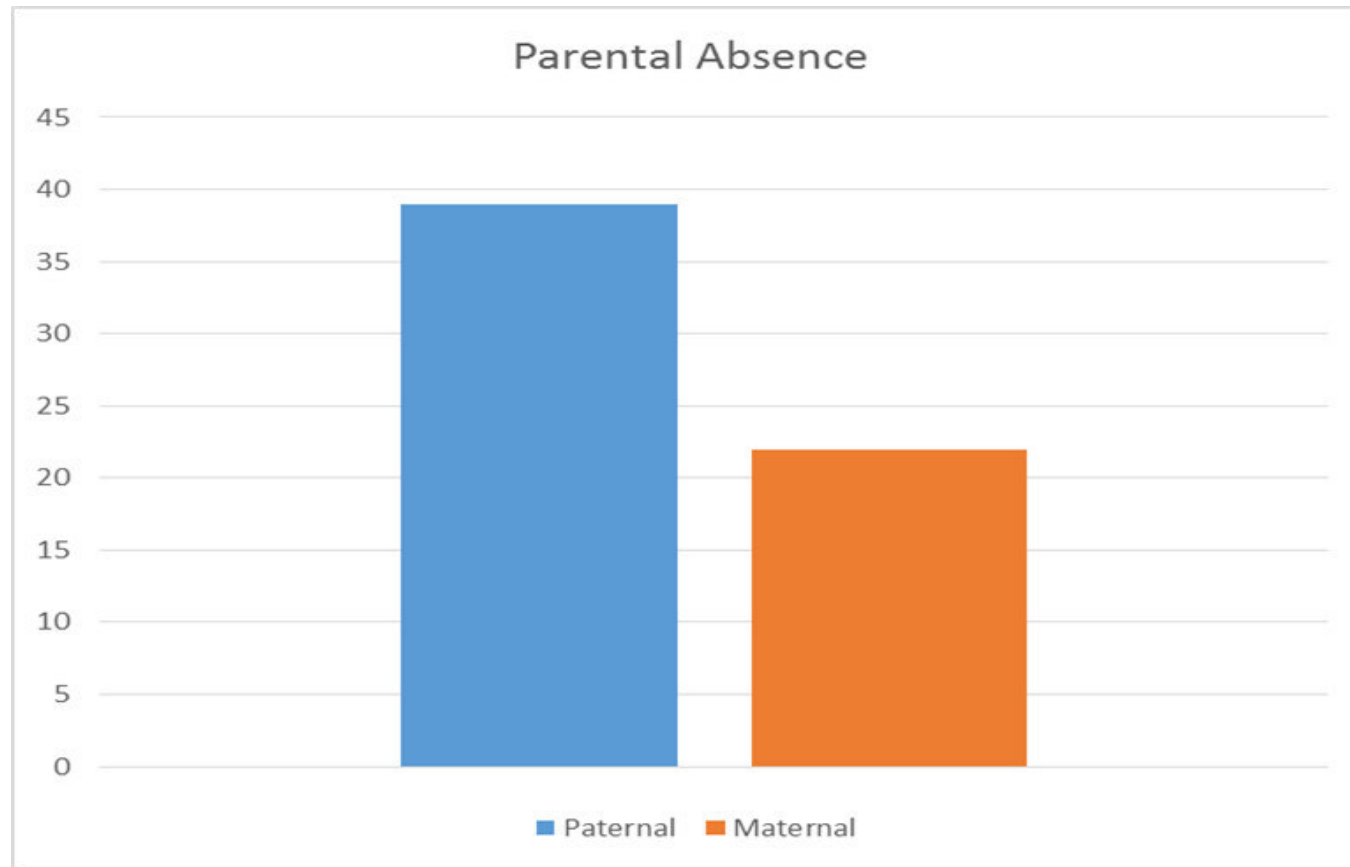
- Using Kaplan-Meier estimation

We estimated proportion of children with paternal and maternal absence.

- About 39% of children experience paternal absence by any cause
- About 22% of children experience maternal absence by any cause

Shown in figure below

Proportion of Children with parent(s) absent



Paternal Absence by Cause

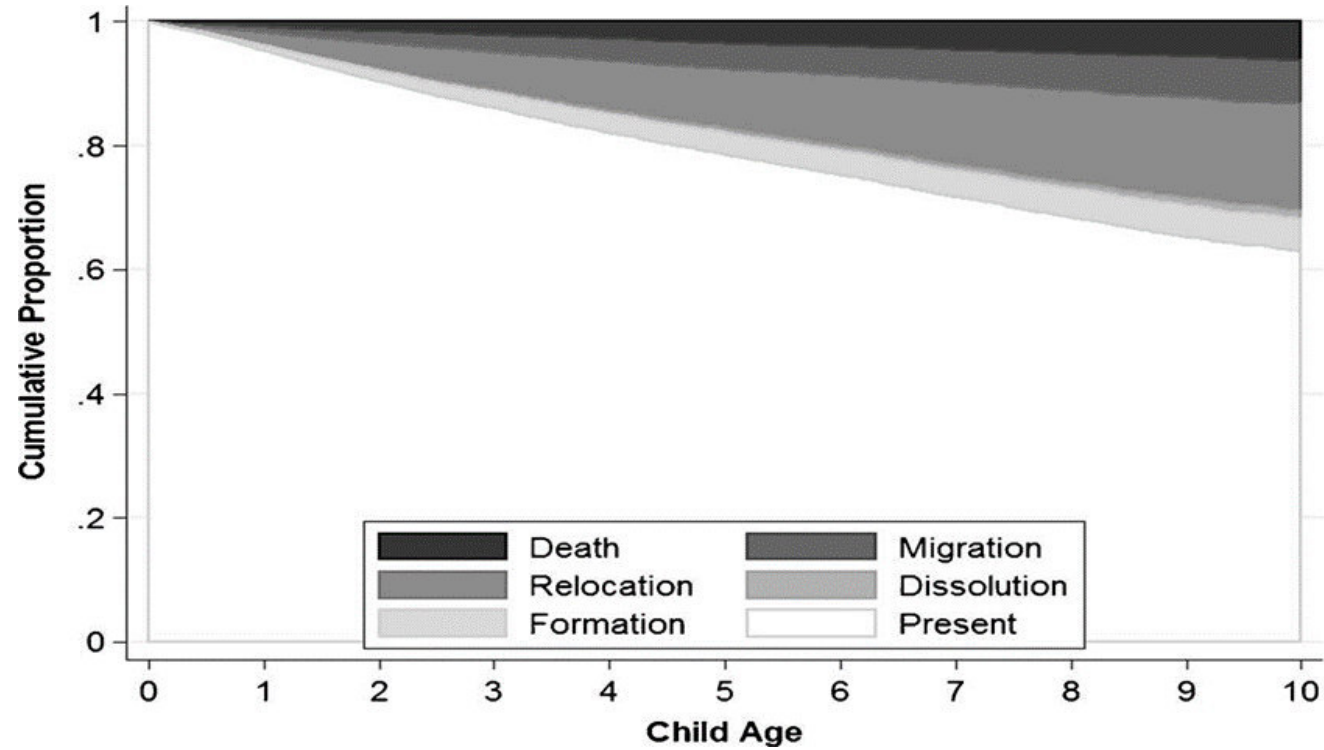
- Child relocation is by far the leading cause of paternal absence

Possible Reason: **Extended families**

- Paternal migration, paternal death, union formation and union dissolution make up **nearly the same share of paternal absence.**

Figure Below

Paternal absence by cause



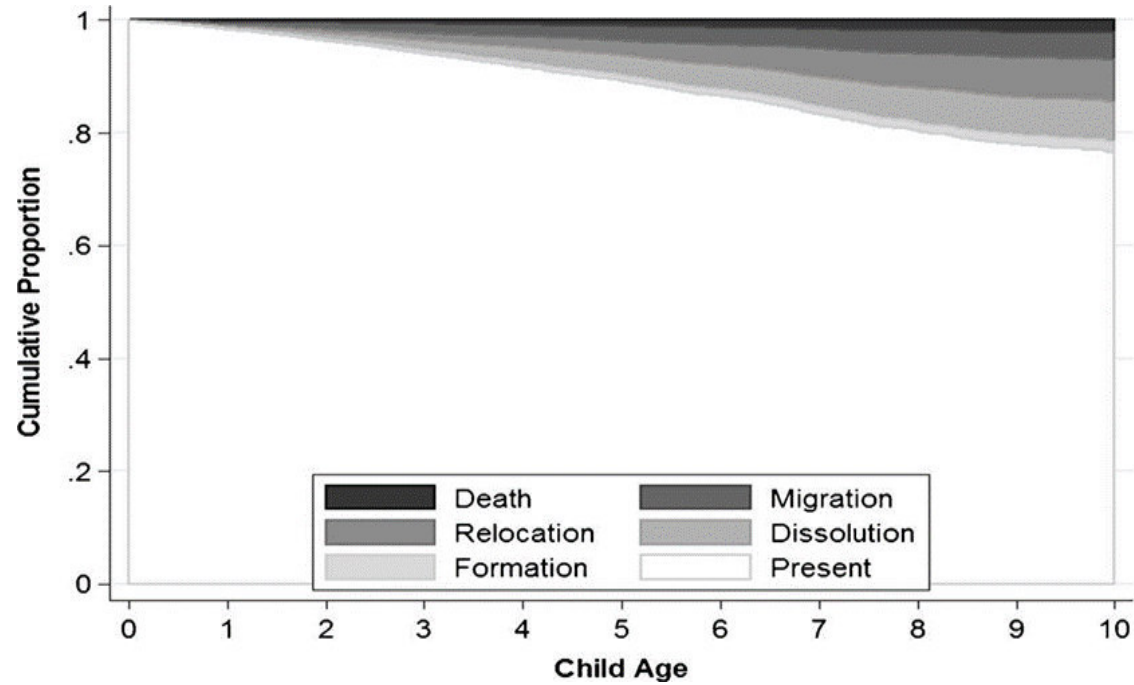
From STATA

Maternal Absence by Cause

- **Union dissolution** through divorce and separation is leading cause of maternal absence
- **Child relocation** comes second.
- **Maternal migration** is the third ranking cause of maternal absence.

And lastly **union formation**

Maternal Absence by Cause

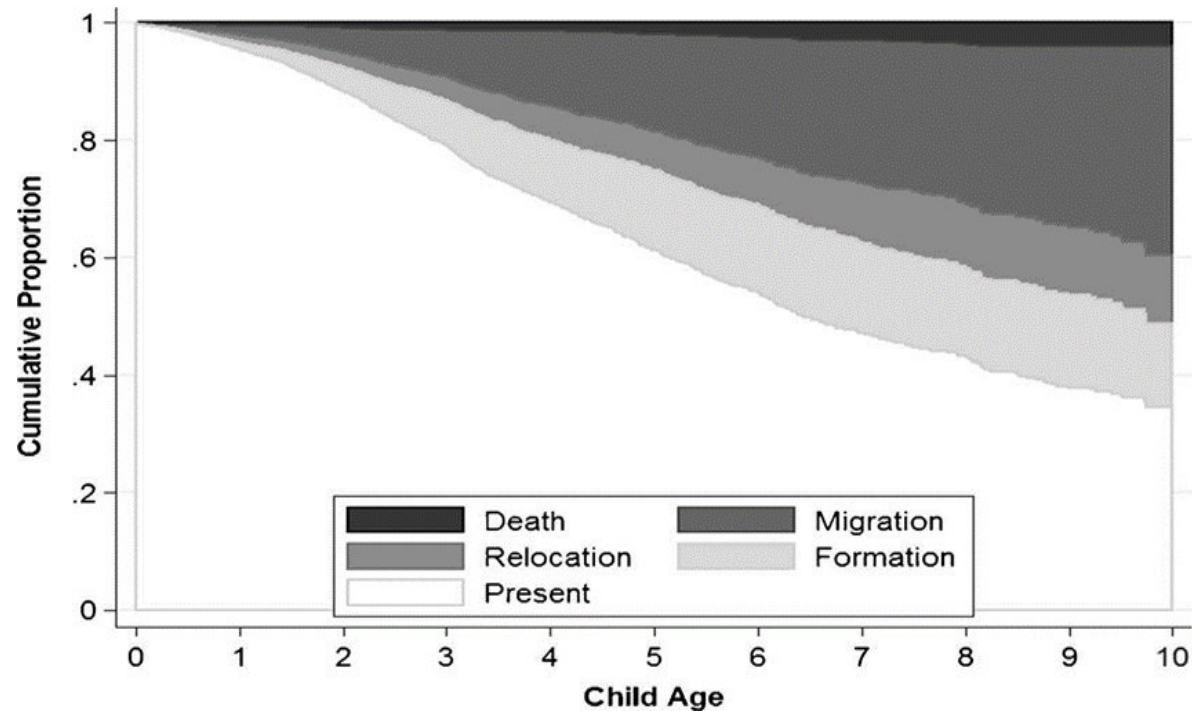


- From STATA

Maternal Absence For Single Mother Households

- Maternal migration leading cause of absence
- Union formation and child relocation account for nearly the same share of maternal absence.

Maternal Absence For Single Mother Households



- From STATA

Objective 1: Parental Absence and Risk of Child Mortality

- The hazards ratios of parental absence were calculated

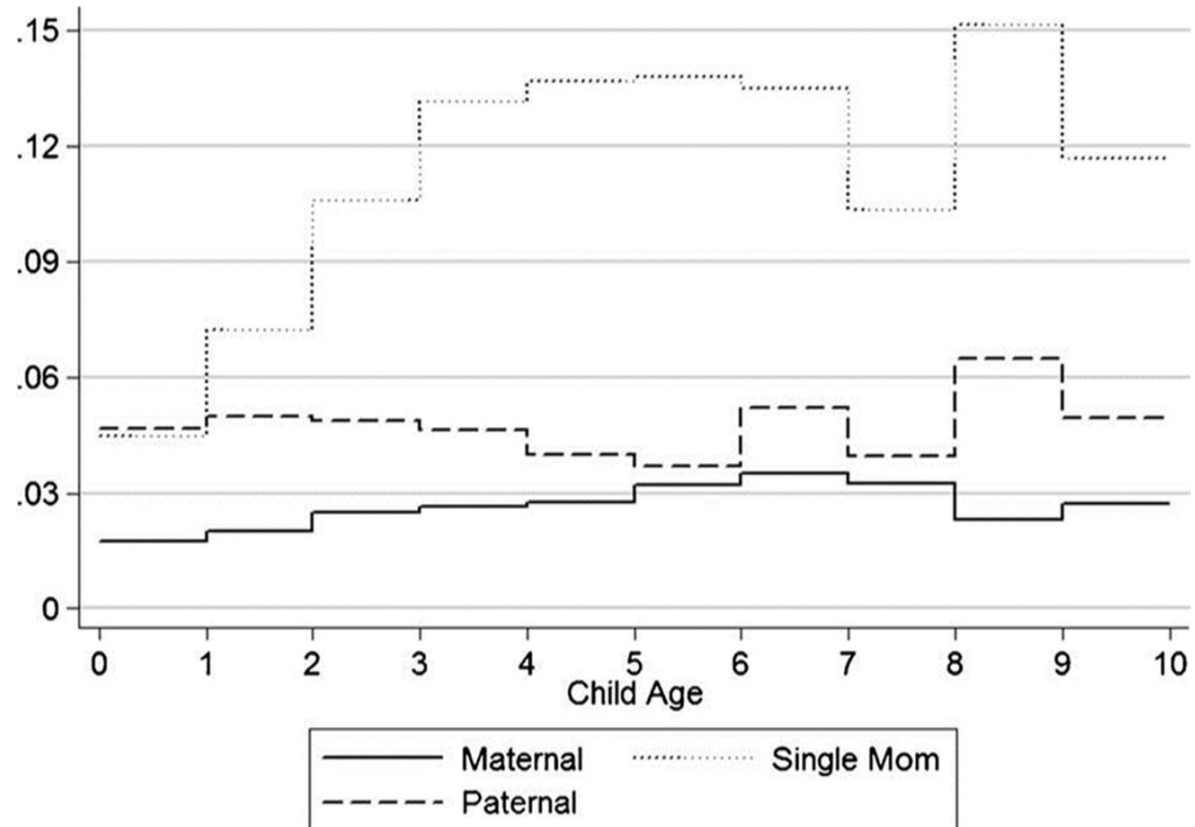
In the study, having any parent absent is associated with 35% higher hazard of children death compared to those children with both parents present.

Possible Reason: absence of a parent results in a loss of resources and is therefore deleterious for children well-being

Objective 2 : Does it matter which parent is absent on risk of child mortality?

- Piecewise Exponential Model was fit
- Maternal absence has greater risk of child mortality compared to paternal absence
- Maternal absence of children born in single mothers has the highest risk of child mortality

Parental Absence and Hazard of Child Death



- From STATA

Continued

- The hazard for maternal absence increases with age
- The hazard for paternal absence decreases monotonically with age
- The hazard for maternal absence of children born into single mothers higher at every age than that for children born into two-parent households.

Thank you for your attention