

Abstract:

The high rate of population growth in Africa has led to government attempts to encourage fertility control, but economic development does not seem to be following Western demographic transition theory. Kenyan total fertility was 8.1 children in 1979 and mean desired number of children for ever married women is 7.2. Key patterns of fertility contributing to these figures are high levels of pre- and non-marital fertility, traditional orientations to fertility, low prevalence of modern orientations to family size and contraception, regional and ethnic variations and high fertility among young urban women. Two theories relevant to understanding the situation may be Caldwell's theory of economic and reproductive decision-making and Freedman's social psychological emphasis on world-wide communications network.