



Socio-Demographic Determinants of Family Diversity in Maroua

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Abstract: The deterministic approach which examines causal variables that shape families was adopted in this paper to establish the relationship between family diversity and socio-demographic factors. Therefore, our objective was to explain the correlation that exist between family diversity in Maroua and socio-demographic characteristics such as religious affiliation, income, ethnic groups, level of education etc. The quota sampling method was used to ensure the equal representation of male and female in the sample. We administered 849 questionnaires 432 to men (50.9%) and 412 to women (49.1%). Equally, the number of questionnaires administered in each quarter was determined by its size. The systematic sampling method was used, we started the administration of questionnaires from a particular household and then skip five households before selecting the next household. We obtained the following results: If one is a monogamist, the higher the probability that one will be highly educated, have a legalized relationship, be younger, have a prestigious job and consequently earn a higher income and the reverse is true with polygynists. There is a very significant relationship between family diversity and income, level of education, age, occupation, religion, ethnic groups, legality of the relation and family size.

Keywords: Family diversity, Monogamy, Polygynous, Marriage, determinants

Received : 25 April 2026

Revised : 26 May 2026

Accepted : 30 May 2026

Published : 30 June 2026

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Nanche Billa Robert
(2026). Socio-Demographic
Determinants of Family
Diversity in Maroua. *Skylines
of Anthropology*, 6: 1,
pp. 57-75.

Introduction

The population of the Far North was estimated at 3,111,792 inhabitants which was about 17.8% of the Cameroon's total population (National Institute for Statistics,

2011), The total population of the Far North increased to about 4,208,433 inhabitants. This population is made up of 50.3% women and 49.7% men. About 19.4% of the population is aged between 0 to 4 years, the age of 35.6% varies from 5 to 14 years, 33.2% are of working age (15-64) and only 2.8% are at least 65 years old. Therefore, the Far North of Cameroon has a relatively younger population (National Institute for Statistics, 2016)

There is an economic dependency ratio of 1.19 and it is in the Diamaré division where there is relatively the largest number of people of working age in the Far North Region of Cameroon (about 49.6%). There are about 8.1 percentage of widowed or divorced women in the Far North and about 10.4% in the Diamaré Division. In the Far North region about 1.2% of the people live with a disability and about 1.8% of them are in the Diamaré division. The average household size in the region is 6.3 people.

In 2014, the poverty rate (or incidence of poverty) in the Far North region was 74.3%; nearly double the national level. The poverty rate is higher in households headed by women (81.2%) than in those headed by men (22.9%). Poverty increases with the size of the household; rising from almost 28% in one-person per household to 86% in households of at least 8 people. The poverty rate seems to increase with the age of the head of household: about 60.4% in households headed by a person under 35, 76.9% in households headed by someone who is about 35 to 64 years old and 83.2% in households headed by a person who is 65 and above. The level of poverty decreases as the level of education of the head of household increases: from 81% in households where the head has no schooling to 33% in those where the head has a higher educational level. Households headed by inactive people are the poorest (78.6%). The level of poverty among those headed by employed people is also high and stands at 74.2%. Poverty is higher in households headed by people working in the primary sector (85.1%) and the poverty rate is 64.3% and 32.1% in households where the head works in the secondary and tertiary sectors respectively.

About 96.5% of workers were self-employed in 2016, in the Far North region of Cameroon. There is the lack of formal employment opportunities; therefore, a majority of job seekers are generally employed in the informal sector, which is characterized by high levels of poverty, inequality and low-quality employment. Our objective is to examine how socio-demographic variables determine marital type in Maroua.

Our motivation in writing this paper is based on the fact that Maroua is a town where there polygyny and monogamy are common due to the fact that the Islamic

faith and Christianity are deeply-rooted. Secondly, we were also motivated by the scarcity of recent research works on the subject and very few studies have been conducted on the deterministic factors of family variations in Maroua, Therefore, this work will provide a reference frame of the socio-demographic determinants of family diversity for the academic community.

Determinants of Marital Variation

Family is defined as any relatively stable group of people bound by ties of blood, marriage, adoption; or by any sexually expressive relationship; or who simply live together, and who are committed to and provide each other with economic and emotional support. (Schwartz & Scott, 2007). Family members “consider their identity to be significantly attached to the group (Lamanna & Riedmann, 2006) or are at least “committed to each other” (Schwartz & Scott, 2007). In this article, we consider family as a group of people bound together by marriage. It is worth noting that a family is not uniform or natural but is “culturally constructed” (Stockard, 2002).

Research indicates that religion promotes marital stability (Call & Heaton, 1997). Some religious groups such as Catholics teach that divorce is morally wrong and therefore make the procedure for divorce difficult. In contrast, Islam has less complicated rules for obtaining divorce. But divorce is more common among Christian groups than among Muslims and traditional groups, and this difference persists even if other factors, such as kinship structure, type of residence, education, and marital duration are considered (Takyi, 2001). Takyi and Gyimah (2007) attribute lower divorce among Catholics and Muslims to religious teachings against divorce. Equally, religious groups may also create contexts for positive interaction between couples. However, religious difference between couples can detract from marital stability (Call & Heaton, 1997).

In contrast to the rational-choice framework, the cultural–institutional framework emphasizes continuity. Religion provides values guiding behavior and a set of rules that people use to “construct strategies of action” (Keister, 2003). Moreover, religious organizations are the product of a long history of interaction between adherents and an organizational structure and culture (Edgell, 2006). Religious institutions promote the ideals that have been created by this process. The institutional view suggests that family behaviors may be more resistant to change in religious groups that have defined values and rules regarding those relevant behaviors. Thus, religious group differences may widen over time.

Fernandez-Kelly (1990) argue that social class and employment opportunities play a large role in shaping family structure and functioning. Diversity is created by the “social context and social forces that construct families” (Baca Zinn & Wells, 2000). Families are enmeshed in a field of social forces. The economy, law, politics, religion, gender ideology, and other factors—along with the daily actions and choices of individuals—shape the diverse range of family forms that exist in any given society. Families are shaped or “constructed” by forces larger than themselves. This article examines the social factors and processes that can be used to explain family diversity in Maroua.

Polygyny has long been an accepted marital arrangement in Africa (Klomegah, 1997). It may enhance status among more traditional groups and provides a larger kin group for provision of child care. Even though polygyny is more common among Muslims and more traditional religious groups than among Christians, Klomegah (1997) reports that about one fourth of Christians are in polygynous unions. Roman Catholic and Protestant groups have allowed polygyny even though it was not generally accepted by these groups in Europe and the Americas. Polygyny is less common among more educated women and in urban areas. Recent comparisons of survey data indicate that polygyny is declining (Dodoo, 1998). Several factors could account for this decline, including increased emphasis on intimacy in monogamous relationships, decline in agrarian production systems that facilitate high fertility, and the rising cost of raising children as the importance of education grows.

The hypothesis of this work is formulated as follows: There is a positive relationship between family and socio-demographic factors such as age, income, level of education, religion, ethnic group, occupation, household composition and size.

Conceptual Model

The Positivist Approach

Society through its various social structures and everyday customs and norms constrains how people think, feel and act. These external constraints exist outside of the self, and they have an independent existence in society and cannot be willed out of existence by individuals. Society has an objective external existence independent of any given individual, moreover, the collective existence of a social phenomenon can vary from its expression in any given individual's life. Society is not just a collection of individuals but a collectivity with features and characteristics of its own. Society

is more than the sum of the individuals that characterize it. These collectivities independently regulate individual and group behavior (Dillon, M.2014).

Although marriage is contracted by two individuals, it is a social fact which predates and outlives the lifetime of any couple and the propensity of people to marry is itself constrained not alone by romantic attraction but by many other social facts including for example the state of the economy, , religious expectations and prohibitions, cultural expectation (age of marriage, divorce tendency) Durkheim argues that society has its own reality: a collective reality that exerts its own force independent of individuals. This explains why income, occupation, religious affiliations, ethnic considerations are used to measure family diversity in Maroua. (Dillon, M.2014).

This work examines the forces that regulate individual's choice of the type of marriage they may choose because as Durkheim puts it individuals are constrained by the society in which they live. In Maroua for example, some of the major forces are religion because Maroua is a town with a large number of Muslims and Christians. We also use level of education because Maroua is in a region which occupies almost the last position in official examinations, therefore, level of education can be a major force in explaining family diversity in Maroua etc.

Theory of differentiation

Differentiation is the increase of subsystem in a modern society to increase the complexity of a society. Each subsystem can make different connections with other subsystems, and this leads to more variations within the system in order to respond to variation in the environment. Marriage for example is not a homogenous thing but heterogenous phenomenon composing of monogamic and polygamic types thereby enhancing the complexity of the society.

Societies differ in how they structure marriage in many respects, including the number of spouses that can be involved (Stockard's 2002). Some cultures tolerate or encourage polygamy instead of monogamy. Societies also differ in their conceptions of the proper age for marriage. Social scientists by training tend to adopt a somewhat "deterministic" frame of reference, by viewing human relations as embedded within a complex matrix of causal variables (Babbie, 1986; P. Berger, 1963). They identify the social factors that shape families, such as economic inequalities, religious beliefs, the enactment and reversal of laws, and so on (Dollahite et al., 2004; Erera, 2002; Rank, 2000). Family meanings tend to be socially distributed, and thus partially

predictable, depending on where, by whom, and for what purposes family relations are being considered.

Stratification differentiation or social stratification is a vertical differentiation according to rank or status in a system conceived as a hierarchy. Equally, one's social status such as level of education, income, profession etc which are variables used in this work, determine the type of family one chooses

Methodology

We used the quota sampling method, by so doing we administered questionnaire to men and women ensuring that the percentage of female equal that of male as much as possible for easy comparison. We used the students who were doing the course called Data Collection in the department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Sciences for Development at the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Maroua to administer the data.

We identified all the neighborhoods in Maroua and the number of questionnaires administered in each quarter was determined by its size. That is more questionnaires were administered in bigger quarters than in smaller ones. They started from a particular household and then skip five households before selecting the next household. They either gave the respondents the questionnaire to fill for those who were literate or fill it for them for those who could neither read nor write. They administered questionnaire to 849 individuals: 432 men (50.9%) and 417 women (49.1%) and we ensured that the main ethnic groups living in Maroua were represented in our sample: the peulh (19.1%), the guiziga (15.1%), the Moundang (12.7%), the Tupuri (12.7%), the Mafa (7.5%), the Mofou (5.8%), and other ethnic groups (26.3%) mostly those who were from other regions but who were permanently living in Maroua for professional and other reasons. The percentage of the following age groups were represented in our sample: those between 25-30 years (46.6%) and 36-46 years (22.3%), 47-57 years (9.7%), 58-68 years (4.2%) and .8% for those above 69 years because we have a predominantly youthful population in Maroua. We analyzed the collected data using SPSS software in order to cross-tabulate and describe variables. We put the value in red where the specific modality is above the general modality to show a significant relationship.

Method of Analysis

The SPSS (statistical Package for Social Sciences) software which is a recognised program for analysing data in the social sciences was used to process our data.

Attention was particularly paid to descriptive and inferential analyses. We presented each aspect of the operational framework in five stages: presentation of figures in table, followed by description of the tables and then interpretation and analysis. We did the inferential analysis by considering the chi-test and percentage technique in which we compared the specific category to the general population that is, the independent variable to the percentage obtained in the total population or sample and then explained their sociological implications. We put a + when the percentage of the independent variable is more than the percentage of the total column which shows the difference it makes in the whole. The red in our tables indicates areas of significance. We calculated the correlations that exist between them to show that it was not just a random variation.

Presentation of Results

In this section, we first of all present how age determines income, education, and occupation for us to better understand how it influences livelihood strategies such as availability of subsistence resources. Further more, we examine how age determines quality of life or poverty in the town of Maroua.

Income, Occupation, Education and Age as determinants of Family Diversity

Family Variations and Income

The question we tried to answer is whether one's income significantly determine one's choice of family. Therefore, we examine if personal and monthly household incomes determine family diversity.

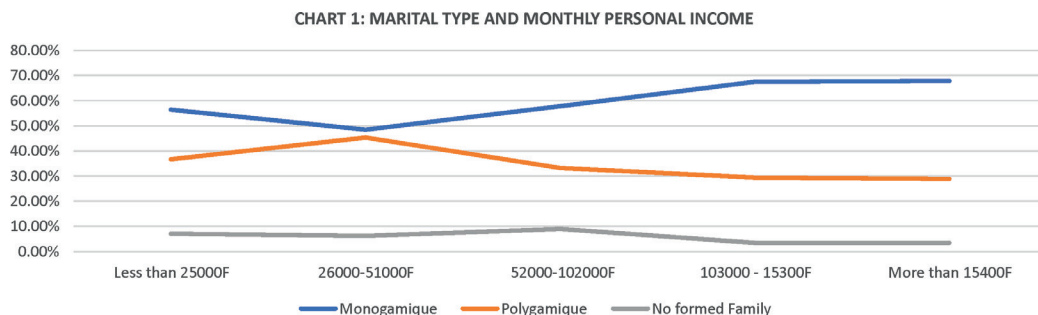


Chart 1 concerns the amount individuals in a family in Maroua earn per month. Our objective is to find out the type of marriage in which individuals earn

higher because income influences many aspects of our social life. Chart 1 indicates that those who significantly earn between 103,000frs CFA and above 154,000frs CFA are monogamist and those who earn less than 25,000frs CFA and between 26,000-51,000frs CFA are significantly polygynists. That is the reason why the blue line representing monogamy rises while income increases and slopes down when income decreases. Equally, the orange line slopes down as income increases and move upward as income decreases. This shows that polygynists are low-salary earners while monogamists are high salary earners. Therefore, as income increases the tendency of being a monogamist increases and as income decreases, people become more and more polygynists. There is a very significant relationship between personal income and marital type . (Value=25.811, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.004). What is mind boggling here is why should low-income families prefer polygynous families; that is, why should they get married to many wives when they do not have the adequate means to feed them? As seen above, we notice that they are significantly older persons with very low level of education.

CHART 2: MARITAL TYPE AND MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

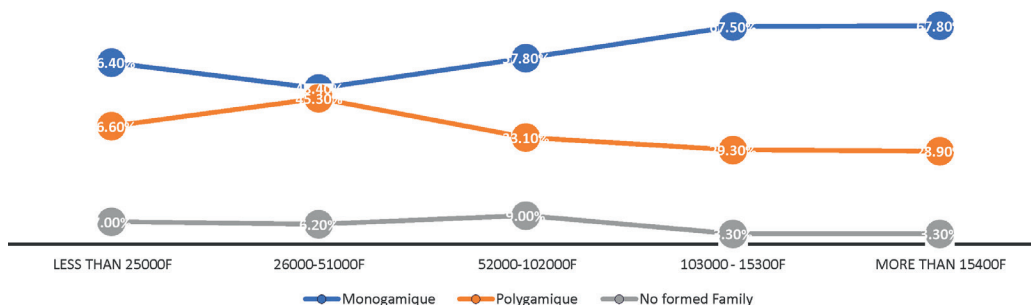


Chart 2 indicates that monogamous household income is significantly between 50,000 -100,000frs CFA and 240, 000-304,000frs CFA while polygynous families significantly earn 101000-151000frs CFA, 152000-202000frs CFA, 203000-253000frs CFA and 304000frs CFA. Therefore, monogamist households significantly have low and high incomes while polygynous household have average incomes and the highest income. This is understandable because household income includes the income of husband, wives and children still living with their parents but who are working, and the polygynous households are relatively larger as compared to monogamous. There is no significant relationship between household income and marital type . (Value=26.588, Degree of Liberty=14, Asymp. Significance =.022). This shows that

the polygamic households live a collective life; everyone brings what he/she earns for the survival of the family. They do not depend only on the heads of the family but everyone brings whatever he/she has for the survival of the group which is an African traditional values: solidarity.

CHART 3 : MARITAL TYPE AND OCCUPATIONS

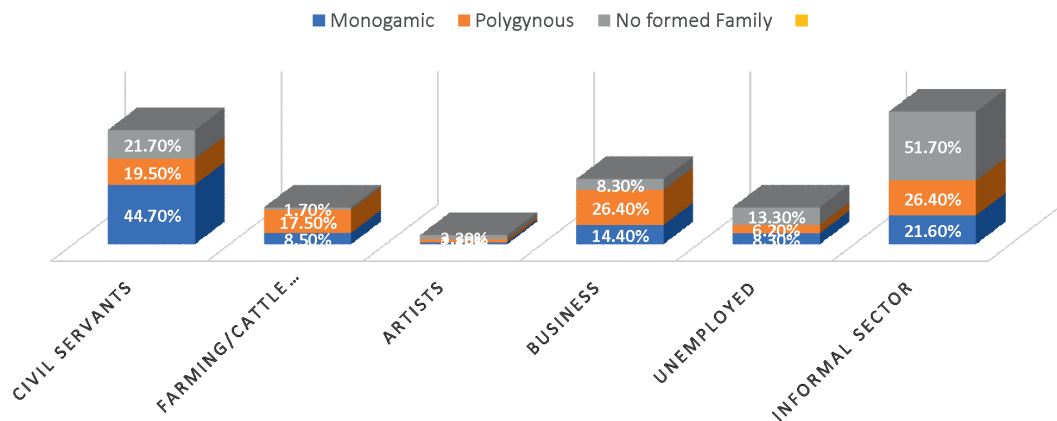


Chart 3 indicates that people who practice monogamy are significantly civil servants which is a sector in Cameroon that pays better than the other sectors because they are precarious due to very low-income. Polygynists are significantly farmers/cattle rearers, artists, businessmen and work in the informal sector which are very precarious jobs. That is why they have relatively lower incomes as compared to those who practice monogamy. Equally, those who have not formed families are significantly artists, unemployed and work in the informal sector. They have the lowest income which is probably the reason why they are either unmarried or have not legalized their marriages. To conclude, if one is a monogamist, the higher the probability that one will have a prestigious job which in the Cameroonian context is the civil service and consequently, one will earn a higher income and if one is a polygynist, one will work in a precarious sector and as a result earn a low salary. There is a very significant relationship between occupation and marital type (Value=108.381, Degree of Liberty=20, Asymp. Significance =.000).

Table 1 indicates that there is a significant relationship between marital status and level of education. The higher educated one is, the higher the probability that one will have a monogamous families and the lowly educated one is, the higher the probability that one will have a polygynous family. The table demonstrates that

Table 1: Level of Education and Marital Type

[illegible]

monogamists in Maroua are holder of the Ordinary Level, Probatoire, graduates, master and PhD holders while polygynists families, the higher the probability that one will be a holder of a First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) or have not gone to school. This corroborates with Table 2 which states that monogamous marriages are significantly practiced by relatively younger persons who are educated while polygynous marriages are practiced by people who are relatively older and who are less educated. It means that the younger generations in Maroua promotes more the western culture of monogamy which means they have dropped their ancestral polygynous families.. There is a very significant relationship between marital type and level of education. (Value=56.749^a, Degree of Liberty=16, Asymp. Significance =.000).

Table 2 shows that monogamous marriages are significantly practiced by those between 25-35 and 36-46 years which are relatively younger persons while **polygynous** marriages are practiced by people who are between 36-46, 47-57, 58-68 and those above 69 who are relatively older persons. The younger one is, the higher the probability that one will prefer a monogamous family and vice versa. This means that **polygynous** family is more popular among the older generation than the younger ones. There is a very significant relationship between age and marital type (Value=31.078, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.001)

Matrimonial Types Variation by Religion, Ethnic Groups, legality

Table 3: Matrimonial Type and Religions

Religion							Total
	Catholics	Muslims	Animist	Protestants	Pentecostals	Other Religions	
Monogamic	146	126	10	147	29	23	481
	67.3%	36.2%	37.0%	79.9%	70.7%	76.7%	56.8%
Polygynous	46	204	15	21	7	4	297
	21.2%	58.6%	55.6%	11.4%	17.1%	13.3%	35.1%
No formed Family	25	18	2	16	5	3	69
	11.5%	5.2%	7.4%	8.7%	12.2%	10.0%	8.1%
	217	348	27	184	41	30	847
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The above table indicates that polygynous marriages are significantly practiced by the Muslim after all their religion permits to get married to up five women w

provided they treat the wives without discrimination and the animist who are not bound by Christians religious teachings of getting married only to one person. However, animists (37%) practice more monogamy than Muslims (36.2%). Equally, more Protestants (79.9%) than Pentecostals (70.7%) have monogamous marriages which means that more Protestants stick to the Christians doctrine of one man, one wife. However, more Pentecostals adhere to monogamy than Catholics which has about 67.3% monogamous marriages in Maroua. Therefore, if one is a Muslim or an animist, the higher the probability that one will be a polygynist and if one is a Protestant, a Pentecostal or a Catholic, the higher the probability that one will be a monogamist. There is a very significant relationship between religion and marital status . (Value=168.035, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.000)

CHART 4: MATRIMONIAL STATUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN MAROUA

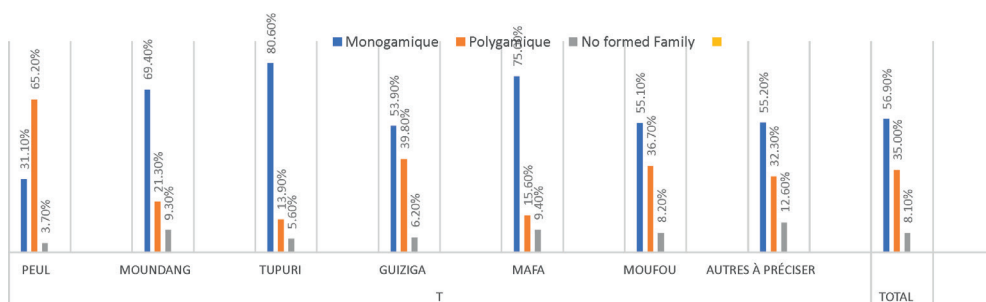
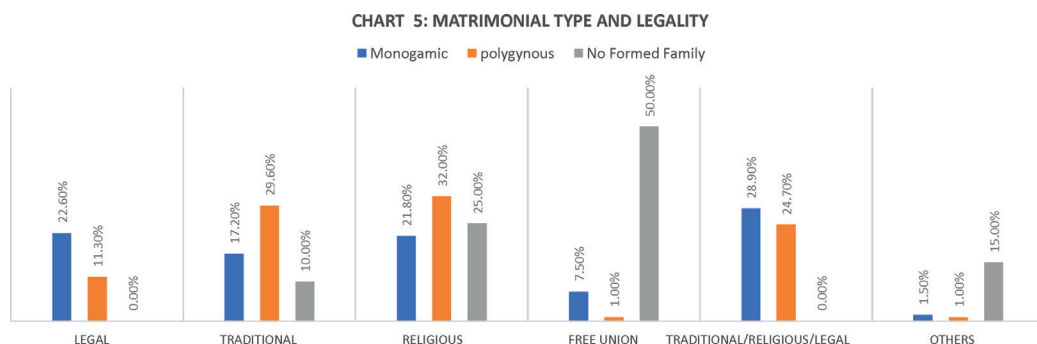


Chart 4 shows that about 35% and 56.9% of legalized marriages in Maroua are either polygamous or monogamous respectively. The chart indicates that polygynous marriages are particularly famous among the Peul ethnic group with about 65.2% and 31.1% of polygamous and monogamous marriages respectively. It is also popular among the Guiziga ethnic group with about 39.8% and 53.9% polygynous and monogamous marriages. It is also popular among the Moufou ethnic group where about 36.7% and 55.1% of them legally have polygynous and monogamous families respectively

Chart 4 also shows that polygynous marriages are more common among the Moundang ethnic group (21.3%) than among the Mafa ethnic group (15.6%). Equally, it is more popular among the Mafa than among the Tupuri ethnic group (13.9%). However, the Tupuri practice the least polygynous marriages and the Peul the most because most of them are Muslims. It is worth noting that many other ethnic groups apart from the main ones also practice polygynous marriages in Maroua. Conclusively, the Peul, Guiziga and Moufou ethnic group practice significantly

polygynous marriages while the Moundang, Tupuri and Mafa significantly practice monogamous marriages in Maroua. There is a very significant relationship between age and marital type (Value=117.642^a, Degree of Liberty=14, Asymp. Significance =.000)



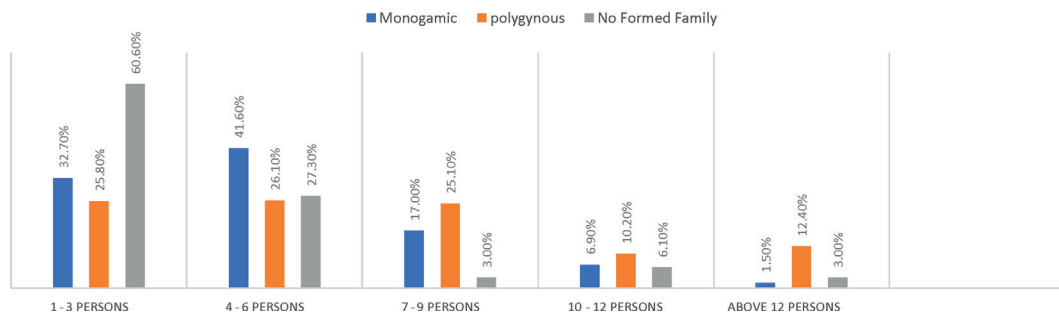
Statistical analyses indicate that people who practiced monogamy have significantly legalized their marriage and they also significantly live in free union. Although taken separately monogamists have not significantly celebrated their marriages traditionally and religiously, however, those of them who have done all of them, that is, having celebrated their marriages legally, religiously and traditionally are significant than the polygynists. Polygynists are more traditional and religious than monogamists while monogamists are more legal and like living in free union. If they live in free union more, it is because they are less religious than polygamists who are significantly Muslims and animists. There is a very significant relationship between marital type and legality of marriage (Value=145.574^a, Degree of Liberty=16, Asymp. Significance =.000).

Matrimonial Status and Family Size

*A quel régime matrimonial appartenez-vous? * Combien de personnes vivent dans votre ménage?*

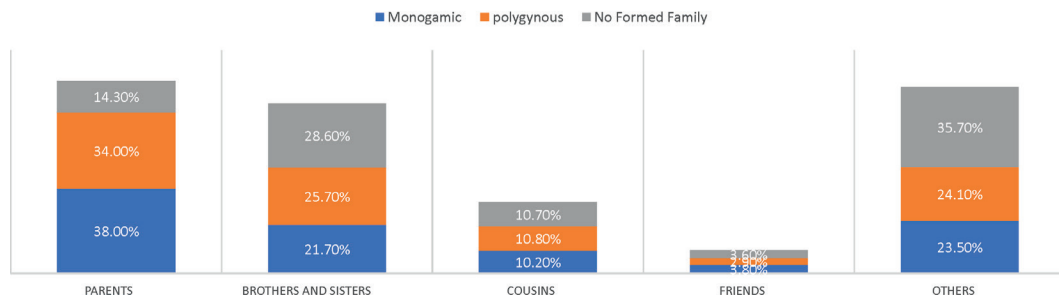
Our statistical analyses indicate that monogamic families significantly have 1-3, 4-6 persons in their household since they are composed of one wife, one husband and children. Polygynous families significantly have larger families that are significantly between 7-9 persons, 19-12 persons and above 12 persons. This is equally understandable because it is a type of family that is composed of a husband and many

CHART 6: HOUSEHOLD SIZE



wives. On the other hand those who have not formed families significantly have only one to three persons in their household. There is a very significant relationship between marital type and family size (Value=74.680, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.000). while monogamic families are smaller, polygynous ones are significantly larger. What is mind boggling here is that they are significantly low-income earners because they do precarious jobs. This is because as seen above, there are significantly old and lowly educated.

CHART 7: COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS



The composition of different household are significantly different depending on the type of marital status. The monogamic family is significantly composed of parents and friends while polygynous families are significantly composed of brothers and sisters and cousins. Therefore, while monogamic family is nuclear in form in the sense that they do not significantly have brothers and sisters, that is, they do not either call or allow their brothers and sisters to live with them, the polygynous ones are extended families which allow not just their brothers and sisters to live with them but also their cousins. Therefore, the religious factor (significantly Muslims whose religion allowed them to get married to four wives) is not enough to explain polygynous families but also the factor that they are traditionalistic in view. There

is a fair significant relationship between marital type and family size (Value=40.701, Degree of Liberty=20, Asymp. Significance =.004).

Conclusion

It is worth-noting that we set out to test the following hypothesis: There is a positive relationship between family and socio-demographic factors such as age, income, level of education, religion, ethnic group, occupation, household composition and size. After analysing the collected data, we obtained the following results:

- As income increases the tendency of being a monogamist increases and as income decreases, people become more and more polygynists those who significantly earn between 103,000frs CFA and above 154,000frs CFA are monogamist and those who earn less than 25,000frs CFA and between 26,000-51,000frs CFA are significantly polygynists. This shows that polygynists are low-salary earners while monogamists are high salary earners.
- Monogamist households significantly have low and high incomes while polygynous household have average incomes and the highest income This shows that the polygamic households live a collective life; everyone brings what he/she earns for the survival of the family.
- If one is a monogamist, the higher the probability that one will have a prestigious job which in the Cameroonian context is the civil service and consequently, one will earn a higher income and if one is a polygynist, one will work in a precarious sector and as a result earn a low salary.
- Monogamists are holder of the Ordinary Level, Probatoire, graduates, master and PhD while polygynists are holders of a First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) or have not significantly gone to school.
- The younger one is, the higher the probability that one will prefer a monogamous family and the older one is, the higher the probability that one is a polygynist. This means that **polygynous** family is more popular among the older generation than the younger ones.
- Animists (37%) practice more monogamy than Muslims (36.2%). Equally, more Protestants (79.9%) than Pentecostals (70.7%) have monogamous marriages which means that more Protestants stick to the Christians doctrine of one man, one wife. However, more Pentecostals adhere to monogamy than Catholics which has about 67.3% monogamous marriages in Maroua.

- The Peul, Guiziga and Moufou ethnic group practice significantly polygynous marriages while the Moundang, Tupuri and Mafa significantly practice monogamous marriages.
- Polygynists are more traditional and religious than monogamist while monogamists are more legal and like living in free union. If they live in free union more, it is because they are less religious than polygamist who are significantly Muslims and animists.
- Monogamic family is nuclear in form in the sense that they do not significantly have brothers and sisters, that is, they do not either call or allow their brothers and sisters to live with them, the polygynous ones are extended families which allow not just their brothers and sisters to live with them but also their cousins

We obtained the following correlations which were used to test our hypothese:

- There is a very significant relationship between personal income and marital type . (Value=25.811, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.004).
- There is no significant relationship between household income and marital type . (Value=26.588, Degree of Liberty=14, Asymp. Significance =.022).
- There is a very significant relationship between occupation and marital type (Value=108.381, Degree of Liberty=20, Asymp. Significance =.000)
- There is a very significant relationship between marital type and level of education. (Value=56.749^a, Degree of Liberty=16, Asymp. Significance =.000)
- There is a very significant relationship between age and marital type (Value=31.078, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.001)
- There is a very significant relationship between religion and marital status . (Value=168.035, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.000)
- There is a very significant relationship between age and marital type (Value=117.642^a, Degree of Liberty=14, Asymp. Significance =.000)
- There is a very significant relationship between marital type and legality of marriage (Value=145.574^a, Degree of Liberty=16, Asymp. Significance =.000).
- There is a very significant relationship between marital type and family size (Value=74.680, Degree of Liberty=10, Asymp. Significance =.000). while monogamic families are smaller, polygynous ones are significantly larger..

- There is a fair significant relationship between marital type and family size (Value=40.701, Degree of Liberty=20, Asymp. Significance =.004).
- Therefore our hypothesis was validated: There is a very significant relationship between family diversity and income, level of education, age, occupation, religion, ethnic group, legality of the relation and family size.

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