

# Shifting Parental Age Differences in Sub-Saharan Africa: Does education matter

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## Abstract

The spousal age gap at first birth is an important factor to consider when analyzing fertility patterns and power dynamics within couples. This study provides updated estimates of trends in this area in sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 to 2015, and evaluates the impact of changes in educational composition on age differences over time. The study found that there has been an overall decline in parental age differences, but with significant variations by sub-region and country. A demographic decomposition analysis revealed that the increase in mean age at first birth of mothers is primarily driven by a shift in women's educational composition. However, the decline in mean age at entry into fatherhood is associated with behavioral change among low-educated fathers. The study will further examine the underlying causes of sub-regional differences in the shifts to parental age differences at first birth.