

## **Trends of Intergenerational Support towards Elderly Parents in Coast Region, Tanzania**

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**Abstract:** This study sought to establish the trend of intergenerational support amid current social and economic changes in the Coast region, Tanzania. The study was specifically conducted in Kibaha Town Council (TC) and Mkuranga District Council (DC). The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A total of 394 respondents composed of older people aged 60 years and above out of the 15,919 older people obtained in Kibaha TC and Mkuranga DC were selected to participate in this study. Data was collected through a questionnaire, interview schedule and FGD. The findings revealed that despite social and economic changes which affect the relationship between parents and adult children, financial support was largely provided to the majority of older people. Indeed the study has noted that despite the reception of support from their adult children, there was a lack of filial obligation among adult children. In addition, though the majority of older people were receiving support, older women, illiterate and those living with their adult children were more likely to demand and receive support than others. As a result of poor economies among adult children, the support received by older people, especially financial assistance was largely inadequate and untimely. It is therefore recommended that the government and the community need to raise awareness among the young people on the importance of helping older parents as part of the strategies to enhance informal protection mechanisms. To reduce a huge burden on adult children, the government needs to re-think and put in place a non-contributory universal pension for all older people. Similarly, the government needs to put a high priority on older women since they are the ones who are most in need of support. To ensure that the support provided is adequate and reliable, the government needs to create more employment opportunities for adult children.

**Keywords:** Social protection; the elderly; intergenerational support and care; parent-child relationship; economic changes.

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### **Introduction**

Throughout history, in most countries, adult children have been at the fore concerning the provision of support and care to needy old people (Silverstein, Gans & Yang, 2006). The provision of

support (financial aid, helping with domestic chores and emotional support) from adult children to their parents (intergenerational support) has been influenced by norms, moral codes and religious realms (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991). For example, an

act of adult children fulfilling care obligations towards their parents in China is called filial piety and lies in Confucianism ideology (Shi, 2017). In Turkey, the responsibility for supporting older people has always been the duty of adult children characterized by solidarity and filial piety due to historical, cultural and religious factors (Ocakli, 2017). The same can be said of Indonesia, whereby Indonesians believe that there is a *surah* in the Koran that emphasizes the norms of intergenerational support and care and has been practised as unwritten rules of conduct (*adata*) (Eeuwijk, 2014). Similarly, Aboderin (2006) stressed that many societies in Africa have had moral codes which underline the act of young people taking care of their elderly parents. Like many other countries in Africa, older people in Tanzania have been relishing financial and social support coming mostly from family networks, including their adult children.

By and large, the well-being of older people in Tanzania has been informed by the co-existence of formal and informal social protection arrangements (URT, 2018). The formal arrangement includes the existing programmes and strategies formulated by the state to safeguard the livelihood of older people (Barrientos & Hulme, 2009). Informal arrangements include several different mechanisms that are used by families and communities to protect their livelihoods and guarantee their standards of living (Spitzer & Mabeyo, 2014). These include the intergenerational support that is provided by adult children to their older parents (*ibid*). Despite the existence of both types of social protection mechanisms, the formal social protection mechanisms have not been able to match up with the demands and needs of the elderly, leaving a huge burden on informal social protection mechanisms (UN, 2016). Concomitant with this idea, the national ageing policy in Tanzania has categorically stated that “since the government cannot meet all demands and needs of the elderly, the family should remain the basic institution of care and support for older people” (URT, 2003 p.10). In the absence or lack of publicly funded programmes for providing old-age security to older people, intergenerational support has become the indispensable means of old-age support for many older people in Tanzania (Nakao, 2016). According to Msechu (2014), intergenerational support and care, if available, are ideal forms of improving older people's well-being in Tanzania.

Despite its potential, various studies in Africa such as Aboderin (2004), Amaike and Soyombo (2007) and Okumagba (2011) have indicated that family support has declined for older people. The decline of familial support is largely associated with changes in intergenerational relationships (Manyara, Mwangi, & Apollos, 2016). It is believed that several social and economic changes have been partly affecting the intergenerational relationships with issues such as modernization, urbanization and globalization being at the fore. For example, it is argued that modernization and the growth of towns have changed the formal relationship between the family and society in general (Maffioli, Sacco & Gabrielli, 2007). There is a concern that urbanization and rural-urban mobility have influenced adult children to move away from their home villages, leaving behind older people with no support (Alber, Häberlein & Martin, 2011). With the rise of modernization, adult children are said to embody new values and norms which affect the value of filial responsibility (Muia, Maina & Mwangi, 2013; Tafere, 2013). According to Eboiyehi (2015), the traditional care and support for the aged are diminishing due to the way the younger generation perceives old age and the aged. The change in perception of old age and the aged is linked to an external influence which is gradually eroding the traditional African belief of seeing the elderly in a positive light. Consequently, the decline of support from family networks poses a challenge to the African governments concerning the effectiveness of informal social protection mechanisms for older people. This is because, in most African countries, the majority of the older people are taken care of in the realms of informal social protection mechanisms (Yakubu, 2020).

Currently, Tanzania is experiencing a high rate of urbanization coupled with forces of modernization. Having an urban population growth rate of 5.4% per annum, Tanzania had the sixth-highest rate of urban population growth globally in 2015 (Worrall et al., 2017). This means that, currently, the majority of adult children are leaving their home villages and moving to urban centres for greener pastures (Steel & Lindert, 2017). In the case of modernization, it is argued that many families in Tanzania have faced forces of globalization, which makes it hard for them to extricate from the fast-shifting world. Hence, it can be said that Tanzania's interaction with the global system has played a significant role in what Tanzania's family is today (Manyama, 2017; Rwegelera, 2012). In his study, Manyama (2017) suggested that intergenerational relationships are

also changing in Tanzania as are in other countries. However, detailed information as to what extent intergenerational support is changing is missing. Remarkably, changes in intergenerational relationships are intertwined with a substantial increase in the number of older populations in the country. Based on the census data, in 2012, Tanzania had some 2,449,257 older people, of which 1,170,323 were male and 1,278,934 were female (URT, 2003). Out of 2,449,257 older people, 1,922,713 were living in rural areas and 526,544 were living in urban areas. The United Nations projected that between 2020 and 2050, the absolute number of Tanzanians over 60 years will almost triple, increasing from 2.95 million to 8.39 million (UN, 2017).

Recent studies on social protection mechanisms in Tanzania (Malima, Jeckoniah & Mvena, 2017; Mfungo, Msilu & Lesso, 2020) have been mostly emphasizing the need for the government to strengthen its capacity to reach elderly households, which according to Mwanyangala et al. (2010) are the poorest of the poor. However, these studies have put a low priority on the role of intergenerational support in old age security. These studies have failed to look at how to strike balance between informal and formal social protection mechanisms. The need to underscore the trend of intergenerational support for older people is of paramount importance given the fact that the majority of older people rely heavily on transfers provided to them by their adult children (Steel & Lindert, 2017). While some other studies (HAI, 2011; Spitzer et al., 2009) have shown a general decline in familial support, detailed information concerning the trend of intergenerational support is missing. The elderly in Tanzania may face a double impact in the sense that they are caught up in a situation where formal programs to social protection inadequately cover them. Therefore, this study sought to establish the trend of support provided by adult children to elderly parents. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the status of intergenerational support in the older people's views?
2. How are older people's characteristics associated with the likelihood of receiving or not receiving support from adult children?
3. To what extent do older people feel satisfied with the support provided to them by adult children

## **Methodology**

This study employed the mixed research approach whereby the concurrent triangulation research design was employed. The concurrent triangulation design involves the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. The study employed the qualitative approach to get the views of the elderly parents with regards to the reception of different forms of support from their adult children and the quantitative approach was merely employed to describe the findings in numerical values to ascertain relationships and association of the involved variables.

## **Population and sampling**

The study was conducted in Mkuranga District Council (DC) and Kibaha Town Council (TC) in Coast Region. The Coast Region was purposively chosen because it is among the four leading regions with high proportions of the elderly in their population out of 28 regions in Tanzania. The region has 8.5% of the elderly population in its general population (URT, 2013). Similarly, the two selected areas were purposively selected because of having a huge number of elderly in their populations compared with other local government authorities in Coast Region. As of 2018, Mkuranga DC had 15,677 older people while Kibaha TC had 15,919 older people. The inclusion of two local government authorities was not merely done for comparison purposes but rather to draw an adequate sample for analysis. Mkuranga DC and Kibaha TC had a total number of 39 wards of which 8 were randomly selected. From the selected 8 wards, the researcher randomly picked 8 villages in Mkuranga DC and 8 mitaa in Kibaha TC. Using a Yamane formula, a sample of 394 respondents was drawn out of 31,596 elderly people obtained in both Kibaha TC and Mkuranga DC.

## **Instruments**

A questionnaire was administered to the 394 respondents. The questionnaire was largely dominated by close-ended items to enable the collection of information which is amenable for statistical analysis. Items were set to stimulate responses on the existing patterns of support from adult children to elderly parents. The questionnaire was conducted in face-to-face mode and mostly in respondents' households. Older people's households were identified during the selection of respondents. In case respondents were not present for a long time, another respondent on the list was chosen to fill the vacancy. Respondents who were

living in the same households were interviewed separately since the research did not focus on the household's components but rather on individual self-assessment. In the course of questionnaire administration, the study recruited research assistants to support the principal researcher. There were eight research assistants for the entire exercise. Research assistants were a mixture of Community Development and Social Work Officers accrued from Kibaha TC and Mkuranga DC respectively. Apart from their academic qualifications, which were bachelor's degrees, the selection of these research assistants entailed their familiarity with issues related to elderly people.

The study conducted several in-depth interviews with key informants (purposely selected older people). The selection of participants in the in-depth interview was merely based on their merits and not by chance. The study also conducted 6 FGDs (comprising 8 people each) in both councils of Kibaha TC and Mkuranga DC. As proposed by Creswell (2006), groups involving 8-10 older people are far much better for a discussion. The study opted to use this particular method to capture people's feelings, opinions, sentiments and thoughts with regard to the issue in the study.

### Validity and Reliability

Combination of various methods of data collection such as questionnaire, interviews, Focus Group Discussion and documentary reviews ensured that the collected information was not biased to a single method. Second, the researcher ensured careful sampling of respondents and appropriate use of instruments. Data collection instruments were carefully designed in a way that they provided accurate and consistent results throughout. Moreover, the researchers conducted a pilot study

in the Mkuranga District which significantly allowed to check any possible discrepancies in data that would have hampered consistency in application and results obtained from the research tools. The sample items were also broadened for improving reliability.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

In the course of quantitative analysis, the study applied both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Firstly, older people's characteristics, the status of the flow support and support satisfaction were examined using descriptive statistics which involved percentages and frequencies. Secondly, the inferential analysis in form of chi-square was run to test the association between support received and individuals' characteristics. The data collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and documentary reviews were subjected to qualitative analysis. The researchers read them comprehensively to get a deeper understanding of what they meant concerning the research problem. These data was filtered to get patterns of significant themes. After themes had been identified, data was merged into categories in relation to the research questions that guided the study. The qualitative analysis was then triangulated with quantitative data.

### Ethical Consideration

The researchers sought a clearance letter from the University of Dodoma which was granted after adhering to all procedures. The clearance letter facilitated the researchers' permission at different levels of administration including the region, district ward and village/mtaa. Second, the researchers ensured research ethics when developing instruments and administering data collection to avoid any harm, suffering or violation of privacy.

**Table 1: Responses whether older people received support for the past three months (n = 394)**

Responses	Frequency	Per cent
Received support	299	75.9
Not receiving support	95	24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>100</b>

### Findings and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study based on the research questions that guided the analysis of data.

**Research question 1:** What is the status of intergenerational support in the older people's views?

Table 1 presents the distribution of the responses. The majority of the respondents 299 (75.9%) reported that they had received some form of support from their adult children for the past three months, unlike 95 (24.1%) respondents who reported that they had not received any form of support from their adult children for the same period.

Results from the in-depth interviews and FGDs also show evidence of the flow of support from adult children to their older parents. Cementing on the same scenario, one respondent during an in-depth interview had this to say:

...it is true that some of my adult children have been providing me with some support such as money and food. Although, the received money does not solely fulfil my needs, but I thank God for what I get because it pushes me somewhere..." (An in-depth interview at Tambani, June 2020)

The narration indicates that support was being provided but it was not satisfactory. Although some studies such as HAI (2011) in Tanzania and Aboderin (2006) in Ghana raised concerns about the decline of familial support for older people, this study indicates that probably the stated decline should not entirely be associated with adult children's support. Despite the existence of social and economic changes in most parts of Tanzania, it seems that there are some areas where intergenerational support is taking place. The persistence of intergenerational support towards older people amid changing intergenerational relationship have been also reported in the recent study of Mbwete (2015) in Kawe, Dar es Salaam. Similarly, other studies in Africa and other areas such as Amaike and Soyombo (2007) and Okumagba (2011) in Nigeria, Cong and Silverstein (2012) in China and Anikina, Taran & Timofeeva, (2017) in Russia also indicated the persistence of intergenerational support towards older people amid changing intergenerational relationship. Unfortunately, these studies just indicated the persistence of the flow of support but did not indicate whether there was strong filial piety or strong norms of familism among adult children.

During the in-depth interviews and FGDs, the study noted that the persistence of support in the area was not solely based on the strong norms of familism among adult children. This was rather amplified by one respondent who during an in-depth interview was quoted saying:

Most adult children in this current generation just take it easy to not care for their parents even if parents are old. For instance, as a needy old person, sometimes I may decide to ask for help from one of my children...interestingly, the child that I may

have requested support or help from, can also ask me why I haven't asked another child instead of requesting from me" (An in-depth interview at Tambani, July 2020).

This denotes that not all adult children were supportive of their parents, rather some were supportive and others were reluctant. Even though the questionnaire wanted older people to indicate whether they were receiving support from their adult children, the study during in-depth interviews noted that in most cases, not all children provided support. In that case, it can be said that some adult children were obliged to norms of familism while others were not. This can be also justified by the sense that in most cases older people received support because they were often requesting it. The study was informed that even though support was provided, to a large extent, elderly parents were the ones who pushed to be supported. Generally speaking, the study noted that the traditional moral obligation among adult children seems to diminish in the modern era. Whereas in the traditional era adult children embodied norms of familial obligation, currently it seems that support provided by them is being requested instead of coming out unconditionally.

Although the number of older people who reported not receiving any sort of support from their adult children was relatively low, the study took a stance to investigate some reasons that instigated the scenario. The act of older people reporting that they were not receiving any support from their adult children is not new because studies such as Spitzer, Helmut, Rwegoshora & Mabeyo (2009) in Tanzania and Okumagba (2011) in Nigeria revealed the same trend. However, those studies did not go further to examine the reasons why older people were not receiving any sort of support from their adult children. According to Anikina, Taran & Timofeeva (2017), when children do not help their parents, there should be reasons for that.

The study analysis from in-depth interviews and FGDs revealed two critical reasons why support was not flowing from adult children to older people. First, the study noted that there was a sense of poor reciprocity between children and parents. The study noted that probably adult children were not supporting their parents to show their grievances regarding their parents' negligence to develop their careers. When explaining the same scenario, one

respondent during an in-depth interview in Kongowe had this to narrate:

..I think some of our adult children have the feeling that their poverty has been caused partly due to the negligence of their parents. I have witnessed some incidences whereby some elderly parents have been complaining been confronted by their children in seeking inheritance. In one incidence, for example, one older parent was complaining that his sons have threatened him that they are going to burn his house if he doesn't provide them with their shares of inheritance because he did not take the trouble to make them educated" (An in-depth interview at Mwarusembe, July 2020).

The above narrations indicate that some parents probably did not perform their objectives as required. When adult children feel that their older parents did not do enough to develop their careers, they build an internal resistance toward their parents. Other studies have also shown that provision of support from adult children to parents is associated with the support received earlier in life. A study by Geest (2016) revealed that people in Ghana especially in Kwahu-Tafo believed that only a parent who cared well for his/her children should receive the same care from those children. Children tend to support their parents sometimes because their parents supported them when they were young (Evandrou, Falkingham, Gomez-leon & Vlachantoni, 2018). This may bring us to the idea that when a parent invests in his/her child, this stays as a social capital through which the parent exploits when in need.

Second, the study noted through in-depth interviews and FGDs that poor economic capabilities

among adult children limited their chances of providing financial support to their elderly parents. Even though this conclusion was reached through interviews and FGDs, the same conclusion would have been reached by anyone due to the levels of education of most adult children. The findings show that the majority of adult children reported in this study were those who had attained only primary education. The implication of the findings above is that less education among adult children influenced them to partake in simple jobs which yielded unreliable incomes for them. Cementing on this idea, one respondent in an in-depth interview had this to say:

Although our area has some economic opportunities such as factories and industries, lack of educational qualifications hinders many of our adult children to be employed in these facilities. As a result, they are left to partake in these petty jobs like motorcycle-driving (bodaboda), street vendors (machinga) and fuel attendants." (An in-depth interview at Picha ya Ndege, June 2020)

Concomitant with these findings, other studies have shown that people with higher education tend to provide more support than those with less education. For example, a study by Pei and Cong (2020) in China indicated that the highest educated child provided more financial support than other children. Similarly, another study by Shi (2016) demonstrated that the educational level of grown children has a positive effect on improving elderly parents' quality of life. The study noted that in the coastal areas, particularly in the Coast Region, many people seem not to take issues of education seriously.

**Table 2: Respondent's responses on the most received support (n=299)**

Responses	Frequency	Per cent
Food	114	38
Financial assistance	120	40
Health services	30	10
Shelter	16	5.7
Clothes	19	6.3
Total	299	100

It is widely argued that people in the region especially those affiliated with tribes such as Zaramo, Ngindo, Matumbi, Kwere and Dengereko

put more emphasis on socio-cultural practices such as initiation ceremonies (Unyago) and frequent traditional dances (ngoma). Initiation ceremonies

involve keeping an adolescent girl in a confined area while being taught different issues related to her maturity in womanhood. It is believed that aftermath of the initiation ceremonies, most girls face consequences of trying to practice what they were taught, hence jeopardizing their education career.

Similarly, in order to establish the status of intergenerational support, the study strived to establish the most received support among older people. Table 2 indicates that out of 299 respondents who reported regularly receiving support, 120 (40%) indicated financial assistance, 114 (38%) mentioned food, 30 (10%) indicated assistance related to health services, 19 (6.3%) mentioned clothes and 19 (5.7%) indicated assistance related to shelter.

The general impression from these results is that older people in the area were largely given financial assistance. In that case, it can be said that the majority of them were deprived of income. This is because people receive what they need most and do have not the means to acquire it by themselves. According to Dykstra (2015), despite other factors, individuals' needs and demands are strong elements for him/her to be supported. Elsewhere, a study conducted by Okumagba (2011) in Nigeria revealed that the majority of older people reported largely receiving more monetary support than non-financial support. When asked about the general well-being of the older people in the area, one respondent during an in-depth interview had the following comment:

Most of us are deprived of financial resources; as a result, I sometimes starve because I lack money to buy food...In order to acquire some money to purchase the food, I sometimes go around begging in religious houses or government's offices..."  
(An in-depth interview at Kongowe, July 2020).

The above narration justifies the situation of the majority of older people in the area. The fact that older people were ready for begging in religious houses and governments office denoted that the financial support provided to them by their adult children was not even enough for them. The study was informed that poor incomes for many older people triggered other problems such as lack of food, medicines, poor shelter and clothes. Studies in other developing countries have also shown that a

lack of reliable incomes among older people is associated with many challenges to their well-being. Another study in South Africa noted that older people were experiencing high levels of poverty that sometimes inhibited the availability of foods, medicines and clothes (Kasiram & Hölscher, 2015). The study noted that elderly women were more suffering than male older people. Further, Ayana (2012) revealed that older people in Ethiopia were lacking the income to buy food and other necessities. Nevertheless, the study conducted by D'Mello and Monteiro (2016) in India discovered that older people were missing nutritious foods because of lacking money to purchase them.

Generally speaking, the study has found that most older people in the area were succumbing to old age poverty resulting in lacking basic needs such as food, decent clothes and shelter. In that case, financial assistance received by older parents from their adult children was vital for their livelihood. This is because the majority of older people in Tanzania lack income security culminating from the nature of the formal social protection mechanisms which favour individuals who work in the formal economy. Older people in Tanzanian whose majority live in rural areas are working in an informal economy that is not entitled to the contributory pension schemes. Apart from older people who live in rural areas, it has been noted that even those who live in urban areas are also facing the same scenario. For example, a study by Spitzer, Helmut, Rwegoshora & Mabeyo, (2009) in Lindi and Dar es salaam observed that older people in those areas were living in poor conditions coupled with poor financial assistance. This calls upon the government and non-governmental agencies to look at the situation of older people.

**Research question 2:** How are older people's characteristics associated with the likelihood of receiving or not receiving support from adult children?

With regard to the trend of intergenerational support, the study sought to ascertain if there was any association between older people's characteristics and the likelihood of receiving support from their adult children. The study ran a Chi ( $\chi^2$ ) test. The Chi test was done because variables for individuals' characteristics and support reception were categorical. Individuals' characteristics were sex, age, marital status, education levels, living arrangement and family size.

The results of the chi-square as presented in Table 3 show that sex, education levels and living arrangements of the respondents were significantly associated with the reception of the support.

For the case of sex, it was found that there was a significant relationship between the sexes of the respondents and the reception of support from their adult children. The Pearson chi-square significance value was 0.002, which is less than the alpha value of 0.01 implying that the sex difference was

significant at the 1% level. Based on the results, it means that older women were more likely to receive support from their adult children compared to older men. These results imply that because of their economic vulnerability, women stood a chance to demand and receive more support than men. Women's economic vulnerability was largely seen in terms of their illiteracy and lack of monthly pensions.

**Table 3: The association between individuals' characteristics and reception of support**

Variable		Reception of Support				X <sup>2</sup> - value	P-value
		Yes		No			
		Fre	%	Fre	%		
<b>Sex</b>	Male	140	46.8	62	65.3	9.813	0.002
	Female	159	53.2	33	34.7		
<b>Age</b>	60 -65	78	26.1	34	35.8	3.361	0.499
	66 – 71	97	32.4	27	28.4		
	72 -77	58	19.4	16	16.8		
	78 – 83	39	13.0	11	11.6		
	84 and above	27	9.0	7	7.4		
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	169	56.5	61	64.2	3.759	0.289
	Divorced	32	10.7	11	11.6		
	Widowed/widower	95	31.8	21	22.1		
	Never married	3	1.0	2	2.1		
<b>Education</b>	No formal schooling	162	54.2	27	28.4	29.410	0.000
	Some primary	50	16.7	25	26.3		
	Primary completed	67	22.4	28	29.5		
	Post-primary technical training	3	1.0	0	0.0		
	Some secondary	4	1.3	4	4.2		
	Secondary completed	6	2.0	9	9.5		
	College/university	7	2.3	2	2.1		
<b>Living arrangements</b>	Living alone in your home	40	13.4	17	17.9	9.070	0.028
	Living alone with your spouse at your home	73	24.4	34	35.8		
	Living in your adult child or grandchild's home	32	10.7	4	4.2		
	Living with your spouse and either your adult child or both at your home	154	51.5	40	42.1		

For example, the study in table 4 revealed that there were more (32.2%) illiterate older women than (15.7%) of men, while only 5.3% of women reported receiving a monthly pension as compared to 10.9% of men. These results corroborate with that of Golaz and Rutaremwa (2011) and Spitzer and Mabeyo (2014) in Tanzania who showed that women are the ones who suffer most in terms of illiteracy and poverty. Similarly, other studies in developing countries also revealed the economical vulnerability among women. A study by Darkwa and Mazibuko (2002) in South Africa revealed that most African women operate within the informal sectors which have no retirement insurance in old age.

For the sake of education, the results show that the education level of an individual was significantly associated with the reception of the support from the adult children since the Pearson chi-square significance value was 0.000 which is less than 0.01, hence making it significant at 1% level. This means that older people who had no formal education were more likely to receive support than people who were in other levels of education. The study learnt that people who had no formal education were likely to receive support because the majority of them were inhibited with incomes. The high rate of illiteracy among older people compounds their vulnerability since it restricts them from exploiting



opportunities around them thus jeopardizing their social protection. This is evident in Tanzania whereby there is a correlation between the level of education and the economic status of the person (Spitzer & Mabeyo, 2014). Based on these results, it can be said that the majority of older people in the area were economically vulnerable, hence depending largely on support from family networks.

For the sake of living arrangements, results inform that older people who were living with their children and their grandchildren were most likely to receive support compared to other types of living arrangements. This was true because the Pearson chi-square significance value was 0.024 making it significant at the 5% level. The fact that older people who were living with their spouses, children and

grandchildren were more likely to receive support than others indicates that co-residence is a good indicator with regards to the exchange of support between parents and children. During FGDs, it was reported that because of staying with grandchildren, elderly people in Mkuranga DC and Kibaha TC were sometimes receiving financial support from the parents of those grandchildren. Another study conducted by Lin and Yi (2013) in China showed that people who reside closely are more likely to provide or receive support than those who live distantly. Co-residence is most important, especially for those older people who are needy, frail and sick or widowed because it eases ways of supporting an individual.

**Table 4: The difference between men and women in terms of educational levels and pension status (n=394)**

Categories	Education					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%
No formal education	62	15.7%	127	32.2%	189	48.0%
Some primary	49	12.4%	26	6.6%	75	19.0%
Primary completed	68	17.3%	27	6.9%	95	24.1%
Post-primary technical training	1	0.3%	2	0.5%	3	0.8%
Some secondary	5	1.3%	3	0.8%	8	2.0%
Secondary completed	12	3.0%	3	0.8%	15	3.8%
College/University	5	1.3%	4	1.0%	9	2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>51.3%</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
			Pension status			
Pensionable	43	10.9%	21	5.3%	64	16.2%
Non-Pensionable	159	40.4%	171	43.4%	330	83.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>51.3%</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5: Satisfaction of support (n=299)**

Responses	Frequency	%
Very much satisfied	15	5.1
Satisfied	38	12.7
Not satisfied nor dissatisfied	60	20.1
Dissatisfied	104	34.8
Very much dissatisfied	82	27.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

**Research question 3:** To what extent do older people feel satisfied with the support provided to them by adult children?

The study aimed at determining the perceptions of older people about the support provided by their adult children. The aim was to examine the extent to which older people were satisfied with various types of support provided to them. Table 5 provides responses with regards to the support's satisfaction.

Out of 299 respondents who reported receiving support, 104 (34.8%) reported being dissatisfied with the support while 82 (27.4%) respondents were very much dissatisfied. On the other hand, 60 (20.1%) respondents were not satisfied or dissatisfied while 38 (12.7%) respondents were satisfied with the support. Lastly, the table depicts that only 15 (5.1%) respondents were very much satisfied with the received support.

Similarly, findings from in-depth interviews and FGDs revealed that most older people had been critical about the satisfaction of the support. The dissatisfaction with support among older people signifies its inadequacy and irregularity. The study revealed that the majority of respondents thought that the support provided to them was not enough to sustain their needs and demands. Further, the study learnt that the majority of older people were experiencing a lot of difficulties while having a small pool of support sources to draw upon. For example, most of them were preoccupied with issues of parenting while facing frequent illnesses. This was justified in an in-depth interview when one respondent was quoted saying:

...I am staying with several grandchildren at my home who consume a lot of my financial resources. Even though, their parents sometimes send me money to cover some of the costs. However, the amount provided does not suffice all the needs. I would have supplemented that support with farming activities, but due to the frequent illness I find myself unable to attend those activities..." (An in-depth interview at Boko Timiza, July 2020).

Despite the inadequacy of support, the study noted that older people were not satisfied with the support because it was not regular. Respondents opined that their adult children were not punctual to notice whether their parents were in need or not. This was mostly reported to affect older parents who were living alone. It took older people themselves to notify their adult children that they needed support. Cementing on this, one respondent had this to say:

..... I have to recall my adult children that I need support because if I do not tell them I receive nothing. I wish if they would be in a position to know that as an old person I regularly need their support because my strength has waned away..." (An in-depth interview at Mwandege, July 2020).

From the above, the study noted that there was a gap between the needed support and the received one. It can be said that what older people anticipated from their adult children was not what they received. Nonetheless, the study noted further that even the support received was not timely. In that sense, two things were noted. First, the burden incurred by older people was too huge to be borne

by themselves, hence needing someone to augment their efforts. Unfortunately, that was not possible because the support received was not compatible with the demands. Second, the capacity of adult children to provide adequate support in time was constrained by the poor economies they were incurring. Currently, the unemployment rate among adult children seems to be high as a result most of them are forced to work in unreliable and unpredictable jobs which in turn do not yield them substantial incomes. These two reasons compounded the desire of older people to look for other alternatives for support.

Similarly, the issue of older people being dissatisfied with adequacy (insufficient) and irregularity of support was reported in other research as well. Studies such as Spitzer, Rwegoshora and Mabeyo (2009) in Tanzania and Okumagba (2011) and Amaike and Soyombo (2007) in Nigeria are good examples. In a study by Spitzer et al. (2009), it was indicated that the majority of respondents reported that familial support from adult children was given upon request or on an irregular basis meaning that support was received occasionally or rarely. Nevertheless, a study by Amaike and Soyombo (2007) in Nigeria revealed that the majority of older people believed that their adult children's support was grossly inadequate to meet their basic needs in later life.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Conclusions**

It is concluded that despite social and economic changes which affect the relationship between parents and adult children, financial support was largely provided to the majority of older people. Indeed the study revealed that despite the reception of support from their adult children, however, it was not solely based on filial obligation among adult children. Thus, in the absence of a reliable formal social protection mechanism, older people took the stance to demand it from their adult children. In addition, though the majority of older people were receiving support, older women, illiterate and those living with their adult children were more likely to demand and receive support than others. Nonetheless, the support received by older people was largely inadequate and untimely. Poor economies among adult children were the major reason for this inadequacy and irregularity of support.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that the government and the community need to raise awareness among the young people on the importance of helping older parents as part of the strategies to enhance informal protection mechanisms. Since the most demanded support by older parents is financial assistance, then the government needs to re-think and put in place a non-contributory universal pension for all older people to augment informal social protection mechanisms. The government needs to put a high priority on older women since they are the ones who are most in need. To ensure that the support provided is adequate and reliable, the government needs to create more employment opportunities for adult children.

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