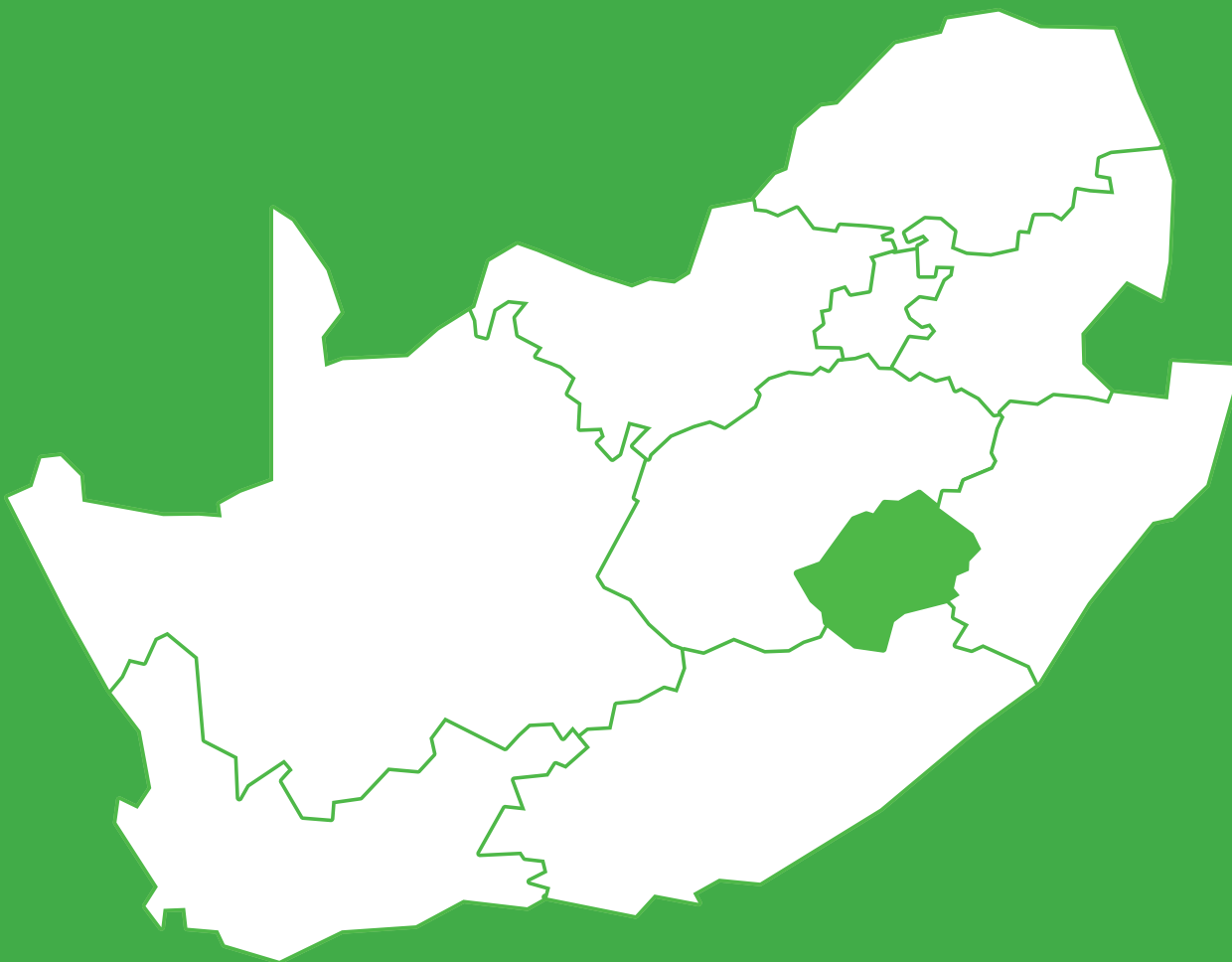




CENSUS 2022

CULTURAL DYNAMICS IN SOUTH AFRICA



IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



stats sa

Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Cultural Dynamics in South Africa

Report No. 03-01-84

Statistics South Africa

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Cultural Dynamics in South Africa/Statistics South Africa

Published by Statistics South Africa, Private Bag X44, Pretoria 0001

© Statistics South Africa, 2025

Users may apply or process this data, provided Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is acknowledged as the original source of the data; that it is specified that the application and/or analysis is the result of the user's independent processing of the data; and that neither the basic data nor any reprocessed version or application thereof may be sold or offered for sale in any form whatsoever without prior permission from Stats SA.

Stats SA Library Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) Data

Cultural Dynamics in South Africa/Statistics South Africa. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2025

Report no. 03-01-84

80 pp

ISBN: **978-1-77997-658-1**

A complete set of Stats SA publications is available at Stats SA Library and the following libraries:

National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Division
National Library of South Africa, Cape Town Division
Library of Parliament, Cape Town
Bloemfontein Public Library
Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg
Johannesburg Public Library
Eastern Cape Library Services, King William's Town
Central Regional Library, Polokwane
Central Reference Library, Mbombela
Central Reference Collection, Kimberley
Central Reference Library, Mmabatho

This report is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

For technical enquiries, please contact:

Angela Ngyende

Tel: 012 310 9389

Email: AngelaN@statssa.gov.za

Johan Sibiya

Tel.: 012 310 3394

Email: JohanSi@statssa.gov.za

FOREWORD

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) has released a number of census thematic reports that form part of phase 2 census dissemination products. This report on cultural dynamics is one of them, aimed at providing valuable insights on culture aspects measured in post democracy South African censuses including language, population group, religion and marriage. Indicators profiled provide insights on interaction of a number of cultural aspects in South African society in the last three decades and how such diversity promotes social cohesion. Findings on trends and patterns in spoken language over the period 1996-2022 indicate that IsiZulu remained the most spoken language (24,4%) followed by IsiXhosa (16,3%) and Afrikaans (10,6%). Provincial variations showed that IsiZulu was predominantly spoken in KwaZulu-Natal (80%), IsiXhosa (81,8%) in Eastern Cape, Sesotho (72,2%) in Free State, Setswana (72,8%) in North West, Sepedi (55,6%) in Limpopo, and Afrikaans (54,6%) in Northern Cape. Language profiles in each of the six outlined provinces depict dominant cultures from a language perspective. On the other hand, the three remaining provinces (Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Western Cape) depict existence of diverse cultures in spoken language, a key aspect of interaction at household and community level. It was also noted that provinces sharing international borders recorded higher proportions of households speaking languages similar to those spoken in those neighbouring countries. Free State and Lesotho—Sesotho; North West and Botswana—Setswana; Mpumalanga and Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland—Siswati). Such a profile of spoken languages depicts shared cultural practices beyond international borders within Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

Results on the language and population group cultural dimensions depicted variations across the different groups; about a third of black Africans spoke IsiZulu at home and one in five were IsiXhosa speakers in all four censuses. A majority of coloureds (more than 70%) were Afrikaans speakers, although a 10 percentage point decrease was observed between 1996 and 2022. Indians/Asians predominantly speak English, whilst the white population group mostly spoke Afrikaans (58,0%) and English (41,1%) in 2022. Findings also showed that the influence of language is evident on education outcomes. The results showed that English speakers consistently recorded the highest progression ratios from Grade 9 to completing Grade 12, and progression from Grade 12 to completing bachelor's degrees. However, overtime, the gaps between different ethnic groups have and continue to narrow.

Religion, another major component of culture that influences way of living and interaction at household and community level indicate that South Africa's population is predominantly affiliated to Christianity. Persons not affiliated to any religion decreased significantly by 8,8 percentage points (from 11,7% in 1996 to 2,9% in 2022). Provincial variations showed that the highest proportions of persons affiliated to Hinduism were in Kwazulu-Natal in all the census data years (1996: 5,5%; 2001: 4,7% & 2022: 4,2%) whilst Western Cape recorded the highest proportions of persons affiliated to Islam. Results further showed that Traditional African Religion was more prevalent in three provinces; Kwazulu-Natal (13,5%), Eastern Cape (11%) and Limpopo (6,3%). Population group dynamics in religion affiliations showed that four out of every five black Africans, coloureds and whites were affiliated to Christianity and figures show an upward trend in the last three decades. Indians/Asians were more affiliated to Hinduism (37,1% in 2022), also, this population group constituted the highest proportion of persons affiliated to Islam (24,0%) in 2022. There has been significant increase in black

Africans affiliated to Traditional African religion (9,5% in 2022 compared to less than one percent in 1996 and 2001). Sex variations also showed that women were generally less likely to be not affiliated to a religion compared to their male counterpart's whilst population group variations showed that whites were more likely to be not affiliated to any religion compared to black Africans.

The chapter on influence of culture on nuptial trends and patterns revealed that dynamics of marriage in South Africa are shaped by a complex blend of diverse factors among others; population group/race, religion, language as proxy to ethnicity and to some extent place of birth. The sharp decline in marriage rates suggests a broader societal shift away from marriage. However, looking at population group dynamics, higher marriage rates were observed among white and Indian/Asian population groups as compared to black Africans and coloureds. The results on Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) suggest that marriage patterns are partly influenced by one's cultural background, hence the differences observed between South African born population and foreign born population. Findings showed that South African-born individuals have a higher SMAM than their foreign-born counterparts, with South African males marrying at an average age of 34,5 years in 2022, compared to 28,1 years for foreign-born males. South African females married at an average age of 31,4 years, while foreign-born females married earlier at 20,5 years. Further analysis showed that foreign-born individuals were more likely to get married than South African-born individuals and foreign-born individuals were also less likely to be divorce or separate compared to those born in South Africa.

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
Abbreviations and acronyms	ix
Glossary of concepts	x
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Report objectives.....	2
1.3 Measures used in analysis	2
1.3.1 Educational progression	2
1.3.2 Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM)	3
CHAPTER 2: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA	4
2.1 Introduction.....	4
2.2 Trends, patterns and differentials in spoken languages.....	5
2.2.1 Trends and patterns: 1996–2022.....	5
2.2.2 Provincial differentials.....	6
2.2.3 Population group differentials	8
2.2.4 Metropolitan municipality differentials.....	9
2.3 Non-official languages spoken in South African households: Census 2022	10
2.4 Multi-lingual households in South African: trend and patterns, Censuses 1996 and 2022	14
2.4.1 Multi-lingual households: provincial trends and patterns, Census 1996 and 2022	15
2.5 Language and educational progression.....	15
2.6 Summary of findings and discussion	17
CHAPTER 3: MULTI-RACIAL HOUSEHOLDS	19
3.1 Introduction.....	19
3.2 Trends and patterns of multi-racial households in South Africa.....	20
3.3 Multi-racial households by settlement type	22
3.4 Multi-racial households by sex of head of household, Census 2001–2022'.....	23
3.5 Multi-racial households by household size, Census 2001–2022	24
3.6 Household composition of multi-racial households.....	25
CHAPTER 4: PATTERNS AND TRENDS IN RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION	26
4.1 Introduction.....	26
4.2 Global shifts in religious beliefs	26
4.3 Trends in religious affiliation/belief.....	26
4.3.1 Regional trends and patterns in religious affiliation.....	27
4.3.2 Religious affiliation and selected socio-demographic characteristics	31
4.4 Religious affiliation/belief in households	32

CHAPTER 5: CULTURE AND NUPTIALITY	34
5.1 Introduction.....	34
5.2 Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) measures	34
5.3 Overview of nuptiality trends from 1996–2022.....	34
5.4 Population group and its influence on nuptiality patterns.....	35
5.4.1 Trend analysis of persons who reported that they were never married	35
5.4.2 Trend analysis of the married population.....	36
5.4.3 Trend analysis of persons living together as married partners	38
5.4.4 Trend analysis of separated/divorced persons	39
5.4.5 SMAM by sex and population group	40
5.5 The role of education in nuptial patterns.....	40
5.6 Language and its impact on marital decisions	41
5.6.1 Marital status & language spoken in the household	43
5.6.2 Official and non-official languages.....	45
5.6.3 SMAM by language spoken.....	46
5.7 Religion and its influence on nuptiality.....	46
5.7.1 Marital status & religious affiliation.....	47
5.7.2 SMAM by religious belief	48
5.8 Nuptiality patterns for foreign-born and South African-born populations	48
5.8.1 Marital status of foreign-born and SA-born population.....	49
5.8.2 SMAM by foreign-born and SA-born populations.....	50
CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS	52
APPENDICES	63

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and province, Census 2022	6
Table 2.2 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and population group, Census 2022	8
Table 2.3 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and Metropolitan Area, Census 2022.....	9
Table 2.4 - Population by non-official languages spoken in the household and province, Census 2022.....	12
Table 3.1 - Households by population group of head of household: Censuses 2001—2022	20
Table 3.2 - Households by province and type, Censuses 2001, 2011 and 2022.....	21
Table 4.1 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination and province, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022	28
Table 4.2 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination and population group, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022.....	29
Table 4.3 - Distribution of the population by religious affiliation status and socio-demographic characteristics, Census 2022	31
Table 5.1 - SMAM by sex and population group, Census 1996–2022.....	40
Table 5.2 - SMAM by sex and educational level, Census 1996–2022.....	41
Table 5.3 - SMAM by language, Census 1996–2022	46
Table 5.4 - SMAM by religious affiliation, Census 1996, 2001 & 2011	48
Table 5.5 - SMAM by country of birth, Census 1996–2022	50

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household, Census 1996–2022	5
Figure 2.2 - Population by non-official languages spoken in the household, Census 2022	10
Figure 2.3 - Percentage of multi-lingual households by province, Census 1996 and 2022	15
Figure 2.4 - Proportions of persons who go on to complete Grade 12/matric after completing Grade 9 by spoken language	16
Figure 3.1 - Percentage distribution of single-race and multi-racial households in South Africa, Census 2001–2022	20
Figure 3.2 - Multi-racial households by settlement type, Census 2001–2022	22
Figure 3.3 - Multi-racial households by sex of head of the household and census year	23
Figure 3.4 - Multi-racial households by household size, Census 2001–2022	24
Figure 3.5 - Multi-racial households by household composition, Census 2001–2022	25
Figure 4.1 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022	27
Figure 4.2 - Distribution of households by religious affiliation and sex of head of household, Census 2022	32
Figure 4.3 - Distribution of households by religious affiliation and population group of head of household, Census 2022	33
Figure 5.1 - Distribution of population 12 years and above by marital status, Census 1996–2022	35
Figure 5.2 - Proportion of never-married persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022	36
Figure 5.3 - Proportion of married persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022	37
Figure 5.4 - Proportion of persons 12 years and older living together as married partners by population group, Census 1996–2022	38
Figure 5.5 - Proportion of divorced/separated persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022	39
Figure 5.6 - Dominant language spoken by population group, Census 2022	42
Figure 5.7 - Percentage of the legally married population 12 years and above by language spoken in the household, Census 2001, 2011 & 2022	43
Figure 5.8 - Percentage of the divorced population 12 years and above by language spoken in the household, Census 2022	44
Figure 5.9 - Percentage distribution of the population 12 years and above by language spoken (official & non-official) and marital status, Census 2022	45
Figure 5.10 - Percentage distribution of population 12 years and above selected religious beliefs and marital status, Census 2022	47
Figure 5.11 - Percentage of legally married population 12 years and above by region of birth, Census 2022	49
Figure 5.12 - Percentage of legally married population 12 years and older and the top 10 sending countries to SA, Census 2022	50

Abbreviations and acronyms

AOR	Adjusted Odds Ratio
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMAM	Singulate Mean Age at Marriage
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America

Glossary of concepts

Concept	Definition
Cohabitation	A living arrangement in which an unmarried couple lives together in a long-term relationship that resembles a marriage
Divorced	Current marital status where a person's marriage has been legally dissolved and he/she has not remarried
Language	For the purpose of this report, language refers to the language most often spoken in the household; it is derived from the census question " <i>Which language does (name) speak most often in this household?</i> "
Living together as a couple	Couples living together as though they are married whilst they are not
Lobola (bride price)	Lobola is a means of legitimising a union between a couple and their families. The process includes the negotiation of the amount of money or goods paid by the groom, or his family, to the parents of a woman he is about to marry
Marital status	Current personal status of an individual in relation to the marriage laws or customs of a country
Multi-lingual households	Multi-lingual households are defined as households with two or more members who each speak different a language in the household
Multiculturalism	"a reflection of a value system which emphasizes acceptance of behavioural differences deriving from differing cultural systems and an active support of the right of such differences to exist"
Multiple religion households	Households where all or some household members belong to different religions
Multi-racial household	For the purposes of this report, multi-racial households are defined as households with two or more members who are of different population groups (black African, white, coloured, Indian/Asian, and other) living together as one household
No religion households	Households where none of household members belong to a religious denomination
Nuptiality	The frequency, characteristics and dissolution of marriages in a population.
Secular	The separation of religious institutions from the institutions of state and no domination of the political sphere by religious institutions
Separated	Disunion of married persons, without conferring on the parties the right to remarry
Single religion households	Households where all household members belong to only one religion
Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM)	The average length of single life expressed in years among those who marry before age 50
Ubuntu	The capacity in African culture to express mutual caring, compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality. Derived from the isiZulu maxim: <i>Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu</i> , which can be translated as "a person is a person because of others"

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

South Africa, has, since the dawn of democracy, been affectionately referred to as the rainbow nation; a reference that underscores the diversity of the persons living within the borders of the country. South Africans are united by calling this country home, thus contributing to forming a heritage, identity and culture that is uniquely South African. The concept of culture is broad and has taken many forms and has evolved over time. Many have defined and conceptualised culture in recent times; De Rossi's (2022) defined culture as " [it] encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones and a million other things."

Data constraints limit our analysis in covering all or some of the components of culture as outlined in the above definition. Thus, for the purpose of this report components such as food, music, the clothes we wear, morals, mannerisms and etiquettes and other such elements of culture that cannot be measured quantitatively using census or sample survey data and will not form part of the analysis in this report.

Cultural components that can be quantitatively measured using census and survey data in the South African context include language, religion, population group (race), household composition and nuptial patterns. Therefore, chapter two of this report will profile the language distribution in the country, including the distribution and trend analysis of both official and non-official languages between 1996 and 2022. Furthermore, a trend analysis of multi-lingual household will be presented. Chapter three focuses on the distribution of population by population groups and the racial composition of households and how this has evolved over time since 1996.

The South African Constitution, hailed by many as one of the best in the world explicitly declares the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion to every person who lives in the country (Constitution of South Africa, 1996). Consequently, religion has been and remains a substantial component of South African culture. Generally, a very large part of the population incorporates religion when celebrating their cultures, be it at weddings, funerals, birthdays, initiation ceremonies and so forth (Hodgson, 2017). Thus, chapter four of this report will focus on the religious beliefs profile in the country and how it has transformed over the past three decades.

Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994, persons of different cultural, racial and linguistic background have been able to socialise and get married, something that was not allowed during apartheid (Craig-Henderson, 2006). Furthermore, marriage in the South African context is viewed by some as a contract between two individuals while other see it as a communal practice, either way, marriage remains a big component of our cultural practices in the country (Brown and Thakur, 1997). Thus, chapter five of this report seeks to profile nuptial patterns in the country starting from 1996 to 2022. Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM), an indicator that highlights the age at which persons get married, will be profiled to underscore the changing nuptial practices across different racial groups, provinces, ethnic groups and other socio-economic indicators.

1.2 Report objectives

This report forms part of a series of Census 2022 thematic reports aimed at providing insightful indicators on cultural diversity in South African society. The profiled information is instrumental in advancing awareness and promotion of social cohesion within South Africa. The specific objective of this report is to profile differentials, patterns and trends in South African cultural diversity using Census 1996-2022 data.

1.3 Measures used in analysis

1.3.1 Educational progression

Time plot analysis of educational progression can serve as a valuable tool for understanding trends in educational attainment and guiding efforts to improve educational outcomes and promote social mobility in South Africa.

Following the method proposed by Feeney¹ (1995, 2009), the time at which a particular educational level was completed was calculated using the following procedure:

$$Time = Census_t(2022,275) - (age_x + 0,5) + age_e$$

In the formula, census represents the calendar time at which Census 2022 data collection began; age_x represents the age of persons completing a particular education level; and age_e represents the age at which persons completed a particular educational level e.g. Grade 9. Even though there has been an improvement in the relationship between expected age and completion of key educational milestones, the historical average age at completion of key grades were also taken into consideration when determining the age to be used in the analysis. Hence age 26 years was used for completion of at least Grade 12 and age 35 for completion of at least a bachelor's degree.

The actual attainment ratios are calculated by using the number of individuals who attained a particular grade or qualification divided by the number who attained the previous qualification. For example, completing Grade 12 after completing Grade 9 is calculated as follows:

$$Ratio_{Grd12 - Grd9} = \frac{No. of learners of a particular age who complete at least Grade 12}{Number of learners who completed at least Grade 9}$$

¹ Given a population, a class of events that may occur to members of a population, and a cohort of persons born to this population at some time T. Q denotes the average number of events per person in the cohort, such as attainment of some educational level and the average age at which these events occur to members of the cohort. The latter are defined by a point in time such as Census 2001; such a point is used as the reference time. The horizontal axis represents the time at which members of the cohort reach age M. The best way to apply this method is by the use of large sample or census data in order to generate time plots from data collected at a point in time, with birth cohorts specified by age group (Feeney, 2009).

1.3.2 Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM)

Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) measures the average length of single life expressed in years among those who marry before the age of 50, calculated using the following formula:

$$SMAM = \frac{[(\sum_{i=15}^{49} S_i \times 5) + 1500] - [(\frac{\sum_{i=45}^{49} S_i + \sum_{j=50}^{54} S_j}{2}) \times 50]}{100 - (\frac{\sum_{i=45}^{49} S_i + \sum_{j=50}^{54} S_j}{2})}$$

Where S_i and S_j are proportions of females who are single at ages (i) and (j) respectively

CHAPTER 2: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

Language is not just a critical part of culture but its existence is embedded in the very fabric of culture, it is socially inherent in the practices and beliefs that form our everyday lives (Sapir, 1970). Furthermore, Salzmann (1998) asserted that the fact that language is the cornerstone to the cultural history of any human society means that the relationship between language and culture can never be overstated. This assertion is further cemented by Wardhaugh's (2002) sentiments, that "the structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world and is extremely influential in predisposing speakers of a language toward adopting their world-view". Thus, it is imperative to understand the South African language landscape in the context of culture.

South Africa's language profile is as diverse as its persons; it is one of the few countries in the world where a significant number of languages are constitutionally recognised as official languages. As of July 2023, sign language was officially promulgated as one of the official languages, taking the tally of official languages in the country to 12 (Parliament of RSA, 2023). Language remains one of the primary means of communication in human society, it helps in making sense and conceptualising the world we live in and forms relation with others (Potongwane, 2022). Furthermore, language is more than just a communication tool in a society, it is an expression of culture and identity; that is, one can deduce a person's heritage, geographic region, socio-economic status and other social and cultural attributes from their language and how they speak (Sokal and Bricmont, 1998).

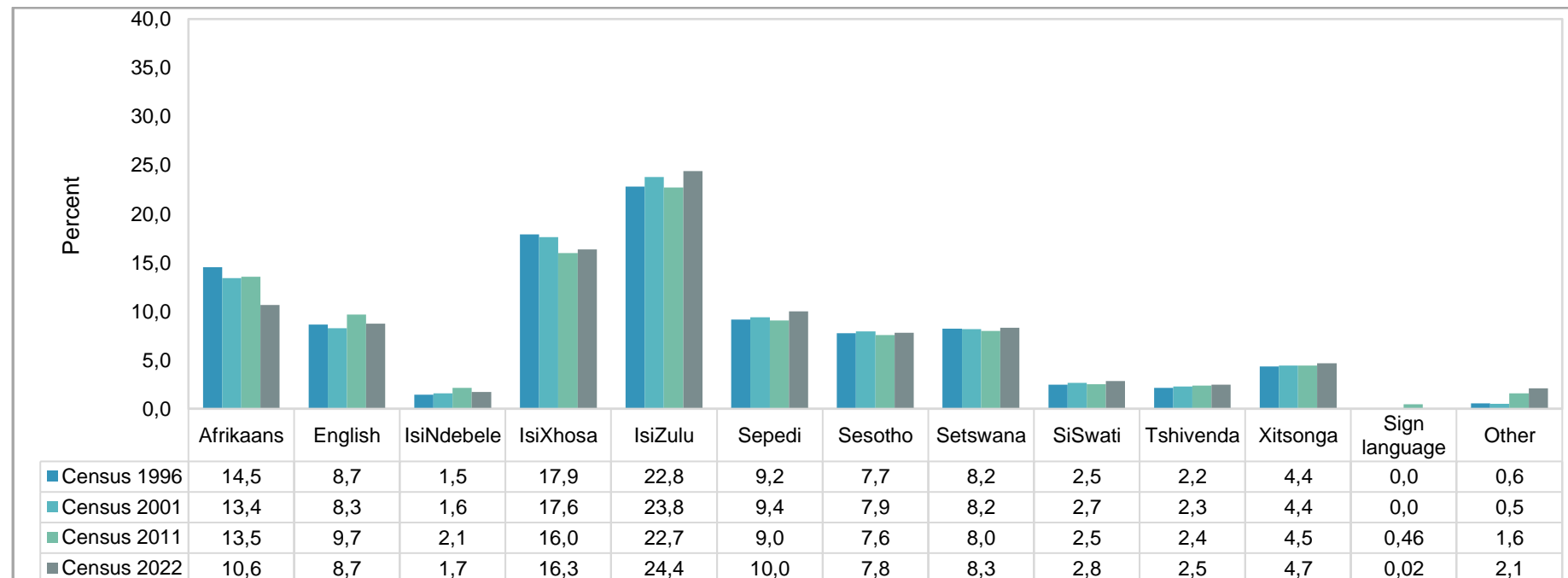
Language in this report refers to the language most often spoken in the household. Persons may, and generally speak different or other languages at their places of work and other settings, but it is necessary to note that the analysis is based on the language spoken at the household. Thus, the following chapter explores linguistic diversity as a proxy to cultural diversity in the country; firstly, we trace how the linguistic landscape has transformed in the last three decades in the country, provinces and the metropolitan municipalities. Secondly, we examine extent of non-official languages in the country, which underscores the migratory trends in recent years. Lastly, we focus on language diversity within households; looking at the distribution and trend analysis of multi-lingual households in the last three decades.

2.2 Trends, patterns and differentials in spoken languages

2.2.1 Trends and patterns: 1996–2022

Figure 2.1 below, shows the percentage distribution of languages most often spoken in the household in the country for all censuses conducted since 1996. The data indicates that isiZulu remains the most spoken language in the country, a picture that hasn't changed much in the past three decades. Results show that almost a quarter of the population (24,4%) in the country in 2022 spoke isiZulu, an increase from 22,8% in 1996. Zulus are one of the largest tribes in the country, famous for their traditional attires and dance. IsiZulu is one of the four Nguni languages spoken in the country, the others are isiXhosa, SiSwati, and isiNdebele; certain phrases, words and pronunciations are common between these languages. Speakers of these can easily communicate with each other while speaking different languages.

Figure 2.1 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household, Census 1996–2022



Note: Sign language was not collected in Census 1996 and 2001

Figure 2.1 further indicates that IsiXhosa is and has, since 1996, been the second most spoken language in the country's households. In 2022, 16,3% of the population in the country spoke the language, nevertheless, this was a 1,6 percentage points decrease compared to the 17,9% in 1996. IsiXhosa, as highlighted above, is one of the four Nguni languages. IsiXhosa speakers can mostly be found in Eastern Cape, as shall be seen in the next sub-section.

Afrikaans, at 10,6% in 2022, was the third most spoken language in South Africa. However, a gradual decrease in the proportion of Afrikaans speakers has been observed since 1996 (from 14,5% to 10,6%) in 2022. Nevertheless, the largest decrease was recorded between the last two censuses, from 13,5% in 2011 to 10,6% in 2022. It is worth noting, however, that the actual number of Afrikaans speakers has increased between 1996 and 2022 by more than 700 000 persons. Looking at "other" languages, the percentage share increased from 0,6% in 1996 to 2,1% in 2022, showing a 1,5 percentage points increase.

2.2.2 Provincial differentials

One of the key policies of the apartheid regime was the creation of Bantustans, also known as homelands. These were areas reserved for the black majority, created along state designated ethnic groups (Phillips, 2017). The concentration of specific ethnic groups and languages in specific geographical areas based on their Bantustans legacy in the past is evident to this day. Figure 2.2 presents variations in languages spoken in each of the nine provinces, which in turn defines cultural diversity in each of these provinces. Results generally reflect dominance of particular ethnic groups in a particular province. Four in five persons spoke IsiZulu and IsiXhosa in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, respectively, in 2022. As highlighted above, Ciskei and Transkei are former homelands that were located at what is now known as Eastern Cape, while KwaZulu is now known as KwaZulu-Natal. Consequently, the state designated ethnic groupings used at the time to form the homelands are visible in the dominance of each language in these areas.

Table 2.1 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and province, Census 2022

Language	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	SA
Afrikaans	41,1	9,5	54,6	10,3	1,1	5,1	7,8	3,3	2,3	10,6
English	22,1	4,9	2,1	1,6	14,3	1,1	9,1	1,5	1,0	8,7
IsiNdebele	0,2	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,5	3,0	9,8	1,2	1,7
IsiXhosa	31,4	81,8	4,6	5,6	3,1	4,7	6,7	1,0	0,2	16,3
IsiZulu	0,4	0,3	0,3	3,8	80,0	1,6	23,2	27,9	0,6	24,4
Sepedi	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,2	0,1	2,1	12,7	10,2	55,6	10,0
Sesotho	1,0	2,4	1,1	72,2	0,6	5,8	13,1	2,2	0,8	7,8
Setswana	0,1	0,0	35,7	5,3	0,0	72,8	10,3	1,6	1,3	8,3
Sign language	0,01	0,01	0,01	0,02	0,01	0,03	0,02	0,02	0,01	0,01
SiSwati	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,3	0,9	30,6	0,3	2,8
Tshivenda	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,4	2,4	0,2	17,4	2,5
Xitsonga	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,0	3,2	7,0	10,6	17,2	4,7
Other	3,3	0,9	1,1	0,7	0,7	2,5	3,7	1,2	2,1	2,1
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

The findings on provincial variations are a reflection of cultural diversity depicted in each province. It is interesting to note that Gauteng attracts migrants from both within and outside South Africa is the only province with no single dominant language. Gauteng is smallest province in the country in terms of land area size but remains the largest by population size (Stats SA, 2024) and the most industrialised. The province is home to the largest first and second generation of migrants who initially came to the country when gold was discovered in the 19th century and later as a result of secondary and tertiary sectors' opportunities (Khanyile, 2022). It is, therefore, not surprising that the province has the most diverse language profile as shown in Table 2.1 above. Results indicate that almost a quarter (23,2%) of the residents of the province spoke IsiZulu, while one in 10 either spoke Sesotho (13,1%), Sepedi (12,7%) or Setswana (10,3%). The province was home to the largest proportion of person who communicated using non-official languages in the country at about 4%. The various languages spoken in this province is a reflection of cultural diversity.

On the contrary, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal recorded one dominant language, accounting for more than 80% of their population speaking IsiXhosa and IsiZulu respectively. The results further show that seven out of 10 persons in the North West (72,8%) and Free State (72,2%) provinces spoke Setswana and Sesotho, respectively. Important to note is that Free State shares a border with our neighbouring country Lesotho, while North West shares a border with Botswana; which explains the dominance of these languages in these provinces. The results are a reflection of cultural interaction between cross border communities. Limpopo on the other hand reflected dominance of Sepedi speakers, constituting over half of the population (55,6%) followed by Tshivenda and Xitsonga speakers at 17%.

Mpumalanga reflects a number of cultural identities depicted by a variety of languages spoken; SiSwati (30,6%), IsiZulu (27,9%), Xitsonga (10,6%) and Sepedi (10,2%) among others. Northern Cape (54,6%) and Western Cape (41,1%) depicts some similar cultural aspects in terms of common language spoken, which is Afrikaans. Furthermore, one in five persons (22,1%) in the Western Cape spoke English, the largest proportion in the country, followed by KwaZulu-Natal at 14,3%.

2.2.3 Population group differentials

Every society characterised by race is bound to have cultural distinctions including language spoken, which defines each race/population group heritage. South Africa is a multi-racial country, constituting mainly four population groups namely; black Africans, whites, coloureds and Indian/Asian. Table 2.2 below, shows variations in language most often by population group over the period 1996-2022.

Table 2.2 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and population group, Census 2022

Language	Black African				Coloured				Indian or Asian				White				Other		Total			
	1996	2001	2011	2022	1996	2001	2011	2022	1996	2001	2011	2022	1996	2001	2011	2022	2011	2022	1996	2001	2011	2022
Afrikaans	0,7	0,7	1,5	0,5	82,1	79,4	75,8	72,6	1,5	1,7	4,6	0,7	58,6	59,1	60,7	58,0	15,2	22,2	14,4	13,4	13,5	10,6
English	0,4	0,5	2,9	1,2	16,4	19,0	20,9	25,1	94,5	93,8	86,2	94,6	39,1	39,3	36,0	41,1	29,6	32,3	8,5	8,3	9,7	8,7
IsiNdebele	1,9	2,0	2,6	2,1	0,1	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,8	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,0	2,1	0,6	1,5	1,6	2,1	1,7
IsiXhosa	23,2	22,3	20,1	20,0	0,3	0,3	0,6	0,5	0,1	0,1	0,4	0,3	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,1	1,9	3,3	18,0	17,6	16,0	16,3
IsiZulu	29,5	30,1	28,5	29,9	0,2	0,3	0,5	0,7	0,2	0,2	1,3	0,6	0,1	0,1	0,4	0,1	4,1	1,6	22,8	23,8	22,7	24,4
Sepedi	11,9	11,9	11,4	12,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,6	0,3	9,2	9,4	9,0	10,0
Sesotho	10,0	10,0	9,4	9,6	0,2	0,2	0,5	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,4	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,4	0,0	1,7	2,4	7,8	7,9	7,6	7,8
Setswana	10,6	10,3	9,9	10,2	0,4	0,4	0,9	0,4	0,0	0,0	0,4	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,4	0,0	2,4	0,5	8,3	8,2	8,0	8,3
Sign language	0,0	0,0	0,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,5	0,0
SiSwati	3,2	3,4	3,2	3,5	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,5	0,2	2,5	2,7	2,5	2,8
Tshivenda	2,8	2,9	3,0	3,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,5	0,2	2,2	2,3	2,4	2,5
Xitsonga	5,6	5,6	5,6	5,7	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	3,8	1,2	4,4	4,4	4,5	4,7
Other	0,3	0,3	1,5	2,2	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	3,7	3,8	5,1	3,2	1,9	1,1	1,1	0,5	37,4	35,2	0,5	0,5	1,6	2,1
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Note: "Other" population group was not collected in Census 1996 and 2001

The findings presented in Table 2.2 depict distinct variations in language spoken across the four population groups. Among black Africans, a variety of languages are spoken at home. In all four censuses, about a third of black African population speak IsiZulu (29,9%) and one in five was an IsiXhosa speaker. Looking at language profile of coloured population group, majority (more than 70%) were Afrikaans speakers, although a decrease of about 10 percentage points was recorded over the period 1996–2022. Indian/Asian population group on the other hand predominantly spoke English (94,6%) at home in 2022. The profile of white population group showed that two languages, English and Africans were the most commonly spoken languages among the group. English speakers constituted almost 60% and those who speak Afrikaans slightly increased from 39,1% in 1996 to 41,1%. Furthermore, the results indicated that over a third (35,2%) of those who identified as "other" population group spoke other non-official languages while another third (32,3%) spoke English and one in five was an Afrikaans speaker in 2022.

2.2.4 Metropolitan municipality differentials

There are eight metropolitan areas in the country, located in five out of the nine provinces. Metropolitan areas are generally the economic hubs in their respective regions and tend to have a higher concentration of the population characterised by diverse cultural backgrounds compared to non-metropolitan areas. This section examines language dynamics of metropolitan areas in terms of the extent to which each conforms to the provincial variations highlighted in previous sections. It is noted that Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela Bay metropolitan areas both located in Eastern Cape showed IsiXhosa as the dominant spoken language (82,4% and 59,5% respectively) whilst EThekweni metro in KwaZulu-Natal was dominated by IsiZulu (65,6%) speakers.

Table 2.3 - Percentage distribution of population by language spoken in the household and Metropolitan Area, Census 2022

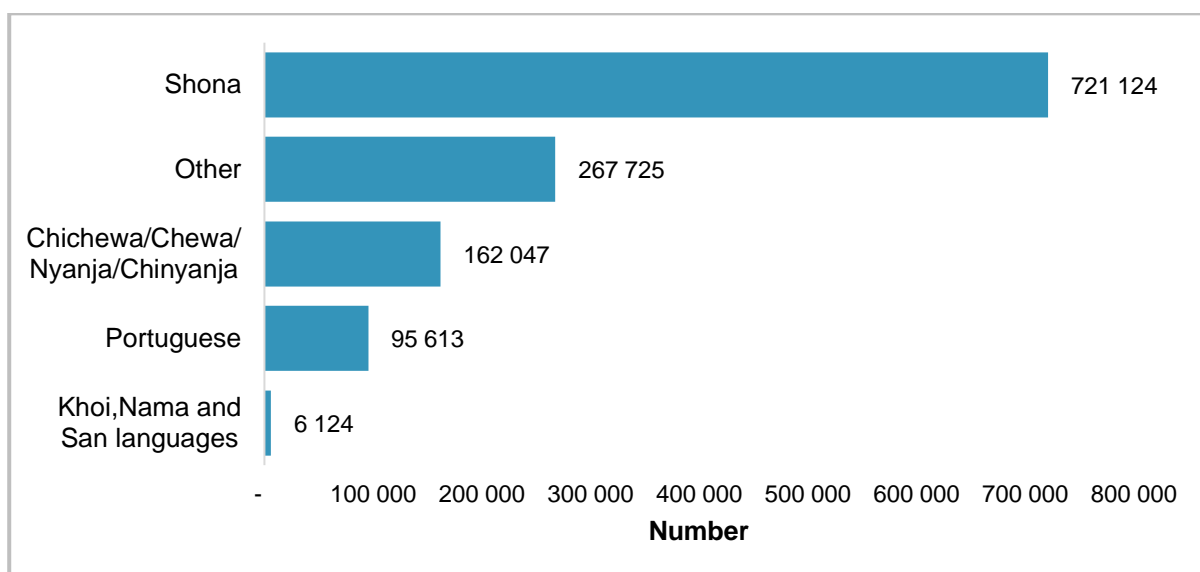
Language	Buffalo City	City of Cape Town	City of Ekurhuleni	EThekweni	City of Johannesburg	Mangaung	Nelson Mandela Bay	City of Tshwane	Non-Metros
Afrikaans	5,3	26,1	7,3	0,8	3,8	10,8	24,7	12,1	10,6
English	10,1	30,6	8,9	28,6	13,7	1,7	13,3	6,9	8,7
IsiNdebele	0,1	0,2	1,7	0,1	3,6	0,1	0,1	5,0	1,7
IsiXhosa	82,4	37,4	8,5	3,1	7,0	7,4	59,5	2,2	16,3
IsiZulu	0,3	0,5	35,7	65,6	28,9	0,6	0,3	9,0	24,4
Sepedi	0,0	0,1	12,3	0,0	7,9	0,2	0,0	24,4	10,0
Sesotho	0,3	0,8	10,2	0,6	11,9	64,0	0,2	5,0	7,8
Setswana	0,0	0,2	2,6	0,0	7,7	14,3	0,0	17,8	8,3
Sign language	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
SiSwati	0,0	0,0	1,2	0,0	0,6	0,1	0,0	1,3	2,8
Tshivenda	0,0	0,1	1,7	0,0	3,5	0,0	0,0	2,5	2,5
Xitsonga	0,1	0,2	6,7	0,0	7,4	0,1	0,1	9,2	4,7
Other	1,3	3,8	3,3	1,1	4,0	0,7	1,6	4,5	2,1
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

City of Cape Town, the only metro in Western Cape, had the largest proportion of both English (30,6%) and Afrikaans (26,1%) speakers across the metros. However, the proportion of Afrikaans speakers was far less than the 41,1% provincial average, implying that Afrikaans speakers were disproportionately spread across the province and not concentrated in the Cape Town area. Nonetheless, over a third (37,4%) of the city's residents spoke IsiXhosa; this was 6,0% higher than the provincial average. Three out of five persons in Mangaung metro, which is located in Free State spoke Sesotho, this was hardly surprising given the fact that 72,2% of the population in the province spoke Sesotho, and that the province is one of three that shares a border with Lesotho.

2.3 Non-official languages spoken in South African households: Census 2022

The advent of democracy in South Africa created noticeable shifts in migration flows from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. Equally, South Africa's (re)insertion into the global economy also brought new streams of migrants from outside the SADC region and new ethnic groups within. Consequently, traditional cultural norms have been reconfigured and caused cultural shifts in spoken languages. South Africa's cultural dynamics are partly shaped by the region of Southern Africa and the rest of the world to some extent. South Africa shares international borders with six SADC countries (Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Eswatini-formerly known as Swaziland, Mozambique & Lesotho). It is interesting to note that there are a number of languages spoken both in South Africa and the these neighbouring countries. Language is thus one of the indicators that depict cultural mix and influences from neighbouring countries. In addition, the cultural landscape in South Africa has and continues to be shaped by Western and Eastern traditions.

Figure 2.2 - Population by non-official languages spoken in the household, Census 2022



The inclusion of additional languages in census questionnaire enables the country to analyse and understand contribution of migration in cultural landscape. diverse language profile and by extension to the cultural and identity of the persons.

The pre-Census 2022 tests data, including the pilot census that was conducted in 2021 showed a significant number of persons who spoke Portuguese, Chichewa/Chewa/Nyanja/Chinyanja and Shona as their primary language of communication in their households. Hence a decision was taken to expand the list of languages from which respondents can chose over and above the 12 official languages and the Khoi, Nama and San languages. Table 2.2 presents the number of persons who spoke non-official languages in 2022.

The results indicate that more than 1,2 million persons in the country spoke non-official languages in their respective households in 2022. It is noted that over half a million (42,4%) were Shona speakers, one of the main languages spoken in Zimbabwe, over 160 000 spoke Chichewa/Chewa/Nyanja/Chinyanja, languages mainly spoken in Zambia and Malawi and over 95 000 spoke Portuguese, a language mainly spoken in Mozambique; although these languages are non-official, they form part of the South Africa's culture and identity. Results are indicative of the role migration plays in cultural shifts as migrants settle and assimilate in destination country and communities. Existence of the above languages in South Africa can be attributed to migration flows within the SADC region and the rest of Africa in the last decades. The recent Migration Profile Report for South Africa indicated that Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Ethiopia and Nigeria were among the top ten sending countries

Among the non-official languages asked in Census 2022 were the Khoi, Nama and San languages, some of the indigenous languages in South Africa. The findings indicate that just over 6 000 persons spoke Khoi, Nama and San languages in their respective households. These statistics partly are indicative of shifts in one of the indigenous cultures in the country.

The following sub-section examines variations in non-official languages at provincial level. Overall, data shows that 43,1% of persons who speak non-official languages were found in Gauteng. Furthermore, provincial variations as profiled in Table 2.4 below, showed that Khoisan languages were mainly spoken in Northern Cape with a percentage share of about 40% followed by Gauteng (14,7%) and Eastern Cape (11,8%). The dominance of Khoisan languages in Northern Cape is supported by vast literature on existence and settlement patterns of this indigenous group in South Africa. Important to note also is that Khoisan communities are found in countries sharing borders with Northern Cape being Namibia and Botswana. Also Du Plessis (2020) explained that Khoisan languages, which comprises mainly of three diverse group of languages of African origins that uses click phonemes, was spoken by San communities in parts of South Africa and neighbouring countries, including Namibia and Botswana.

Table 2.4 - Population by non-official languages spoken in the household and province, Census 2022

Province	Khoi, Nama and San languages		Shona		Chichewa/Chewa/Nyanja/Chinyanja		Portuguese		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Western Cape	262	4,3	142 955	19,8	39 953	24,7	5 675	5,9	49 785	18,6	238 631	19,1
Eastern Cape	721	11,8	33 601	4,7	3 868	2,4	1 147	1,2	25 389	9,5	64 725	5,2
Northern Cape	2 429	39,7	5 508	0,8	734	0,5	1 036	1,1	4 220	1,6	13 926	1,1
Free State	163	2,7	8 217	1,1	1 032	0,6	1 189	1,2	9 089	3,4	19 690	1,6
KwaZulu-Natal	431	7,0	31 180	4,3	20 813	12,8	11 036	11,5	24 888	9,3	88 349	7,1
North West	187	3,1	61 727	8,6	7 991	4,9	9 351	9,8	11 534	4,3	90 790	7,2
Gauteng	900	14,7	305 029	42,3	81 235	50,1	51 927	54,3	101 265	37,8	540 356	43,1
Mpumalanga	271	4,4	29 720	4,1	3 654	2,3	11 950	12,5	14 882	5,6	60 476	4,8
Limpopo	761	12,4	103 187	14,3	2 766	1,7	2 303	2,4	26 673	10,0	135 690	10,8
Total	6 124	100,0	721 124	100,0	162 047	100,0	95 613	100,0	267 725	100,0	1 252 633	100,0

Although Census 2022 data show low numbers in terms of persons speaking Khoisan languages in the South Africa, the statistics should be interpreted with caution. It has been noted that indigenous populations and other minority groups such as persons with disabilities are amongst groups difficult to enumerate, thus introducing bias in population estimates of such groups. The challenge of under enumeration is thus not unique to South Africa and is associated with sparse and isolated settlement patterns among indigenous populations (UNPR revision 3). However, censuses remain a rich data source in providing insights and understanding of characteristics and cultural practices of indigenous population.

In an effort to preserve and revive these languages as an integral part of the South African cultural identity, plans are underway to include the Khoisan languages into the school curriculum. This was recently announced by President of the country during his address at the Reconciliation Day commemoration in December 2024 (Khumalo, 2024).

The results in Table 2.4 further revealed that variations in use of other languages such as Shona, Portuguese, and Chichewa in South African households was partly linked to economic opportunities; for example, it is noted that Gauteng and Western Cape which are the two provinces with most economic opportunities recorded higher percentage share of these languages. In provinces such as Limpopo and Mpumalanga, a higher percentage of Shona speakers in the former (14,3%) and Portuguese in the latter (12,5%) can only be explained by sharing borders with Zimbabwe and Mozambique respectively. These language dynamics imply to some extent the existence of cross border communities which forms part and parcel of culture in these respective provinces.

2.4 Multi-lingual households in South African: trend and patterns, Censuses 1996 and 2022

Multi-lingual households in South African society is one of the key aspects of co-existence of different groups of persons including race and ethnic groups. It symbolises how different groups embrace one another by creating bonds and relationships that enable them to even share living space. Statistics on trends, levels and patterns of multilingualism at household level in South Africa, a country that was previously characterised by segregation based on race and ethnicity gives insights on cultural diversity, social cohesion and integration. Some researchers assert that the same manner in which language is regarded as a major part of any culture, multilingualism should be viewed as part of multiculturalism (Drobot, 2021). As such, multilingualism in this context should be viewed and understood not only as a communication tool, but also as an influence on cultural and traditional values (Cutler, 2005). Furthermore, a comprehension and understanding of multiple languages may lead to an increased awareness of cultural differences and communication context of various cultures of others not just one's own (Drobot, 2021).

South African scholars have conceded that there is no consensus when it comes to the definition of multilingualism, especially from the country's perspective (Ndhlovu and Makalela, 2022). Nevertheless, few within the academic and policy spaces around the world have endeavoured to define this phenomenon (Mbirimi-Hugwe, 2024). The Language Policy of Higher Education in South Africa (2020) defined multilingualism as the effective use of a number of spoken languages by a person or a community. Furthermore, the European Commission (2007) came up with an expanded definition whereby the context into which the languages are used is incorporated; it defined multilingualism as an ability to regularly, on a day-to-day basis communicate using more than one language by a group of individuals. For the purpose of this report, the latter definition is more appropriate, we define a multi-lingual household as two or more persons who stay together, share resources and use different languages, official or non-official, to communicate with each other in the household.

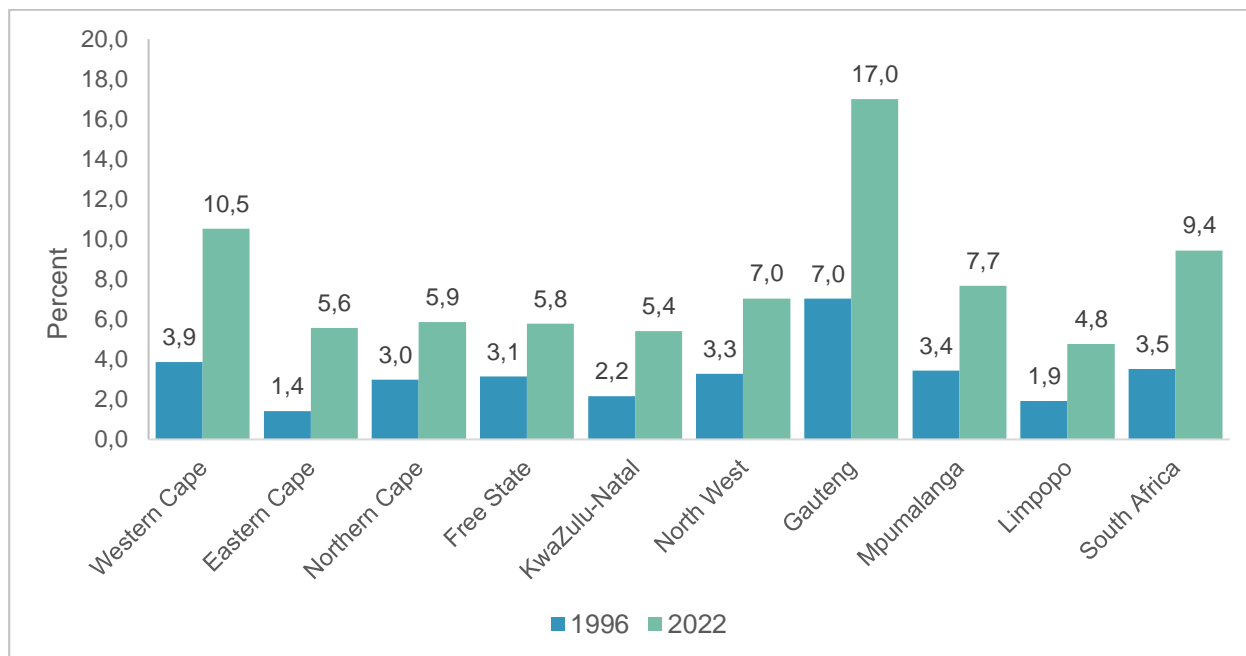
Furthermore, multilingualism, as highlighted above, in this report does not necessarily refer to individuals who have full comprehension of multiple languages at a certain point in time, rather, it refers to a person who speaks one or more languages and can understand other languages spoken by other members of the household; i.e. persons who communicate effectively with each other using different languages in a household set up.

It is a fact that South African languages, especially those that are of African origin are similar to a certain extent; for example, the Nguni sub-family of languages (IsiZulu, SiSwati, IsiXhosa and IsiNdebele) share certain words and phrases (Dube and Suleman, 2019), the same applies to Sesotho, Setswana and Sepedi. A limitation of this analysis is that it doesn't specify the different languages spoken in the respective households, rather it looks at the main language spoken by individuals who make up a household of two or more persons; when these are different, such a household is considered to be multi-lingual. The following sub-section examines the levels and trends of multilingualism in South African households. Thus, the provincial and household size profiles for all four post-1994 censuses were analysed.

2.4.1 Multi-lingual households: provincial trends and patterns, Census 1996 and 2022

Figure 2.3 below presents the proportion of multi-lingual households by province for censuses 1996 and 2022. Nationally, results showed an upward trend on the proportion of multi-lingual households; in 1996, only 3.5% of the households in the country were multi-lingual, this increased to 9.4% in 2022.

Figure 2.3 - Percentage of multi-lingual households by province, Census 1996 and 2022

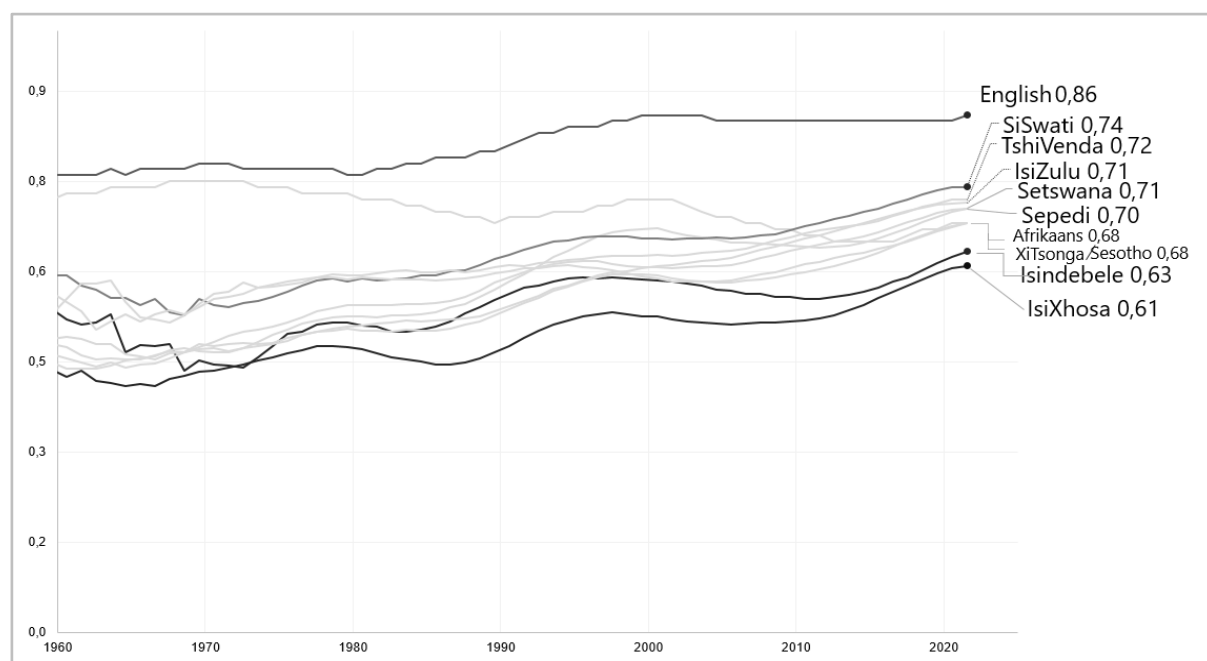


Provincially, a similar trend was observed, Gauteng and Western Cape recorded the largest proportions of multi-lingual households compared to other provinces. In Gauteng, the proportion of multi-lingual households increased from 7,0% in 1996 to 17,0% in 2022 while in Western Cape it creased from 3,9% to 10,5% in the same period. This further underscores the two provinces' status as economic powerhouses and destinations of choice for migrants, both international and internal, and by extension signifies the very diverse culture of languages within the households in the provinces and the country at large. On the other hand, Eastern Cape and Limpopo recorded the lowest proportions of multi-lingual households on average in the same periods.

2.5 Language and educational progression

In this sub-section, educational progression indicator is profiled using language as a proxy for ethnic groups in the country. Using Time plot measure, valuable insights into trends and disparities in education attainment across various ethnic groups over time are shown in Figures 2.4 and 2.5.

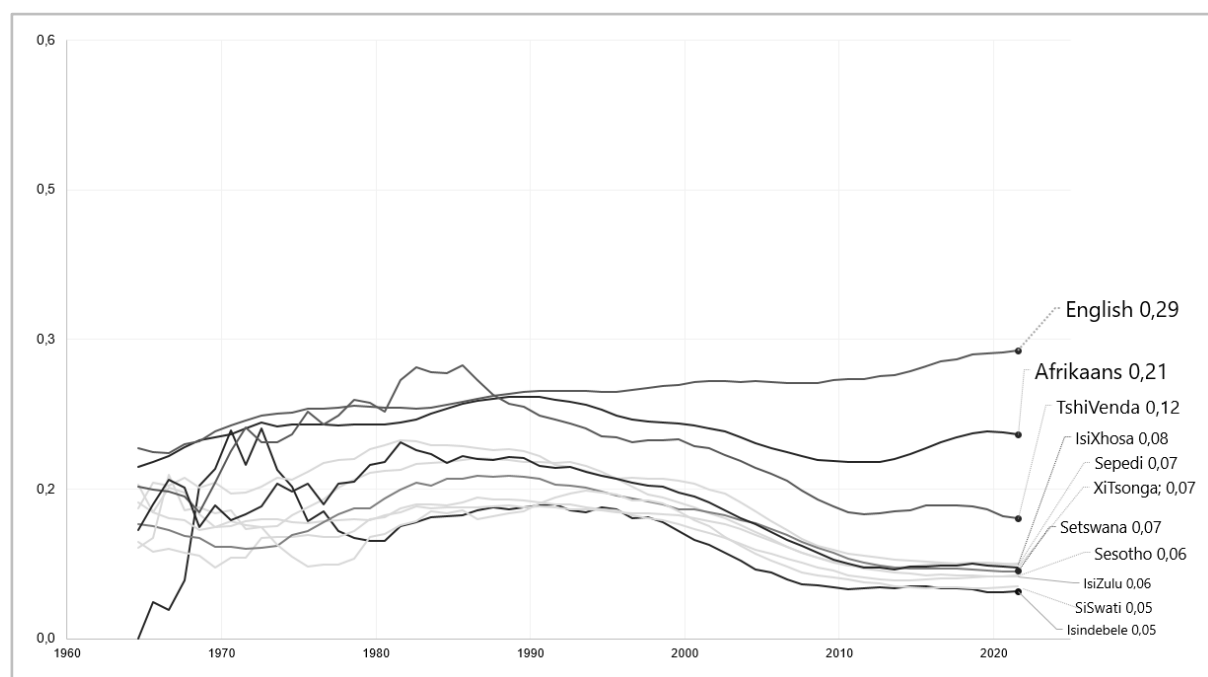
Figure 2.4 - Proportions of persons who go on to complete Grade 12/matric after completing Grade 9 by spoken language



Results in Figure 2.4 above, shows the proportion of those who go on to complete Grade 12/matric after completing Grade 9 by spoken language groupings. It was observed that English speakers have consistently had the highest proportion of those who progress and complete secondary education in the country since the 1960s; having English as the medium of instruction in the South African schooling system may be an added advantage for English speakers and possibly justify the higher progression ratios achieved.

Furthermore, Afrikaans speakers had the second highest proportion of those who progressed to complete Grade 12/matric between the 1960s and the 2010s, wherein after they experienced a significant decrease compared to some African indigenous language speakers; a proportion of 0,68 of Afrikaans speakers completed Grade12/matric in 2022 compared to 0,72 in 1960. On the other hand, IsiXhosa speakers have consistently had the lowest proportions of those who completed Grade12/matric in the country compared to other language speakers, nevertheless, there has been a significant increase in the educational progression in the past decades; from 0,42 in 1960 to 0,61 in 2022.

Figure 2.5 - Proportions of persons who go on to complete a Bachelor's degree after completing Grade 12/matric by spoken language



Results on Figure 2.5 above, show that English and Afrikaans speakers have had the highest proportion of those who go on to complete Bachelors' degrees after completing Grade 12/matric since the early 1990s. In 2022, 0,29 and 0,21 proportions of English and Afrikaans speakers, respectively, completed Bachelors' degrees; this was much higher than the proportions of any other language speakers in the country with the closest being Tshivenda speakers at 0,12. This may be indicative of the fact that most universities in the country apply English as the medium of instruction, while some use both English and Afrikaans, which may offer an added advantage to the speakers of these languages who are predominantly white. The results reflect a clear inequality when it comes to educational achievement by spoken language.

2.6 Summary of findings and discussion

isiZulu remains the most spoken language in the country since 1996, one in every five persons in households spoke isiZulu. IsiXhosa and Afrikaans were the second and third most spoken languages, respectively; although the proportion of Afrikaans speakers decreased by 3,9 percentage points between 1996 and 2022. The number of Afrikaans speakers increased by more than 700 000 in the same period. Most of the provinces except Gauteng has one dominant spoken language, this is a result of the homelands legacy which grouped persons geographically along ethnic lineage. On the other hand, Gauteng as an economic hub reflects an increased migrant inflow and subsequently a diverse spoken language profile.

Since the advent of democracy, the country has seen a gradual increase in the number of migrants from the SADC region, consequently, an increase in the number of non-official language speakers has been observed. Over 1,2 million persons spoke non-official languages in the country in 2022, more than half of these spoke Shona and more than 160 000 spoke Chichewa/Chewa/Nyanja/Chinyanja. Furthermore, over 6 000 persons indicated that they communicated using Khoi, Nama and San languages; a majority of which are in Northern Cape.

The findings show that number of multi-lingual households more than doubled over the period 1996-2022 (from 3,5% in 1996 to 9,4% in 2022). Gauteng and the Western Cape, as the most urbanized provinces recorded the largest proportions of multi-lingual households in the country at 17,0% and 10,5%, respectively.

It was further noted in terms of education attainment, English speakers recorded the highest percentage among persons that progressed to complete grade 12/matric after completing grade 9 (0,86), and persons that progressed to complete bachelor's degree after completing grade 12/matric (0,29). The use of English as the medium of instruction in the schooling system seem to be an added advantage to English speakers. However, whilst we see narrowing gaps among persons of various ethnic groups over time that progressed to complete grade 12/matric after completing grade 9, disparities seem to continue among persons that progressed to complete bachelor's degree after completing grade 12/matric.

CHAPTER 3: MULTI-RACIAL HOUSEHOLDS

3.1 Introduction

South Africa is a diverse country that takes pride in its multi-culturalism. While multi-culturalism is manifold across social, political and national contexts, in its simplest form it refers to the presence of diverse cultures within society (Arasaratnam, 2013). In this “age of democracy” the very act of living across racial boundaries embodies a host of cultural, ethnic, religious, political and demographic factors. The following chapter examines trends and patterns of multi-racial households in the country. The chapter profiles multi-racial households’, their composition and other household characteristics from censuses 2001, 2011 and 2022.

Race is a poignant and controversial issue in South Africa, and has a long and painful history. Historically, race groups were prohibited to marry or have sexual relations with other races due to the laws introduced by the apartheid government. Laws such as the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (no. 55 of 1949) was one of the apartheid legislation enacted that criminalised marriages between whites and non-whites including officers involved in performing such marriages. Another legislation in line with prohibition of relations across races was the amendment of Immorality Act of (5 of 1927) in 1950 (5 of 1950) which prohibited extramarital sex between persons of different races especially whites and non-whites. Such legislations played a role in creating distinct family and household relations. As a result, individuals could not easily form interracial relations leading to family and household formation due to fear of being prosecuted.

Findings in the report provide some insights on racial integration using household composition and structure from census data. Despite the Constitution guaranteeing equal rights to all South Africans, regardless of race, ethnicity, or language, and freedom of association including marriages, gaps still exist, and these directly influence cultural aspects at individual and household level particularly interracial relations and household formation. In South African censuses, a household is defined as “group of persons who live together at least four nights a week, eat together and share resources, or a single person who lives alone” (StatsSA, 2023). In this report, multi-racial households are those households constituting persons from different population group, also known as racial group as per the definition of the household. How these living arrangements or types of households have changed overtime will be examined from census 2001, 2011 and 2022.

Over the period 2001-2022, the number of households have grown as shown in Table 3.1 below. The proportion of households headed by coloured and Indian/Asians increased between 2001 and 2022, whilst those headed by white population group reflect a reverse (decrease from 12,6% in 2001 to 11,5% in 2022). Generally, household headship reflects population group dynamics in the country, that is, majority of households are headed by black Africans. This profile of household headship translates into different cultural practices within each household. Generally, the number of households in the country has increased over time. The proportion of households by population group of the head of household follow the same distribution as the population in the country; black African being constitute the largest number of household heads followed by whites, coloureds and Indian/Asians.

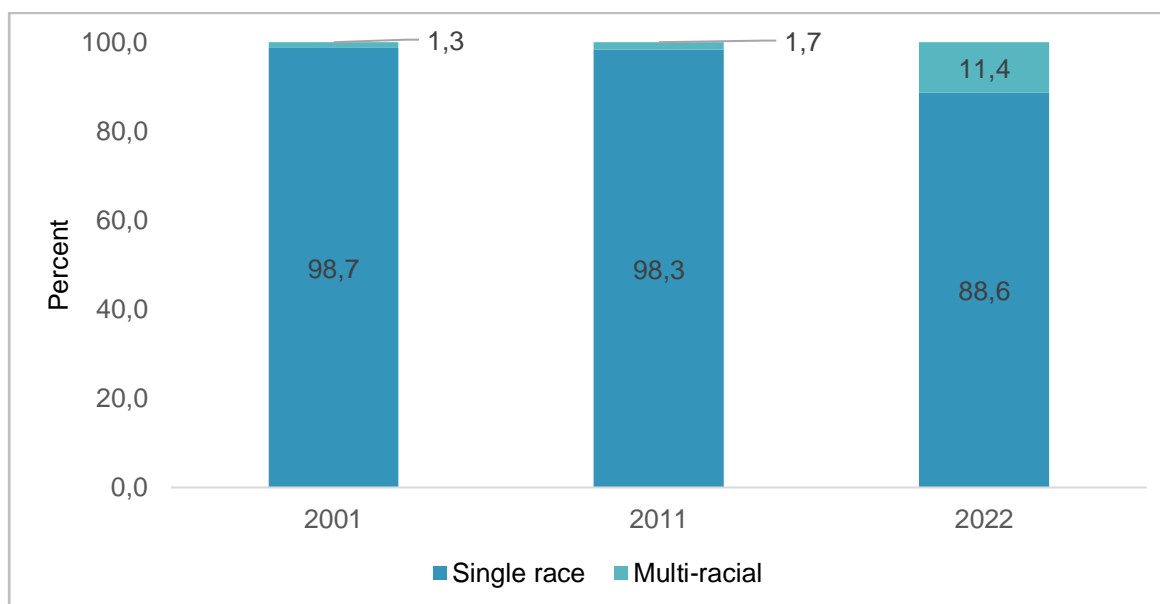
Table 3.1 - Households by population group of head of household: Censuses 2001—2022

Population group	Census 2001		Census 2011		Census 2022	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Black African	8 625 050	77,0	11 360 319	78,6	13 563 385	76,1
Coloured	888 036	7,9	1 056 048	7,3	1 588 703	8,9
Indian/Asian	282 930	2,5	347 199	2,4	565 218	3,2
White	1 409 689	12,6	1 606 428	11,1	2 058 249	11,5
Other	-	-	79 642	0,6	53 224	0,3
Total	11 205 705	100,0	14 449 636	100,0	17 828 778	100,0

It is of interest to further explore cultural dynamics at household level by looking at multi-racial household level and how existence of such type of households is unfolding in the country, and its influence on culture shifts.

3.2 Trends and patterns of multi-racial households in South Africa

Section below describes on the patterns of multi-racial households and their living arrangements over time in South Africa. For the purposes of this report, multi-racial households are defined as households with two or more persons who are of different population groups (black African, white, coloured, Indian/Asian, and other) living together as one household.

Figure 3.1 - Percentage distribution of single-race and multi-racial households in South Africa, Census 2001–2022

Note: This excludes unspecified and do not know

Results presented in Figure 3.1 above, provide insights on extent of household structure shifts over the last two and a half decades in South Africa. Whilst a majority of households are single race households, there has been substantial and consistent upward trend in multi-racial households (1,3% in 2001 to 11,4% in 2022). Whilst multi-racial households need to be understood in terms of breakdown and relations within one household, these findings to a greater extent show that South Africans have begun to embrace each other regardless of their race.

The findings on provincial variations in household structure over the period 2001–2022 are presented in Table 3.2. Generally, most provinces depict a pattern similar to the national one, characterized mostly by single race households. Censuses 2001 and 2011, indicate that multi-racial households were more prevalent in the Northern Cape followed by Western Cape while Census 2022 shows a slightly different pattern; multi-racial households more prominent in Western Cape 17% followed by Gauteng with 14,6% and Northern Cape 10,6%. It is noted that Limpopo recorded the least prevalence with 0,3% in 2001 and 6,7% in 2022.

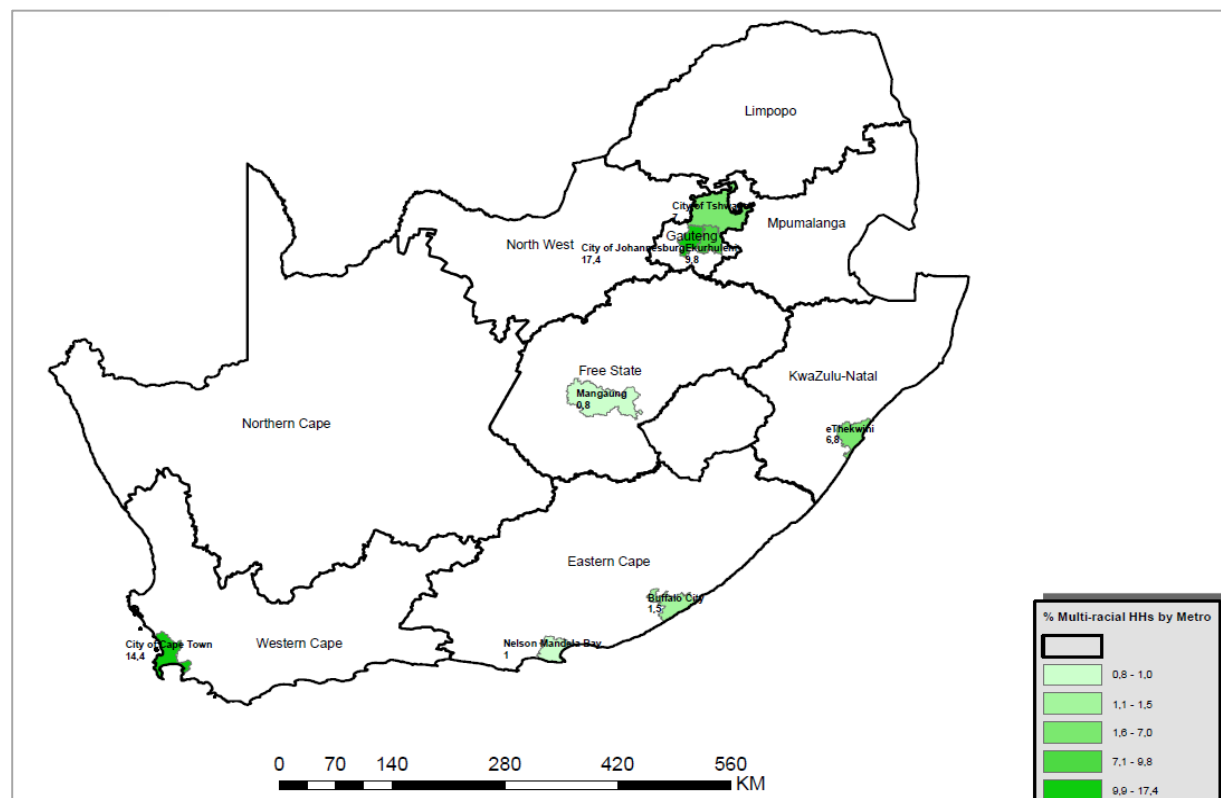
Table 3.2 - Households by province and type, Censuses 2001, 2011 and 2022

Province	Census 2001		Census 2011		Census 2022	
	Single-Race	Multi-Racial	Single-Race	Multi-Racial	Single-Race	Multi-Racial
Western Cape	97,9	2,1	97,2	2,8	83,0	17,0
Eastern Cape	99,2	0,8	98,6	1,4	91,3	8,7
Northern Cape	96,0	4,0	95,3	4,7	89,4	10,6
Free State	98,7	1,3	98,6	1,4	92,3	7,7
KwaZulu-Natal	98,9	1,1	98,3	1,7	89,8	10,2
North West	99,4	0,6	98,8	1,2	92,7	7,3
Gauteng	98,2	1,8	98,1	1,9	85,4	14,6
Mpumalanga	99,3	0,7	99,1	0,9	91,9	8,1
Limpopo	99,7	0,3	99,5	0,5	93,3	6,7
South Africa	98,7	1,3	98,3	1,7	88,6	11,4

Note: Excludes unspecified and do not knows.

Additional analysis was done to understand contribution of metropolitan areas in explaining observed provincial variations in Census 2022.

Map 3.1 - Multi-racial households by metropolitan areas 2022

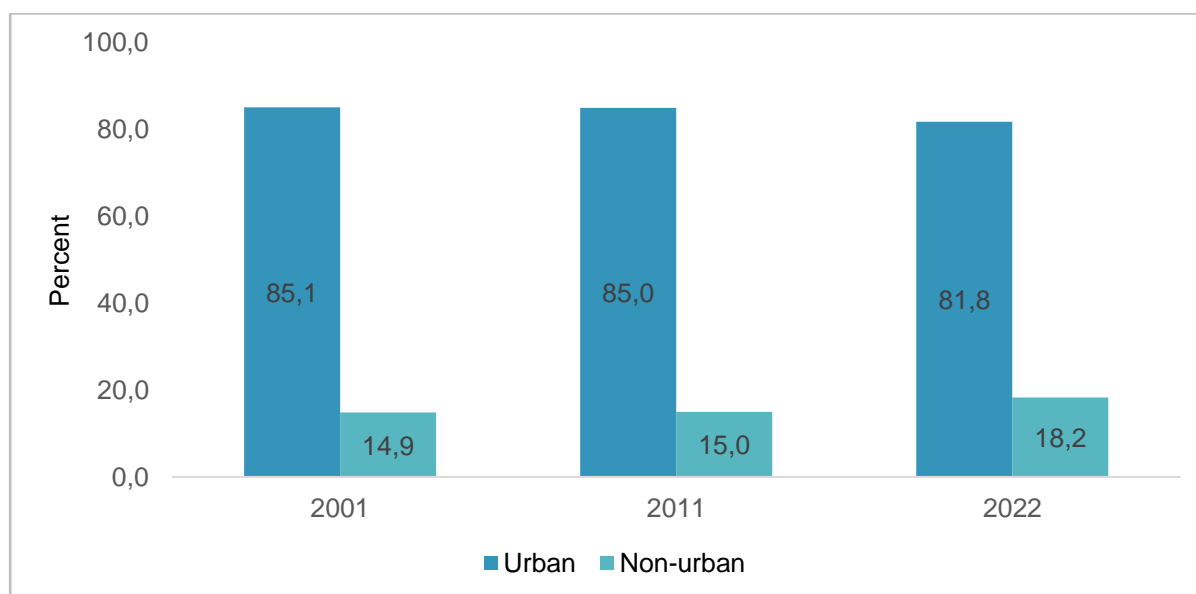


Map 3.1 presents the distribution of multi-racial households by metropolitan areas of South Africa. Data from Census 2022 clearly shows that City of Johannesburg had the highest proportion (29,7%) of multi-racial households followed by City of Cape Town, with a quarter (24,5%) of households being multi-racial. Metropolitans with the least multi-racial households were Mangaung (1,4%) and Nelson Mandela Bay with 1,6% compared to other metropolitan areas in South Africa. This result come as no surprise since the City of Johannesburg and the City of Cape Town are South Africa's largest metropolitan areas by population size (StatsSA, 2024).

3.3 Multi-racial households by settlement type

Research has shown that change and modernity often begin in urban communities and later gets adopted in non-urban communities. Other influences such as internal and international migration, development, etc. also play out differently in urban settlements relative to non-urban settlements.

Figure 3.2 - Multi-racial households by settlement type, Census 2001–2022



Note: Excludes unspecified and do not knows

Figure 3.2 looks at the distribution of multi-racial households by settlement type. Results show that multi-racial households were more prevalent in urban areas compared to non-urban areas and this was the case in all the three census years. Although multi-racial households are more prevalent in urban areas, non-urban areas experienced increase of about three percentage points in mixed race households (from 14,9% 2001 to 18,2% in 2022). Literature suggests that urban areas increase cultural diversity due to migration (Kihato, Massoumi, & Ruble, 2010; Huijsmans, Harteveld, van, & Lancee, 2021). The growth in diversity result in people learning to accommodate each other in terms of language, citizenship, ethnicity and race, class and wealth, and gender (Huijsmans, Harteveld, van, & Lancee, 2021). It is not surprising to observe large proportions of multi-racial households consistently dominant in urban areas.

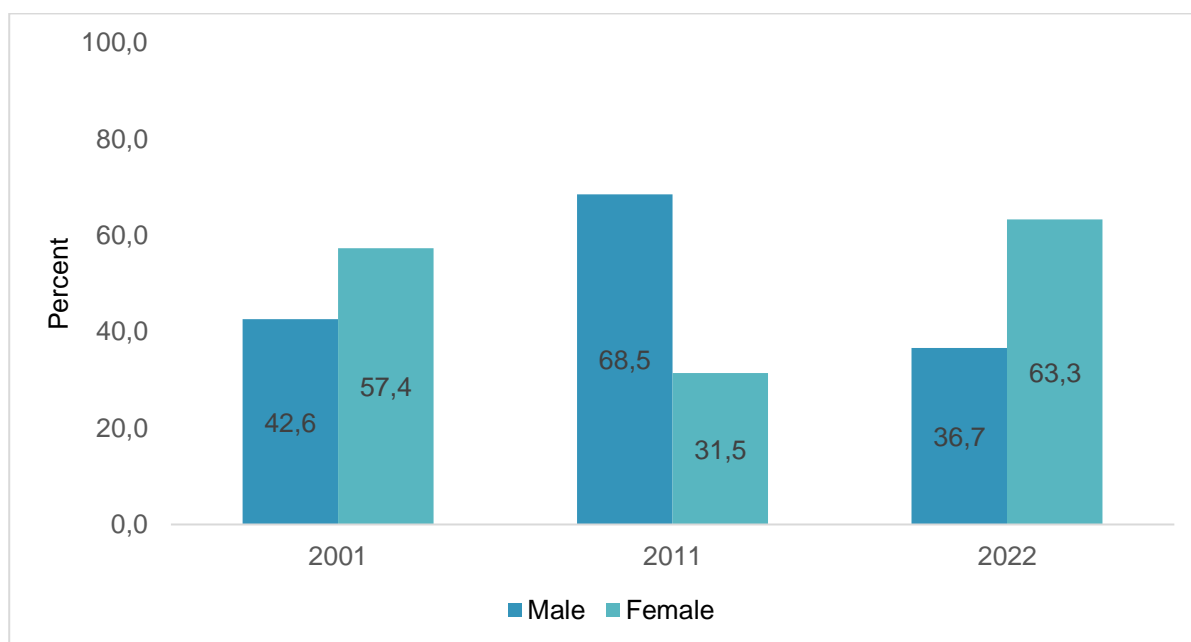
An increase in multi-racial households in non-urban areas in South Africa suggests that racial and ethnic diversity is no longer confined to big cities, it is also shows that South Africa has undergone social transformation including cultural shifts in living arrangements across the country.

3.4 Multi-racial households by sex of head of household, Census 2001–2022'

Living arrangements are crucial for policy makers because it affects the well-being of the population. Regardless of race, living arrangement is influenced by a number of factors, including culture, marital status, financial well-being, health status, family size, social services and support.

Gender influences individual perceptions and behaviour in households and society. In addition, roles played by both genders (male and female) embody behavioural norms applied to them in society, and this affects their day to day behaviour and experiences (Pelletti, et al., 2022; Korabik, McElwain, & Chappell, 2008). Research indicates that socially constructed differences between males and females, tradition or cultural expectations and masculinity or femininity foster differences between male and female household headship (Korabik, McElwain, & Chappell, 2008). This sub-section provides descriptive statistics on changes over time in multi-racial households' composition and structure.

Figure 3.3 - Multi-racial households by sex of head of the household and census year

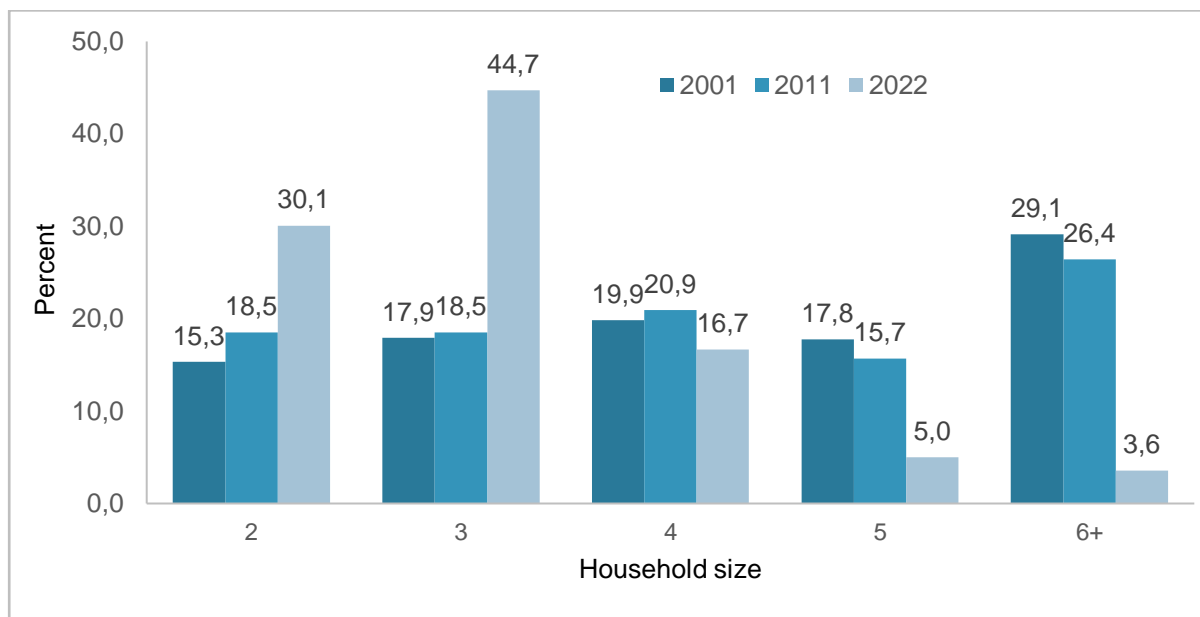


Note: This excludes unspecified and do not knows

Examining the sex variations i.e. comparing the male heads of household to the female heads of households' data shows fluctuating trends in the sex of household headship in South Africa for multi-racial households. Data in figure 3.3 above, further reveals that in 2001 there were more 57,4% female-headed multi-racial households in South Africa. While Census 2011, showed changes with males 69% heading multi-racial households and in the year 2022, 63,3% of multi-racial households were headed by females in South Africa. Census 2022 report showed that 49,6% of households in South Africa were female-headed (StatsSA, 2023). This finding can be attributable to a number of factors such as an increase in female-headed households, migration patterns, urbanization, marriage or divorce rates and the explosion in living alone male-headed households (Thornton, 2023). Further research into changes in headship patterns by sex in the country is necessary.

3.5 Multi-racial households by household size, Census 2001–2022

Figure 3.4 - Multi-racial households by household size, Census 2001–2022

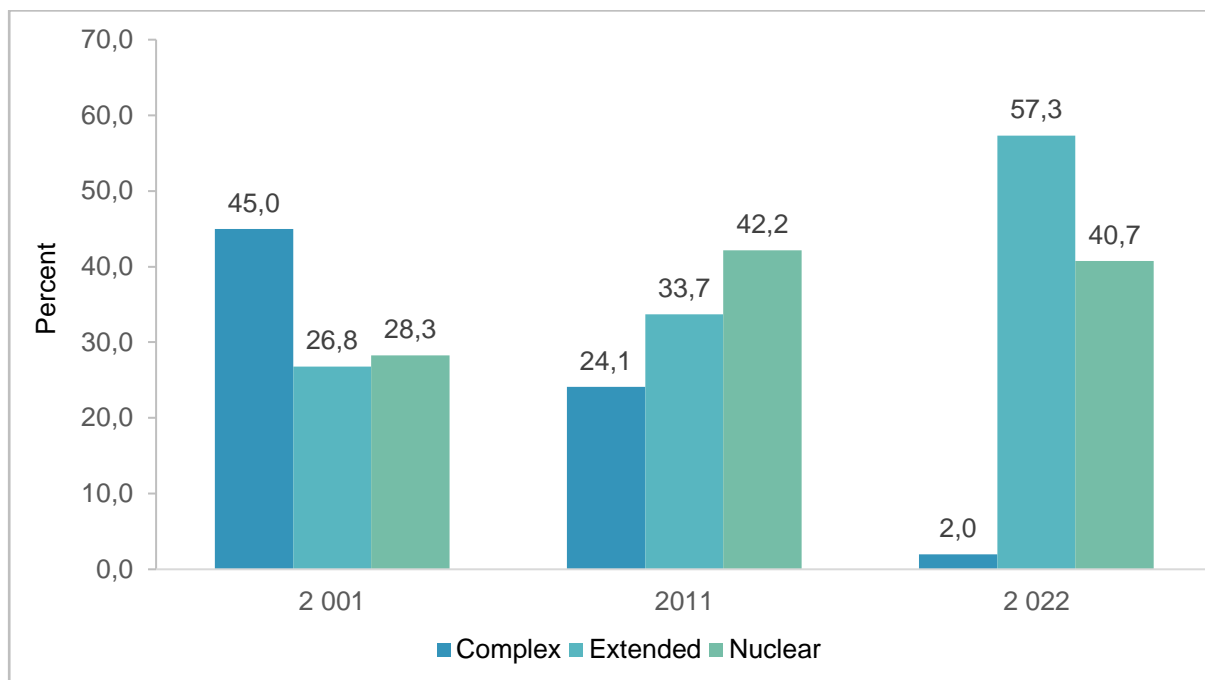


Note: This excludes unspecified and do not knows

Figure 3.4 above depict the distribution of multi-racial households by household size. Results indicate that there was a decline in household size of multi-racial households in South Africa from 2001, 2011 and 2022. It is noted that there was a significant increase in two and three member multi-racial households in 2022 compared to 2001 and 2011. Furthermore, there was a sharp decrease in four, five and six or more member multi-racial households in 2022. In terms of living arrangements and culture in general, the South African society continue to adopt new ways of living including mixed race household formation, and this emerging social interaction patterns have impact on household size. Furthermore, the decline in household size among multi-racial households may be attributed to economic factors such as increased cost of living and other factors including low fertility. Studies have argued that the decline in family size is a result of high urbanization, industrialization, and educational expansion which are higher economic development (Tripathi, 2020; Bongaarts, 2001). Additionally, fertility trends are a significant component in explaining changes in household composition (Ref?). Research has shown that South Africa has been experiencing consistent declines in fertility for the past decades regardless of racial group, hence directly lowering average household size (Zulu & Sibanda, 2005; StatsSA, 2015; Mothelesi & Mhele, 2024; Ahuejere & Malisha, 2024). Furthermore, fertility trends are intertwined with trends in marriages and divorces. South Africa is known for its low marriage rates and high divorce rates regardless of race (StatsSA, 2023; Garenne, 2016).

3.6 Household composition of multi-racial households

Figure 3.5 - Multi-racial households by household composition, Census 2001–2022



Overall, there has been shifts in South African multi-racial households' composition for the periods 2001–2022. In the year 2001, multi-racial households were mostly (45%) in complex households followed by nuclear households with 28,3%. The pattern changed in the year 2011 where higher proportions of multi-racial households were in nuclear households (42,2%) followed by extended households. Again in 2022, a shift is observed, multi-racial households were mostly in extended households followed by nuclear households. These trends do not show any predictable pattern throughout the years, which suggest that multi-racial households are not specifically found in certain types of household composition. These trends are completely different from the national trends and patterns. Due to the nature and purpose of this chapter, single households cannot be measured. Globally, studies have shown that there has been a decline in extended families while African countries show increasing trends (Mhizha, 2024). Evidence further states that in South Africa, after the end of apartheid, black African households composed of extended families, however, of recent, they are gravitating towards nuclear (StatsSA, 2024; Ziehl, 2002). Therefore, results noted on multi-racial households does not reflect the general picture of South African household composition.

CHAPTER 4: PATTERNS AND TRENDS IN RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

4.1 Introduction

Religion forms part of South Africa's unique and vibrant cultural landscape. The South African Constitution is very explicit when it comes to the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion (SA Constitution, 1996). The right to religion therefore, gives South Africans opportunity to practice, follow and associate with any religious beliefs/affiliations of their choice, provided that they do not violate others' rights and freedoms. A religious belief is defined as the attitude(s) toward a religion's central articles of faith. While all religions have prescribed beliefs, not all individuals who identify with that religion adopt all of those beliefs (Coertzen, 2008). South African society is characterized by diverse population of different descents; African, European, Asian, and indigenous influences, all which in turn influence one's religious affiliation. Some of the common religions practiced range from African Traditional religion, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism to Judaism. While the country's religion profile remains very diverse some people choose not associate with any religious beliefs.

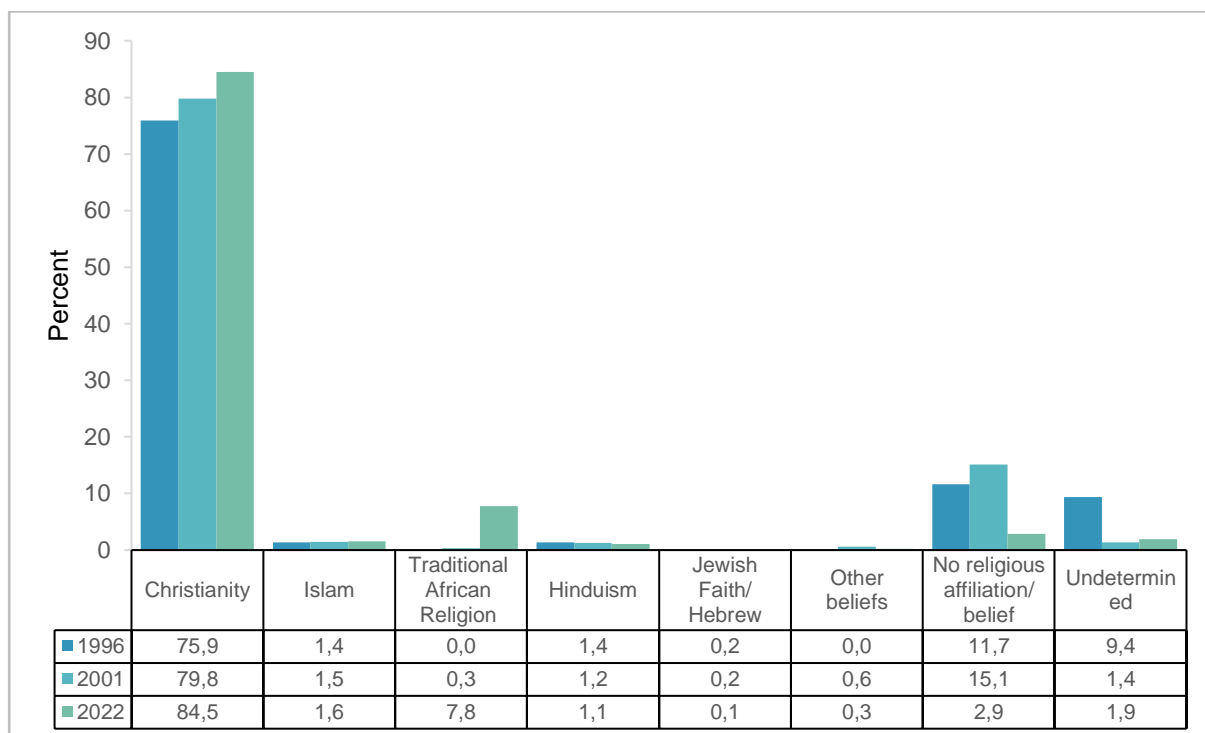
4.2 Global shifts in religious beliefs

The world's primary religions fall into two categories: Abrahamic religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; and Indian religions, which include Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and others (Pew Research Centre: 2012). Nevertheless, Christianity remains the widely followed religious belief in the world with more than two billion followers (Op Cit: 2012). In the Americas and in Europe religiousness as a whole, not just Christianity, has been on the decline in the past few decades as more individuals choose not associate with any religious beliefs (Byra & Crow, 2015). On the other hand, countries in Africa have seen a gradual increase in the number of people affiliating to Christianity, and the continent's population has become predominantly Christians (Op Cit: 2012). Christianity is known to be on the rise in some parts of Asia, especially in China where a large number of people identify as Protestants, a denomination of Christianity (Byra & Crow, 2015).

In South Africa, a number of cultural aspects including religion are believed to have been influenced and shaped by a number of factors including the country's history, colonialism, apartheid, and emerging social dynamics, attitudes and behaviour. This chapter explores trends and patterns in religious beliefs in the last three decades using census data.

4.3 Trends in religious affiliation/belief

According to Boston University's 2020 World Religion Database, approximately 82 percent of South Africa's population was affiliated to Christianity followed by Indigenous beliefs (7%), atheism or agnosticism (6%), and Hinduism (2,4%). Sunni Muslims constituted only 1.7 percent of the population while less than three percent of the Muslim population was Shia (Report on International Religious Freedom: 2023). Other religious groups included Jews, Buddhists, Sikhs, and those following Chinese religions (op cit: 2023).

Figure 4.1 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

Source: Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

The results presented in Figure 4.1 show that generally, South Africa's population is predominantly affiliated to Christianity, and the percentage of persons affiliated to this religion increased from 75,9% in 1996 to 84,5% in 2022. However, it is also noted that persons affiliated to Traditional African Religion increased by almost eight percentage points (from 0,0% to 7,8% over the same period). Conversely, persons with no religion affiliation decreased by 8,8 percentage points, from 11,7% to 2,9%. Furthermore, the percentage share of persons affiliated to Islam (1,4% in 1996 to 1,6% in 2022) and Hinduism (1,4% in 1996 to 1,1% in 2022) slightly changed between 1996 and 2022. The proportion of those undetermined decreased from 9,4% in 1996 to 1,9% in 2022, this may be attributed to improve data collection processes between censuses.

4.3.1 Regional trends and patterns in religious affiliation

In South Africa, there are distinct differences in the nine provinces, attributed to population settlement dynamics across the various ethnic groups, and this in turn explains differences in certain aspects of life including religious affiliation/belief. This sub-section profiles provincial variations in religious affiliation in the last three decades.

Table 4.1 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination and province, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

Province	Religious affiliation/belief									Total
	Census year	Christianity	Islam	Traditional African Religion	Hinduism	Jewish Faith/ Hebrew	Other beliefs	No religious affiliation/belief	Undetermined	
Western Cape	1996	78,2	6,9	0,0	0,1	0,4	0,1	5,2	9,1	100,0
	2001	81,9	6,5	0,0	0,2	0,4	0,5	9,0	1,6	100,0
	2022	84,8	5,2	5,2	0,2	0,2	0,7	1,9	1,8	100,0
Eastern Cape	1996	82,7	0,3	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,0	8,9	7,8	100,0
	2001	86,8	0,3	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,5	10,6	1,4	100,0
	2022	85,4	0,6	11,0	0,1	0,0	0,2	1,3	1,3	100,0
Northern Cape	1996	87,2	0,4	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	2,0	10,3	100,0
	2001	95,1	0,5	0,4	0,1	0,0	0,5	2,5	0,9	100,0
	2022	94,3	0,7	0,6	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,3	3,9	100,0
Free State	1996	90,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,8	7,0	100,0
	2001	94,3	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,6	3,9	0,9	100,0
	2022	92,2	0,5	4,9	0,0	0,0	0,1	1,3	1,0	100,0
KwaZulu-Natal	1996	68,5	1,5	0,0	5,5	0,0	0,0	13,9	10,4	100,0
	2001	72,7	1,5	0,2	4,7	0,0	0,6	18,5	1,8	100,0
	2022	74,3	1,9	13,5	4,2	0,0	0,2	3,3	2,6	100,0
North West	1996	88,7	0,4	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,0	3,5	7,2	100,0
	2001	93,5	0,4	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,5	4,7	0,8	100,0
	2022	94,6	0,3	2,3	0,0	0,0	0,1	1,2	1,5	100,0
Gauteng	1996	74,0	1,4	0,0	0,7	0,5	0,1	12,2	11,2	100,0
	2001	76,7	1,6	0,1	0,8	0,5	0,9	17,9	1,5	100,0
	2022	85,1	1,6	6,0	0,7	0,1	0,3	4,0	2,2	100,0
Mpumalanga	1996	76,1	0,5	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	11,2	12,0	100,0
	2001	82,3	0,5	0,3	0,1	0,0	0,8	14,8	1,1	100,0
	2022	88,4	0,5	7,7	0,1	0,0	0,1	1,8	1,4	100,0
Limpopo	1996	64,0	0,1	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	27,9	7,7	100,0
	2001	67,8	0,2	1,4	0,0	0,0	0,3	29,4	0,9	100,0
	2022	86,2	0,5	6,3	0,0	0,0	0,1	5,1	1,8	100,0

Source: Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

As seen in Table 4.1, there were distinct provincial variations in religious affiliation. Looking at KwaZulu-Natal Province, the findings indicate the highest proportions of persons affiliated to Hinduism in all census years, although there was a slight decrease (1996: 5,5%; 2001: 4,7% & 2022: 4,2%). In Census 2022, the province recorded the highest percentage share of persons affiliated to African Traditional religion (13,5%), whilst the percentage of persons not affiliated to any religion increased between Censuses 1996 (13,9%) and 2001 (18,5%) and decreased significantly in Census 2022 (3,3%). Limpopo province on the other hand used to have the highest percentage share of persons not affiliated to any religion in Censuses 1996 and 2001 (27,9% and 29,4%), however, there was a sharp decrease of 24 percentage points between 2001 and 2022.

The profile of Western Cape showed the highest percentage of persons affiliated to Islam religion despite a slight decrease across all census points (i.e. 6,9% in 1996, 6,5% in 2001 and 5,2% in 2022). Eastern Cape province recorded the second highest percentage in persons affiliated to African Traditional religion in Census 2022 (11%).

Table 4.2 - Percentage distribution of population by religious denomination and population group, Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

Population group	Census year	Christianity	Islam	Traditional African Religion	Hinduism	Jewish Faith/ Hebrew	Other beliefs	No religious affiliation/ belief	Undetermined	Total
Black African	1996	76,7	0,1	0,1	0	0	0	14,0	9	100,0
	2001	79,9	0,2	0,4	0	0	0,6	17,5	1,3	100,0
	2022	85,4	0,3	9,5	0	0	0,1	3,0	1,6	100,0
Coloured	1996	81,9	7	0	0,1	0	0	2,3	8,6	100,0
	2001	86,8	7,4	0	0,1	0	0,5	3,8	1,3	100,0
	2022	90,8	6,8	0,3	0,1	0	0,1	0,5	1,4	100,0
Indian/Asian	1996	19,0	22,8	0	49,9	0	0,1	1,3	6,9	100,0
	2001	24,4	24,6	0	47,3	0,1	0,4	2,2	0,9	100,0
	2022	33,0	24,0	0,2	37,1	0,1	0,9	0,9	3,8	100,0
White	1996	81,3	0,1	0	0	1,3	0,1	5,3	11,9	100,0
	2001	86,9	0,2	0	0,1	1,4	0,6	8,8	2,0	100,0
	2022	87,5	0,3	0,1	0,1	0,7	1,8	4,8	4,8	100,0
Other	1996	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2022	63,0	18,1	1,6	0,6	0,3	1,6	4,3	10,5	100,0

Source: Censuses 1996, 2001 and 2022

Note: Other population group not collected in 1996 and 2001

The findings presented in Table 4.2 showed that four out of every five persons from the black African, coloured and white population groups were affiliated to Christianity in the country and there has been upward trend in proportions of persons affiliated to this religion since 1996. The proportion of Indians/Asians who were affiliated to Christianity increased by 14 percentage points between 1996 and 2022 to 33%, however, the majority were affiliated to Hinduism (37,1%). It is noted that almost half of Indians/Asians persons were affiliated to Hinduism in the period 1996-2001, but there was a decrease of 9 percentage points between 2001 and 2022. It is also noted that the Indian/Asian population group recorded the highest proportion of persons affiliated to Islam in all census years. Results confirm great religious affiliation diversity among the Indians/Asians in the country. Population group variations further showed that black African population group recorded a significant increase in persons affiliated to Traditional African Religion (from 0,1% in 1996 to 9,5% in 2022).

4.3.2 Religious affiliation and selected socio-demographic characteristics

More insights on differences in religious affiliations between males and females are profiled in this section using results on bivariate analysis. The relationship between religion and sex are multifaceted and vary greatly. The results in presented in Table 4.3 showed that six in ten males (61,3%) were not affiliated to any religion compared to females (38,7%).

Furthermore, the results on population group variations showed that a majority of those not affiliated to any religion were black Africans (85,8%), followed by whites; however, this is a reflection of the distribution of the population by race in the country, i.e. black Africans are a majority. The profile of the population by age of those affiliated and those not affiliated to religion followed a similar distribution.

Table 4.3 - Distribution of the population by religious affiliation status and socio-demographic characteristics, Census 2022

	Affiliated to religion		Not affiliated to religion		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Sex						
Male	27 994 830	47,9	1 076 251	61,3	29 071 081	48,3
Female	30 430 224	52,1	678 045	38,7	31 108 269	51,7
Total	58 425 054	100,0	1 754 296	100,0	60 179 350	100,0
Population group						
Black African	47 674 479	81,9	1 490 671	85,5	49 165 150	82,0
Coloured	4 930 397	8,5	27 230	1,6	4 957 627	8,3
Indian/Asian	1 608 631	2,8	14 874	0,9	1 623 506	2,7
White	4 006 746	6,9	209 784	12,0	4 216 530	7,0
Total	58 220 253	100,0	1 742 560	100,0	59 962 813	100,0
Age						
0-14	15 606 654	26,7	353 839	20,2	15 960 493	26,5
15-34	20 219 478	34,6	703 788	40,1	20 923 266	34,8
35-64	18 819 908	32,2	603 806	34,4	19 423 714	32,3
65+	3 779 014	6,5	92 863	5,3	3 871 877	6,4
Total	58 425 054	100,0	1 754 296	100,0	60 179 350	100,0
Country of birth						
SA-born	56 234 673	96,3	1 622 898	92,6	57 857 570	96,2
Foreign-born	2 141 777	3,7	128 768	7,4	2 270 545	3,8
Total	58 376 449	100,0	1 751 665	100,0	60 128 115	100,0

Source: Census 2022

Further analysis was done to gain insights on differences in religion affiliations by population group, sex, age, province using multivariate analyses (see Appendix G). In modern society, for example, the youth are expected to be less likely affiliated to any religion as more of them seem to be less interested in participating in certain cultural aspects. In terms of sex variations in religion affiliations, it is traditionally expected for females to have high odds of being affiliated to a particular religious denomination when compared to their male counterparts.

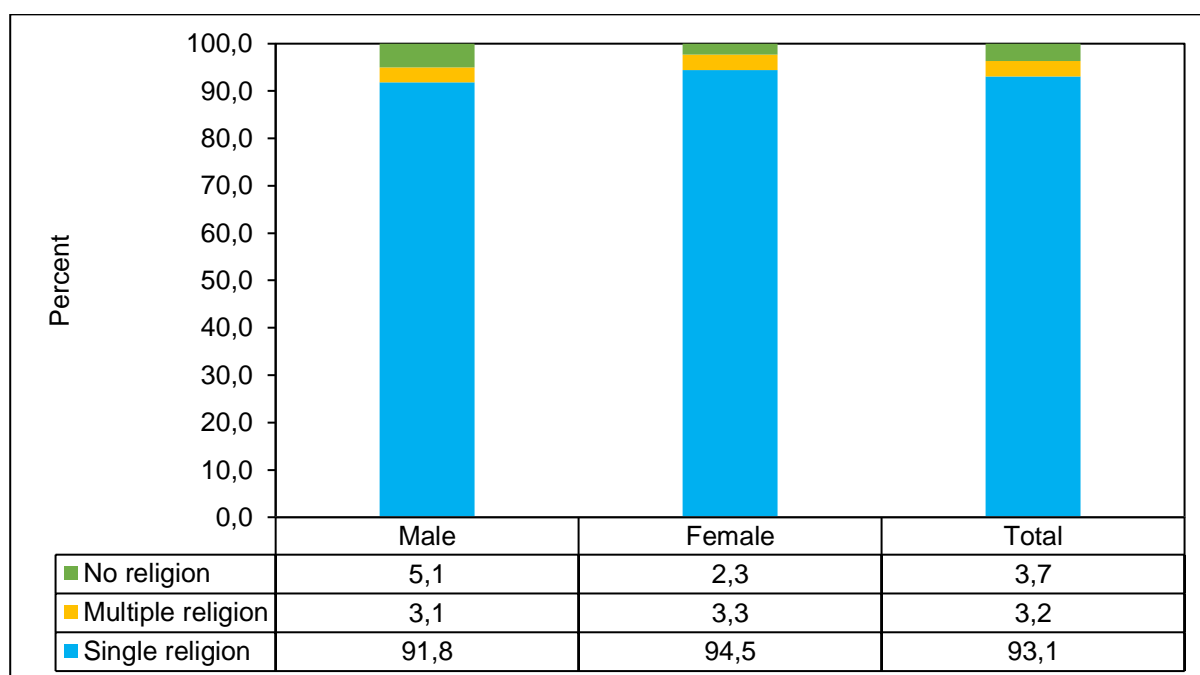
The results on age and sex confirmed the expected patterns. It is noted that age matters when it comes to affiliation to any religious denomination. The adjusted odds ratios (AOR) for adults (0,92) depict that they were less likely to be not affiliated to a religious denomination compared to the youth. The results on sex variations showed that women were generally less likely to be not affiliated to a religion, depicted by odd ratio of 0,52. Looking at population group dynamics, with odds of 1.78, whites were more likely to be not affiliated to any religion compared to black Africans. On the contrary, coloureds (0,23 AOR) and Indians/Asians (0,24 AOR) were less likely to be not affiliated to a religious denomination compared to black Africans.

Looking at provincial variations, three out of eight provinces (Limpopo, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal) with AORs of 2.14, 1.50 and 1.45, respectively, indicate that persons in these provinces were more likely to be not affiliated to a religion when compared to the Western Cape. The rest of the provinces were less likely to be not affiliated to a religious denomination compared to the Western Cape.

4.4 Religious affiliation/belief in households

This sub-section examines the distribution of households whose members all belong to one religion, households where members are affiliated to different religions and households where no member is affiliated to any religious denomination. by sex and population group of the head of household. Results show that an overwhelming 93,1% of households in the country are single-religion households.

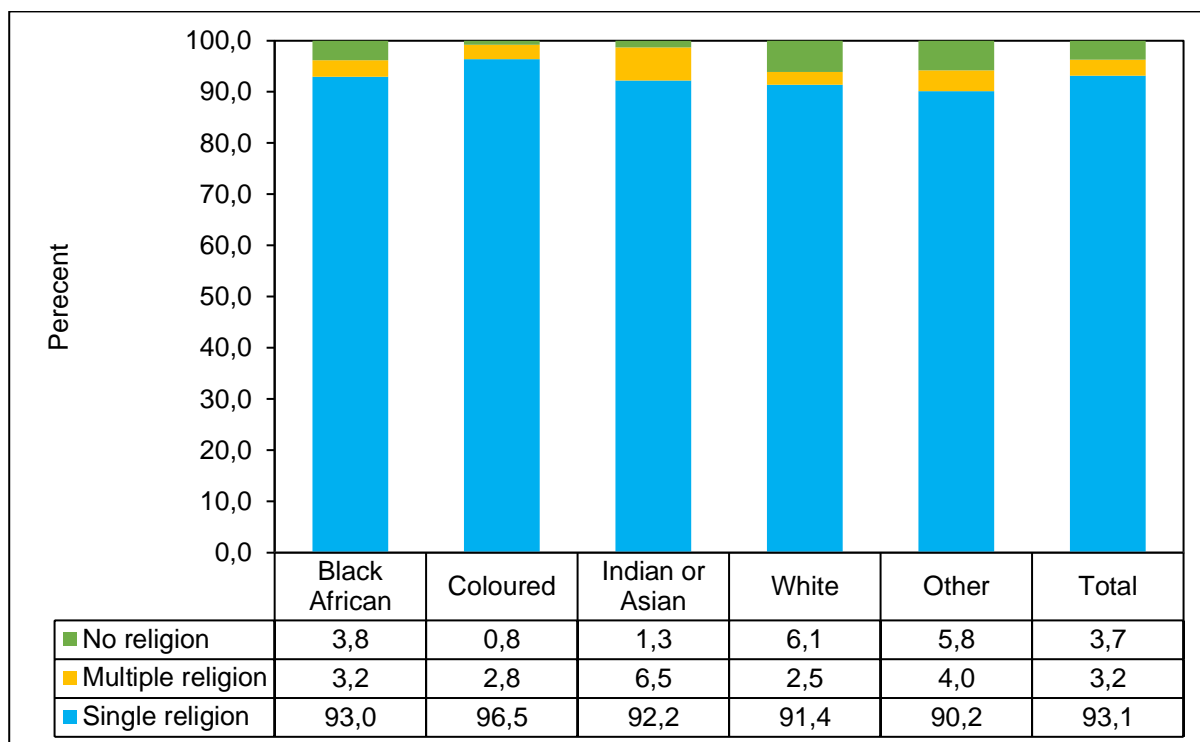
Figure 4.2 - Distribution of households by religious affiliation and sex of head of household, Census 2022



Source: Census 2022

The findings in Figure 4.2 showed that a higher proportion of female-headed households were affiliated to a single religion (94,5%) compared to male-headed households (91,8%). A similar pattern was found among households with multiple religions. Furthermore, it was observed that 5,1% of male-headed households were not affiliated to any religion compared to 2,3% of female-headed households.

Figure 4.3 - Distribution of households by religious affiliation and population group of head of household, Census 2022



Source: Census 2022

Figure 4.3 shows the distribution of households by religious affiliation and population group of the head of household. The results indicate that households headed by coloureds (96,5%) had the highest proportion associated to a single religion, followed by those headed by black Africans at 93,0%. Multiple religion households were mostly common among households headed by Indian/Asians (6,5%) and “other” population group (4,0%), which was higher than the 3,2% national average. Lastly, the results show that 6,1% of white-headed households were not affiliated to any religion; Indian/Asian and coloured headed households had the lowest proportions of households not affiliated to any religion at 1,3% and 0,8%, respectively.

CHAPTER 5: CULTURE AND NUPTIALITY

5.1 Introduction

The cultural dynamics of marriage in South Africa are shaped by a complex blend of diverse ethnic traditions, religious practices, modern influences, and socio-economic factors. Over time, marriage in South Africa has evolved, blending traditional practices with modern influences and adapting to the changing notions of equality, individual rights and societal expectations.

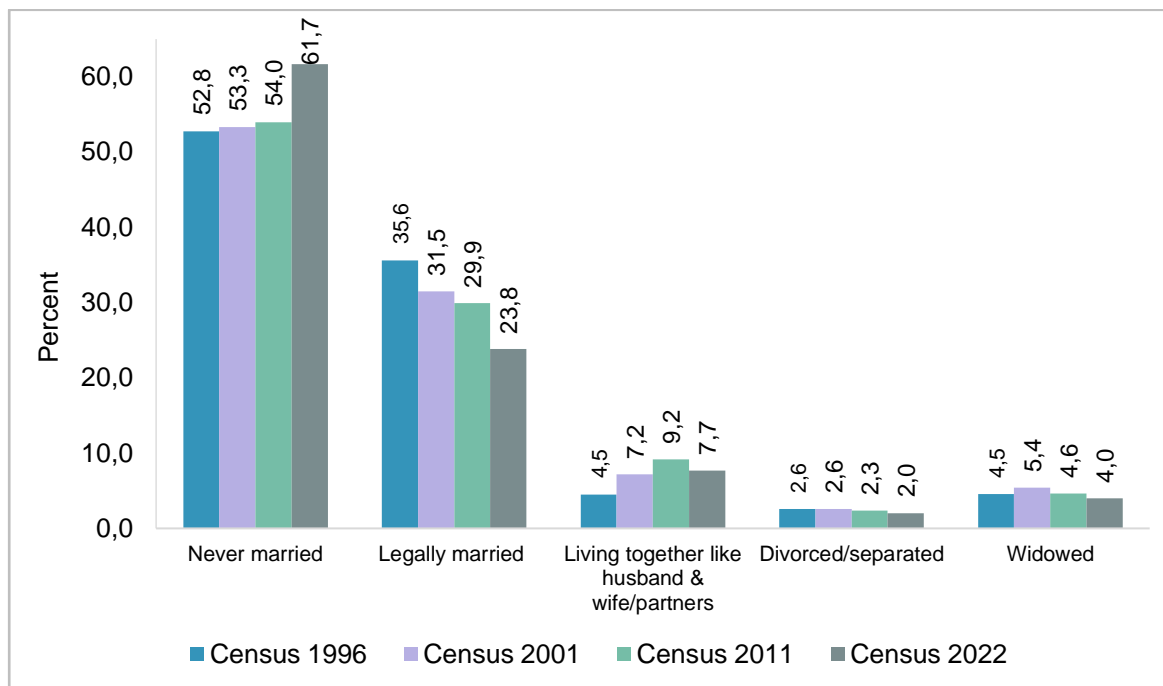
Marital status is a key question used in population censuses to understand changing patterns in marriage, cohabitation, divorce and separation. In South African censuses, this question is posed to persons 12 years and older. This chapter examines the trends in marital status using data from Census 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2022 and analyses marital behaviour using the Singulate Mean at Marriage (SMAM) to determine the role of cultural factors in shaping the marital landscape in South Africa.

5.2 Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) measures

The Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) is an indirect demographic indicator representing the mean age at first marriage of those in a hypothetical cohort who will eventually marry by age 50 (Hajnal, 1953, cited in Faust, 2004). SMAM is derived from the average age at marriage from age-specific marital status distributions of a population rather than directly asking individuals (UN, 2013). The estimated average age at marriage provides us with valuable information about societal trends and cultural and religious behaviours related to marriage (Anukriti & Dasgupta, 2017).

5.3 Overview of nuptiality trends from 1996–2022

Nuptiality trends over time confirm that marriage is not only the choice of an individual but is shaped by societal norms, values, and expectations. As South African society evolves, through the impact of education, gender equality, economic challenges, and legal reforms, so too do the patterns of marriage and family formation. Understanding nuptiality trends provides insight into how cultural values are changing in a rapidly transforming society.

Figure 5.1 - Distribution of population 12 years and above by marital status, Census 1996–2022

The trends on nuptiality from 1996 to 2022 in Figure 5.1 above, shows a clear decrease in the percentage of the legally married population from 35,6% in 1996 to 31,5% in 2001, 29,9% in 2011 and just less than one-quarter (23,8%) in 2022. Conversely, those who never married increased, with the biggest increase from 54% in 2001 to 61,7% in 2022. Those that reported living together as a married couple or cohabiting increased from 4,2% in 1996, 7,2% in 2001, and its highest of 9,2% in 2011.

5.4 Population group and its influence on nuptiality patterns

5.4.1 Trend analysis of persons who reported that they were never married

The decision to remain unmarried in South Africa, like in many African countries, is influenced by the intersection of traditional cultural values and modern socio-economic factors. While marriage has historically been a central institution, trends in urbanisation, education, economic independence, and changing gender norms are gradually reshaping attitudes toward marriage.

Recent studies on marriage patterns in South Africa reveal a clear trend towards decreasing proportions of married women and an increase in age at first marriage (Udjo, 2001; Budlender et al., 2004). Additionally, studies on family formation have pointed out that marriage for young African couples has become too financially onerous given the growing ‘commercialisation’ of *lobola* (bride price) and male unemployment in the post-apartheid period.

These factors may act as a considerable constraint to marriage among African couples (Posel & Casale, 2009; Makiwane, 2004).

Despite these trends, remaining unmarried can still be stigmatised, especially for women. In some communities, there's still a belief that women should be married to be seen as fully realised adults or to achieve social respectability. This stigma can be exacerbated by the pressure to have children within the confines of marriage.

Figure 5.2 - Proportion of never-married persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022

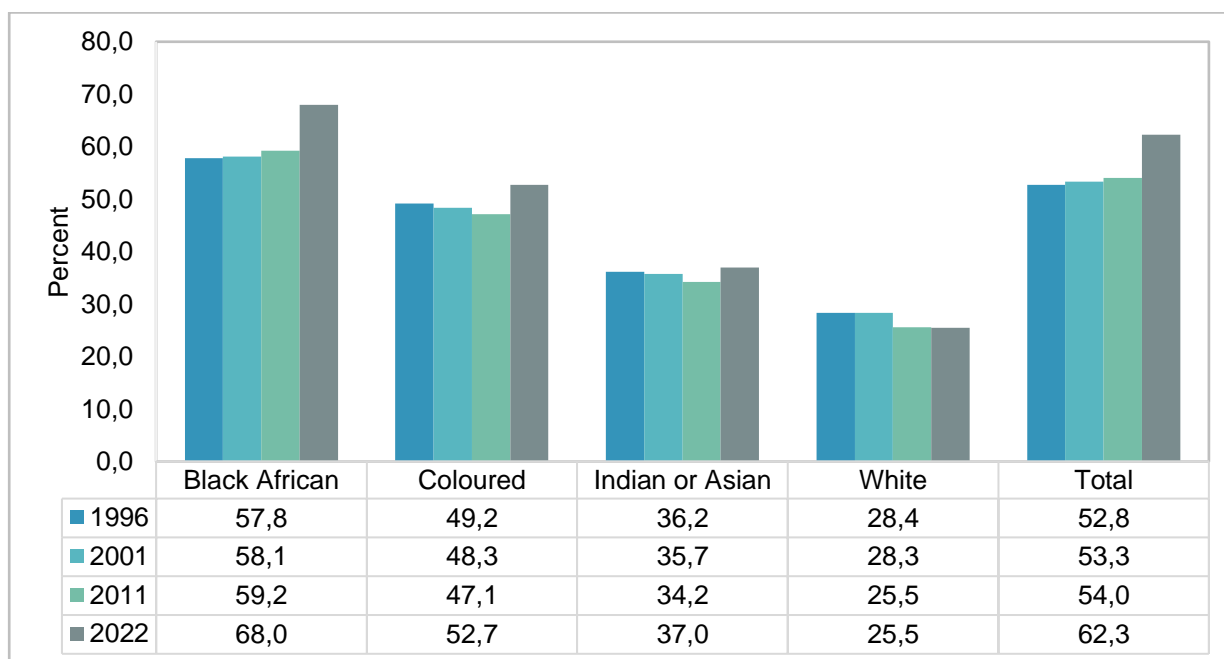


Figure 5.2 above, presents proportions of the never-married persons by population group for censuses conducted in 1996, 2001, 2011, and 2022. The overall trend indicates a 9,5 % increase in the proportion of persons who have never been married, from 52,8% in 1996 to 62,3% in 2022. The highest percentage, which is also above the national average, is observed among black Africans, with a noticeable increase of 10,2% from 57,8% in 1996 to 68,0% in 2022.

The white population group has consistently had the lowest percentage of persons who have never been married, staying relatively stable between 25,5% and 28,4%. The coloured and Indian/Asian population groups show a steady trend with a slight decrease between 1996 and 2011, followed by an increase of 5,6% and 2,8% between 2011 and 2022, respectively.

5.4.2 Trend analysis of the married population

Udjo (1996) indicates that by comparison, marriage in Western cultures is a single event at a particular point in time, which is usually defined by a legal or religious ceremony, whereas in non-Western cultures, it can be a prolonged process. As a result, two parties in the process of marriage may classify themselves as either married or not, depending on their understanding of the stage they have reached in the process of marriage. This assertion, among other factors, is particularly important when comparing marriage across population groups.

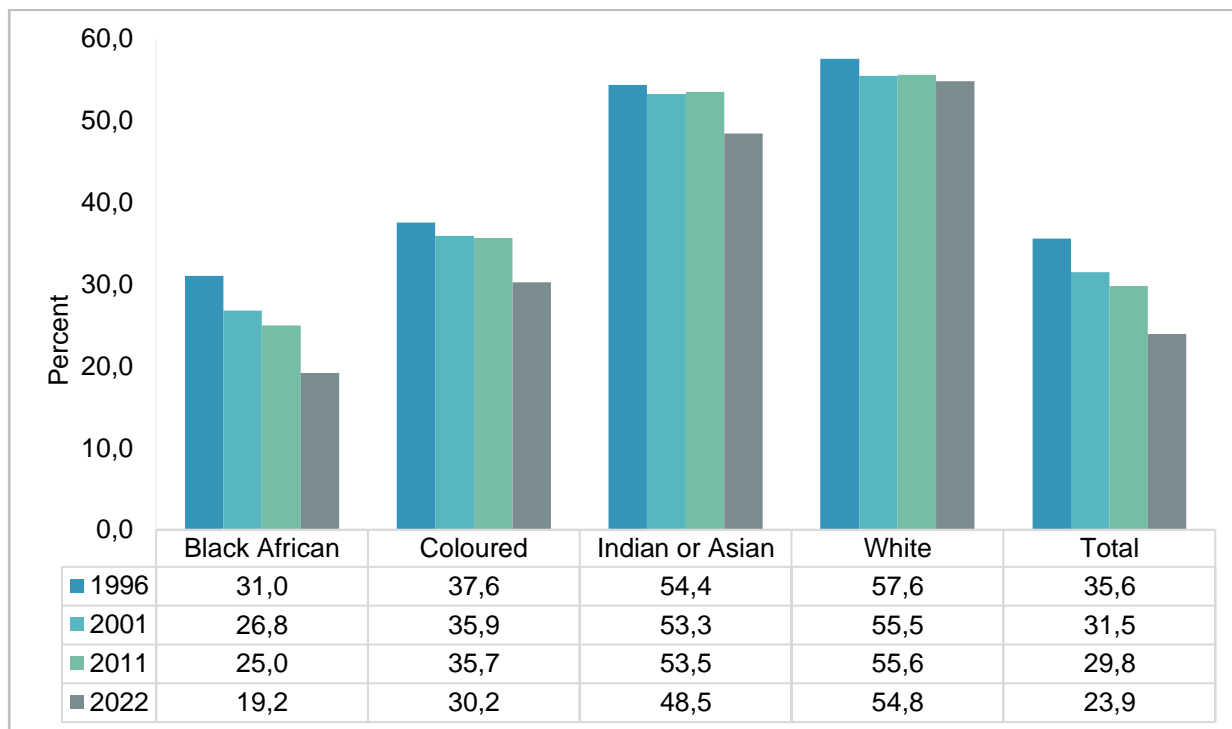
Figure 5.3 - Proportion of married persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022

Figure 5.3 above presents the proportions of married persons by population group for Census 1996 to Census 2022. The overall trend shows a decline of 11,7% in marriage rates across all population groups, from 35,6% in 1996 to 23,9% in 2022, suggesting a broader societal shift away from marriage.

Black Africans reflect a significant decrease of 11,8% of individuals who are married, followed by the coloured population at 7,4% over the same period. White and Indian/Asian population groups reflect smaller decreases in marriage rates, which suggests a more stable trend compared to the other population groups. This data indicates a general decline in marriage rates in South Africa over the past few decades, with variations across different racial groups.

The odds ratio presented in the regression model results (see Appendix 2.1) indicates the likelihood of being married compared to being never married based on specific factors such as population group, sex, education, language, religion, or country of birth. An Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) greater than 1 suggests that the likelihood of being married increases for the given factor. A p-value less than 0,05 indicates statistical significance, meaning the association between marital status and the factor is unlikely to have occurred by chance (Frost, 2018). This confirms that Indian/Asians (AOR = 2,28) and whites (AOR = 4,60) are more likely to be married than their black African counterparts, whose AOR is 1,00. This suggests that race and ethnicity are significant predictors of marital status, with Indian/Asian and white groups exhibiting higher odds of marriage.

5.4.3 Trend analysis of persons living together as married partners

In South Africa, cohabitation is a complex issue influenced by a variety of cultural, economic, and religious factors. While cohabitation without marriage is becoming more common, especially in urban settings, traditional values surrounding marriage still hold significant weight in certain communities where cohabitation is still frowned upon. Cohabitation may be viewed as preparation for marriage by some individuals, while others view it as an alternative to marriage. These may result from different factors that contribute to the delay of marriage and those that are regarded as constraints. Ultimately, attitudes toward cohabitation in South Africa continue to evolve, reflecting broader changes in social and cultural norms.

Figure 5.4 - Proportion of persons 12 years and older living together as married partners by population group, Census 1996–2022

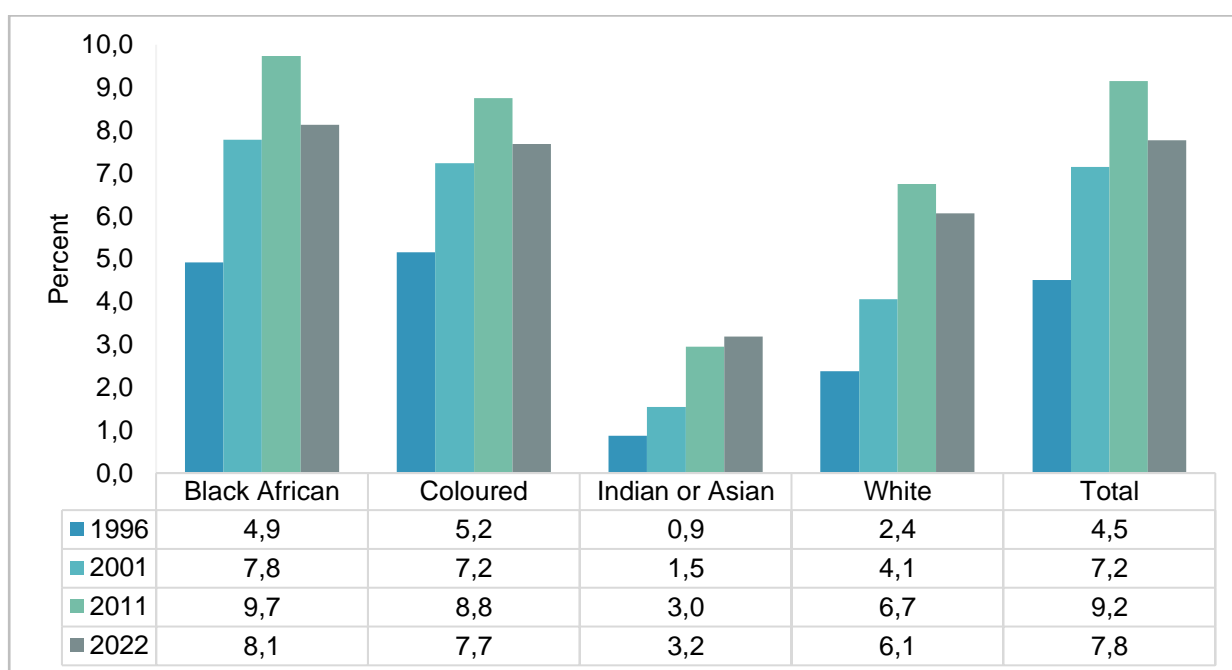


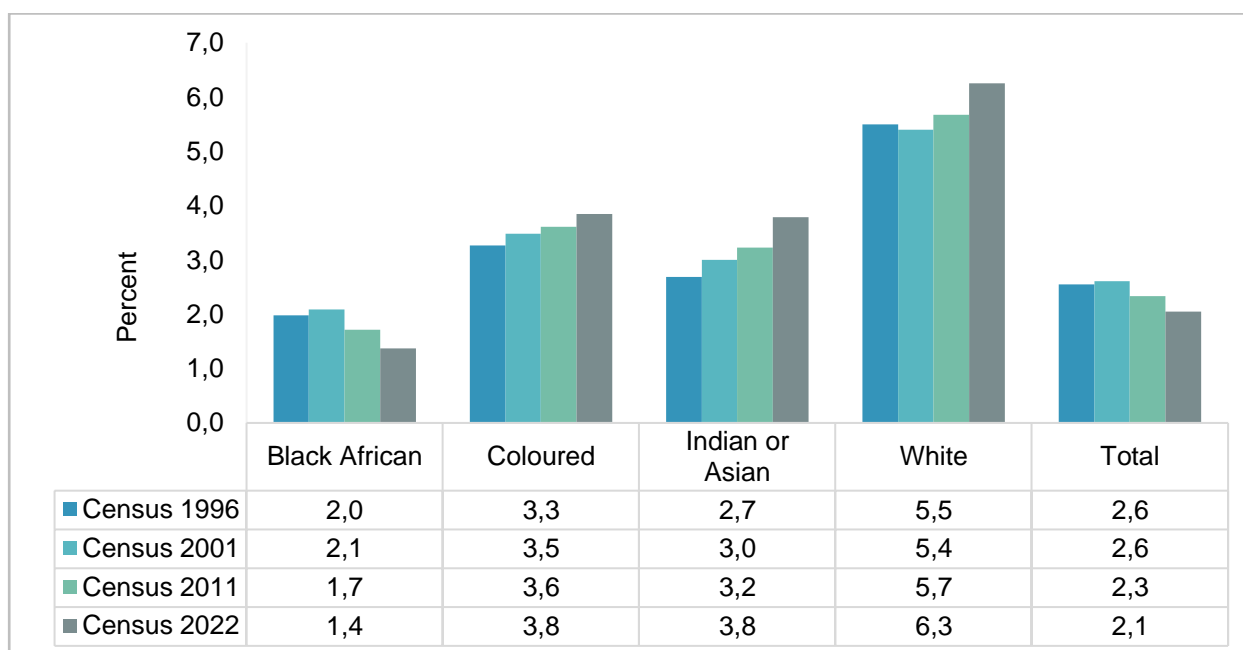
Figure 5.4 above presents the proportions of persons 12 years and older living together as married partners by population group from Census 1996 to Census 2022. The overall trend shows a 3,3% increase in the rates of those living together as married partners, from 4,5% in 1996 to 7,8% in 2022, with a slight decrease in the later years (from 9,2% in 2011 to 7,8% in 2022). Black Africans reflect the highest increase of 3,2% in this category, rising from 4,9% in 1996 to 8,1% in 2022. The proportions for black Africans are slightly higher than the national average for all the censuses.

The coloured population follows with an increase of 2,5% over the same period. The white population also show a steady increase of 2,4% over the same period. The Indian/Asian population group, on the other hand, show a gradual increase from 0,9% in 1996 to 3,2% in 2022, indicating a slower uptake of this living arrangement compared to other population groups. This data suggests that living together as unmarried partners has become more common over the years across all racial groups in South Africa, although the rates remain higher among black African and coloured groups compared to Indian/Asian and white groups.

5.4.4 Trend analysis of separated/divorced persons

Census 1996 reflected the separated and the divorced as one variable while the other censuses showed them separately. The two variables were hence combined in the subsequent censuses for comparability purposes. However, caution should be taken when interpreting the results since not all separations will end in a divorce.

Figure 5.5 - Proportion of divorced/separated persons 12 years and older by population group, Census 1996–2022



The results suggest that while the rate of separation/divorce is slightly increasing for some groups, especially among white individuals, it has generally remained low overall, with a slight decrease across the total population. The overall trend shows a slight decline in separation or divorce rates for the total population, from 2,6% in 1996 to 2,1% in 2022. Black Africans have the lowest percentages of separation or divorce, with a slight decline over the years, from 2,0% in 1996 to 1,4% in 2022, and white individuals have the highest separation/divorce rates, which have risen from 5,5% in 1996 to 6,3% in 2022.

Odd ratio results (see Appendix 2.3) show that coloureds (AOR = 1,73), Indian/Asians (AOR = 1,29) and whites (AOR = 1,50) are more likely to be divorced or separated compared to black Africans.

5.4.5 SMAM by sex and population group

Table 5.1 - SMAM by sex and population group, Census 1996–2022

Population group	Census 1996			Census 2001			Census 2011			Census 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Black African	31,2	28,5	29,8	31,6	28,6	30,1	31,8	28,3	30,0	34,1	30,6	32,3
Coloured	28,1	27,1	27,6	28,9	27,2	28,0	29,6	27,3	28,4	32,3	29,8	31,0
Indian/Asian	26,7	23,5	25,1	27,5	24,4	26,0	28,5	25,4	27,0	31,2	28,1	29,7
White	26,8	24,4	25,6	27,3	25,0	26,1	27,5	25,1	26,2	29,2	26,6	27,9
South Africa	30,3	27,9	29,1	30,9	28,1	29,5	31,2	28,0	29,6	33,8	30,7	32,3

Table 5.1 above, shows the SMAM for South Africa by sex and population group for the 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2022 Censuses. The results reflect that SMAM for males is generally higher than that of females in the country, indicating that female South Africans marry earlier than their male counterparts. SMAM for males at the national level has steadily increased from 30,3 years in 1996 to 33,8 years in 2022, while that of females increased from 27,9 years in 1996 to 30,7 years in 2022. Overall, the gap between male and female SMAM has increased over the years. This high and increasing pattern observed in the study is consistent with findings from early studies around family formation incidence in South Africa, such as Magagula (2009), Palamuleni (2010) and Udjo (1996).

5.5 The role of education in nuptial patterns

Kaufman et al. (2001) noted that marriage patterns may be changing because of opportunities such as education and employment that emerge for young women. Further evidence reveals that age at first marriage is rising in Southern African countries, leading to marriage delay. The delay has been characterised by female labour participation, women's acquisition of formal education, urbanisation and the expense of marriage (Magagula, 2009; Udjo, 2010; & Palamuleni, 2010).

The rise of economic independence, particularly for women, has shifted attitudes toward marriage. Women now have greater access to education and the workforce, which has empowered them to delay or reconsider marriage. This is confirmed by the odds ratio results (see Appendix 2.1), which shows those with higher education (tertiary education such as a degree, diploma, postgraduate studies, doctoral studies, etc.) (AOR = 0,83) are 17,1% less likely to be married as individuals with no schooling.

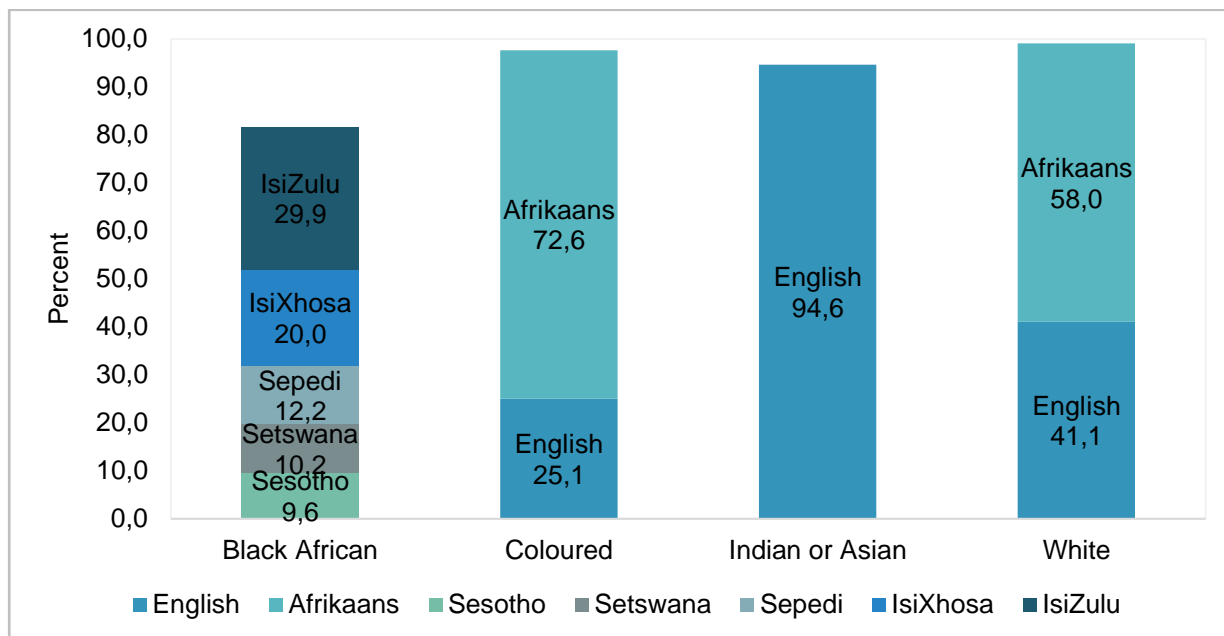
Table 5.2 - SMAM by sex and educational level, Census 1996–2022

Educational level	Census 1996			Census 2001			Census 2011			Census 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
No schooling	30,9	27,2	28,9	31,3	27,1	29,0	31,0	26,3	28,7	32,1	28,3	30,4
Some primary	30,9	27,3	29,1	31,2	27,1	29,3	31,9	26,5	29,6	34,1	29,4	32,3
Completed primary	30,5	27,4	28,9	30,7	26,9	28,8	31,3	26,1	28,9	33,8	28,6	31,6
Some secondary	30,6	28,3	29,4	31,0	28,1	29,6	31,6	27,9	29,8	34,3	30,2	32,3
Grade 12	30,4	28,9	29,6	30,9	29,5	30,2	31,7	29,7	30,7	34,8	31,9	33,3
Higher	28,4	26,9	27,7	29,6	28,0	28,8	30,2	27,8	29,1	32,9	30,8	31,8
Total	30,3	27,9	29,1	30,7	28,0	29,3	31,2	28,0	29,6	34,0	30,8	32,4

Table 5.2 above, indicates that the SMAM across all educational categories has generally increased from 1996 to 2022 for both males and females. The increase is more pronounced for males than for females in all educational categories. The highest mean age at marriage for all census years is observed for those who completed Grade 12. This may suggest changing socio-economic factors such as increased participation in education, changing gender roles, and evolving career ambitions, as indicated in earlier studies on family formations (Magagula, 2009; Ahuejere, 2020). Those with higher education levels recorded the lowest mean age at marriage for the first two census years (1996 and 2001), while those with no schooling recorded the lowest mean age at marriage for the last two census years (2011 and 2022).

5.6 Language and its impact on marital decisions

Language is a significant marker of identity and culture, with each of South Africa's 12 official languages reflecting the country's diverse cultural heritage. As culture and value systems are deeply embedded in language, different language groups may hold varying perspectives on marriage and its associated customs and traditions (Mutasa, 2015). Language not only shapes an individual's sense of self but also their relationships with others, which influences their attitude towards marriage (UN, 2018; Thomas & Maree, 2021). Whilst language will be used as a proxy for ethnicity, it is acknowledged that the use of language as a proxy for ethnicity is complex and that normative cultural differences exist among these groups (Botha, 2022).

Figure 5.6 - Dominant language spoken by population group, Census 2022

In South Africa, the language spoken varies considerably by population group. Figure 5.6 above, shows that the overwhelming majority of the Indian/Asian population in the country reported speaking English in their households. Coloureds spoke Afrikaans most often (72,6%), with just over one-quarter (25,1%) speaking English. Majority of the white population (58%) spoke Afrikaans, and just over two-fifths (41,1%) spoke English. Three in ten (29,9%) of the black African population spoke mostly IsiZulu in their households, 20% isiXhosa, 12,2% Sepedi, 10,2% Setswana and 9,6% Sesotho.

5.6.1 Marital status & language spoken in the household

Figure 5.7 - Percentage of the legally married population 12 years and above by language spoken in the household, Census 2001, 2011 & 2022

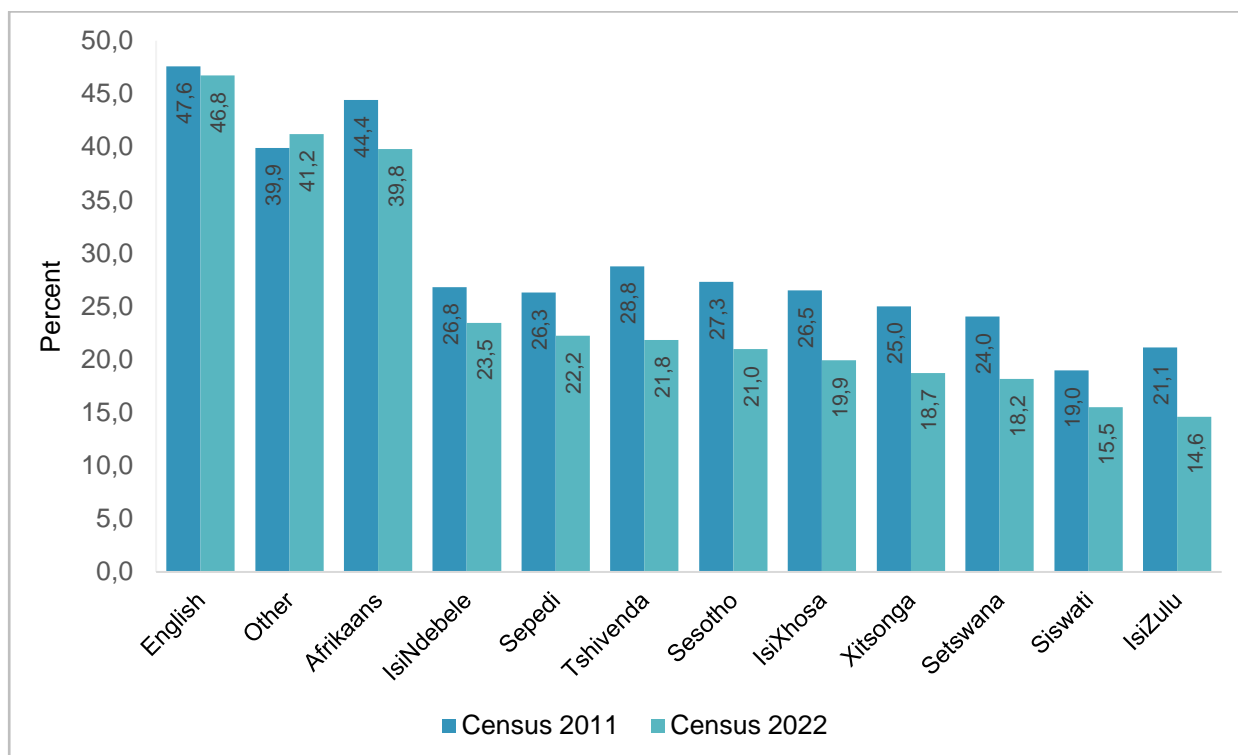
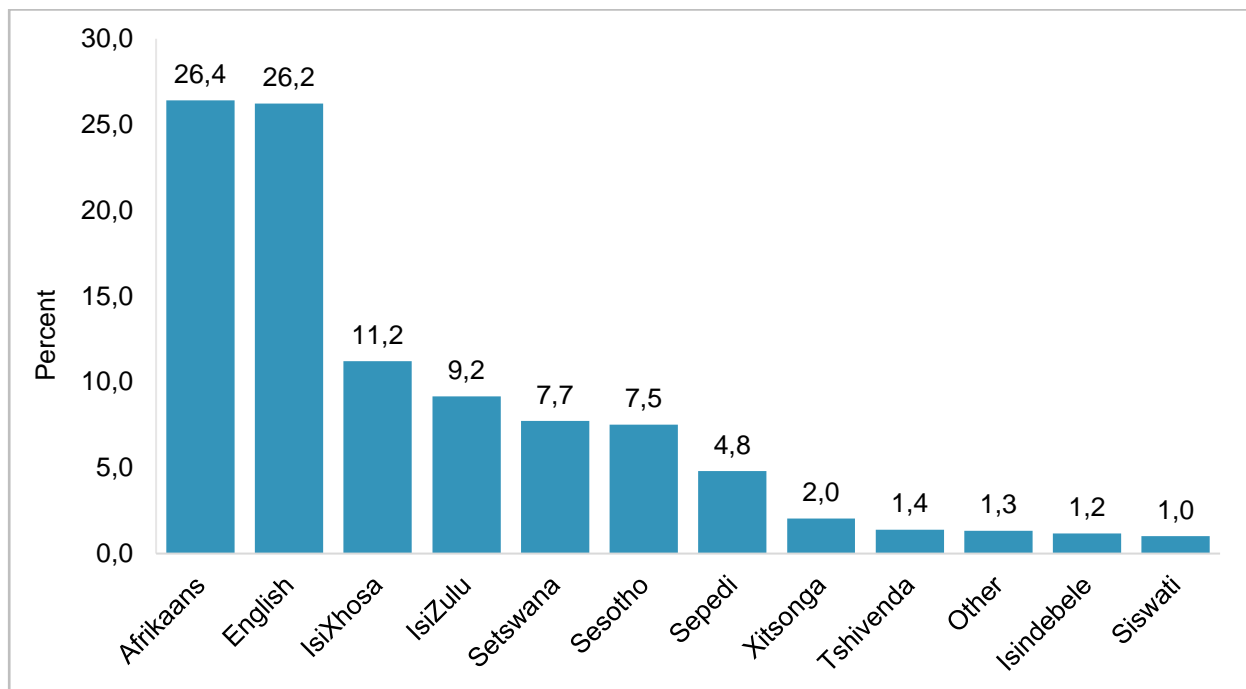


Figure 5.7 above, shows the proportion of the legally married population by the language spoken most often in the household, based on Census 2011 and 2022 data. Languages predominantly spoken by the white population (Afrikaans and English) and Indian/Asian population (English) tend to have the highest proportions of legally married individuals.

Among the language groups with lower proportions of legally married individuals, the practice of *lobola* plays a central role in the marriage process. In many cases, *lobola* is considered the primary ritual in marriage, with civil registration of the marriage being optional. Particularly in rural areas, many marriages may not be formally registered but are still regarded as valid once *lobola* is paid. This cultural practice may contribute to the lower rates of legal marriages in these language groups. Additionally, the financial demands associated with *lobola* may hinder couples from formalising their marriages legally, leading to a decline in registered marriages (Togarasei & Chitando, 2021). Between 2011 and 2022, the proportion of legally married individuals decreased across all language groups, except for those in the "Other" language category, reflecting the global trend of declining marriage rates (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020).

Appendix 2.1 confirms that English speakers (AOR = 1,28) are 27,4% more likely to be married as compared to speakers of Afrikaans, whilst IsiNdebele (AOR = 0,65), isiXhosa (AOR = 0,56) and isiZulu (AOR = 0,44) speakers were less likely than Afrikaans speakers to be married, all of which are statistically significant.

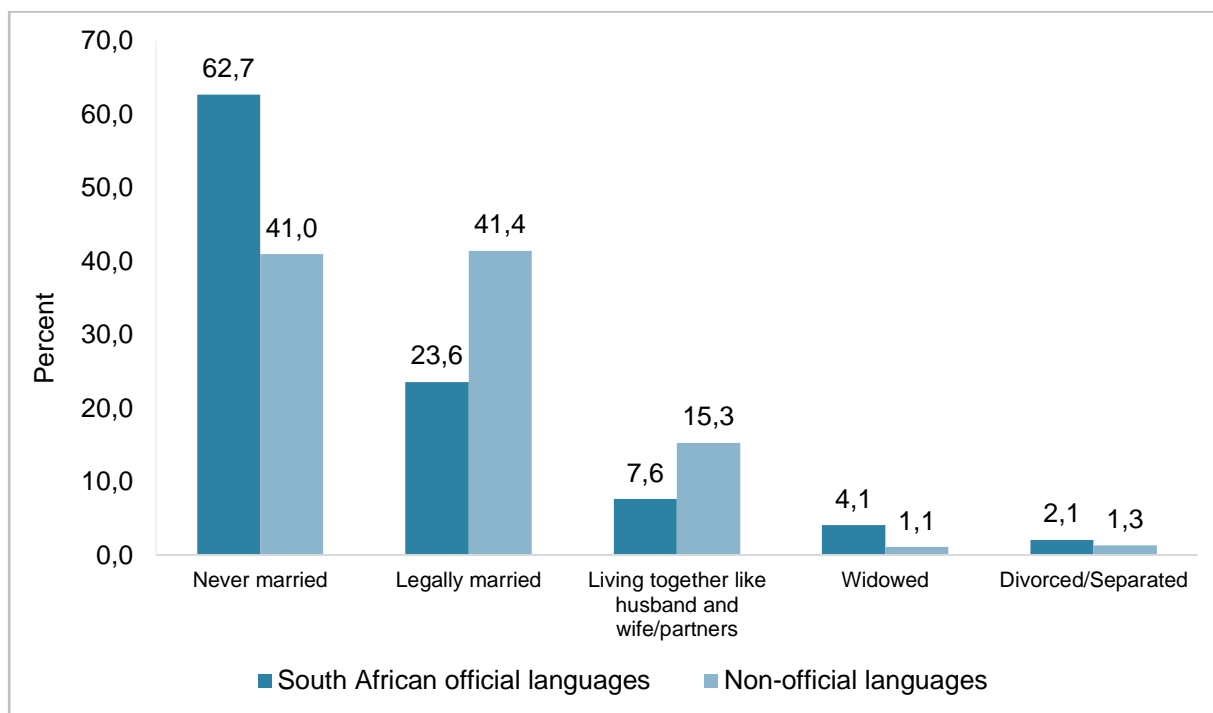
Figure 5.8 - Percentage of the divorced population 12 years and above by language spoken in the household, Census 2022



In 2022, Afrikaans (26.4%) and English speaking individuals (26.2%) accounted for more than half (52.6%) of South Africa's divorced population. This varied considerably to all other language groups, where the proportion of divorce ranged from 11.2% among IsiXhosa speakers to just 1% among SiSwati speakers. English and Afrikaans speakers may be more influenced by Western individualism, which tends to result in a wider acceptance of divorce, particularly when the marriage is considered unhealthy. In contrast, speakers of African languages often emphasise values such as community, togetherness, and *ubuntu*, which can make divorce less acceptable and more likely to be discouraged (Ngihbi & Ekechi, 2022).

5.6.2 Official and non-official languages

Figure 5.9 - Percentage distribution of the population 12 years and above by language spoken (official & non-official) and marital status, Census 2022



Significant differences are seen when comparing the marital status of South African-born individuals who speak an official language to those who speak a non-official language (see Figure 5.7 above). In 2022, over three-fifths (62,7%) of individuals who spoke a South African official language reported being never married, compared to only 41% of non-official language speakers. Additionally, 15,3% of official language speakers reported cohabiting with their partners, more than double the 7,6% recorded among non-official language speakers. There was also a notable difference in the proportion of individuals who were legally married: only 23,5% of official language speakers were legally married, compared to 41,4% of non-official language speakers.

The non-official languages listed in the Census 2022 questionnaire included Chichewa, Shona, Portuguese and the Khoi, Nama and San languages, with Shona recording the highest number of speakers. These non-official languages are predominantly spoken by immigrants, who may be more inclined to marry as a way to establish a stable family structure that offers emotional and social support in a new and uncertain environment (Guirking, Platteau & Wahhaj, 2021).

5.6.3 SMAM by language spoken

Table 5.3 - SMAM by language, Census 1996–2022

Language	Census 1996			Census 2001			Census 2011			Census 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Afrikaans	27,5	26,0	26,7	28,3	26,4	27,3	28,7	26,4	27,5	31,4	29,0	30,2
English	27,3	25,0	26,2	27,9	25,5	26,7	28,8	26,4	27,6	30,7	28,0	29,4
IsiNdebele	33,1	30,9	32,0	33,6	31,3	32,4	32,1	29,2	30,7	32,2	29,1	30,6
IsiXhosa	31,5	28,0	29,7	32,1	28,4	30,2	31,9	28,2	30,0	35,0	31,8	33,4
IsiZulu	32,6	30,5	31,5	32,7	30,3	31,5	33,3	30,0	31,6	36,0	32,8	34,4
Sepedi	31,5	28,1	29,7	32,1	28,5	30,3	32,8	29,0	30,9	34,9	31,5	33,2
Sesotho	29,1	26,9	28,0	30,0	27,2	28,6	30,6	27,0	28,8	33,2	29,5	31,4
Setswana	31,6	29,0	30,3	32,2	29,0	30,6	32,5	29,0	30,8	35,2	31,6	33,4
SiSwati	29,6	27,2	28,4	30,4	27,2	28,7	31,4	27,1	29,3	33,8	29,1	31,5
Tshivenda	28,3	24,9	26,5	29,0	25,8	27,4	29,8	26,3	28,1	32,1	28,0	30,1
Xitsonga	28,7	25,2	27,0	29,1	25,6	27,5	29,6	25,6	27,7	31,9	27,5	29,9
Other	29,6	25,7	28,0	29,5	24,8	27,8	28,1	22,1	25,8	27,1	17,2	23,1

Variations in SMAM by language reflects the interaction of the changing cultural and religious norms. Afrikaans, English, IsiZulu and IsiXhosa all show increases in SMAM from 1996 to 2022, whilst Tshivenda and Xitsonga have lower overall SMAM values. Tshivenda females' SMAM rose from 24,9 in 1996 to 28,0 in 2022. IsiZulu males had the highest SMAM at 36,0 years in 2022, an increase from 32,6 recorded in 1996, while females rose from 30,5 to 32,8 years between 1996 and 2022. The other languages category, which recorded the lowest SMAMs in 2022, may reflect early marriage practices in certain immigrant communities.

5.7 Religion and its influence on nuptiality

In South Africa, religious beliefs are closely tied with cultural and societal norms, significantly influencing views on marriage and the customs and traditions that accompany it. Whilst religious views can vary depending on the interpretation of religious texts, family/community norms and personal beliefs, they can influence the importance, timing and purpose of marriage as well as attitudes toward sex before marriage, which could all influence nuptial decisions.

5.7.1 Marital status & religious affiliation

Figure 5.10 - Percentage distribution of population 12 years and above selected religious beliefs and marital status, Census 2022

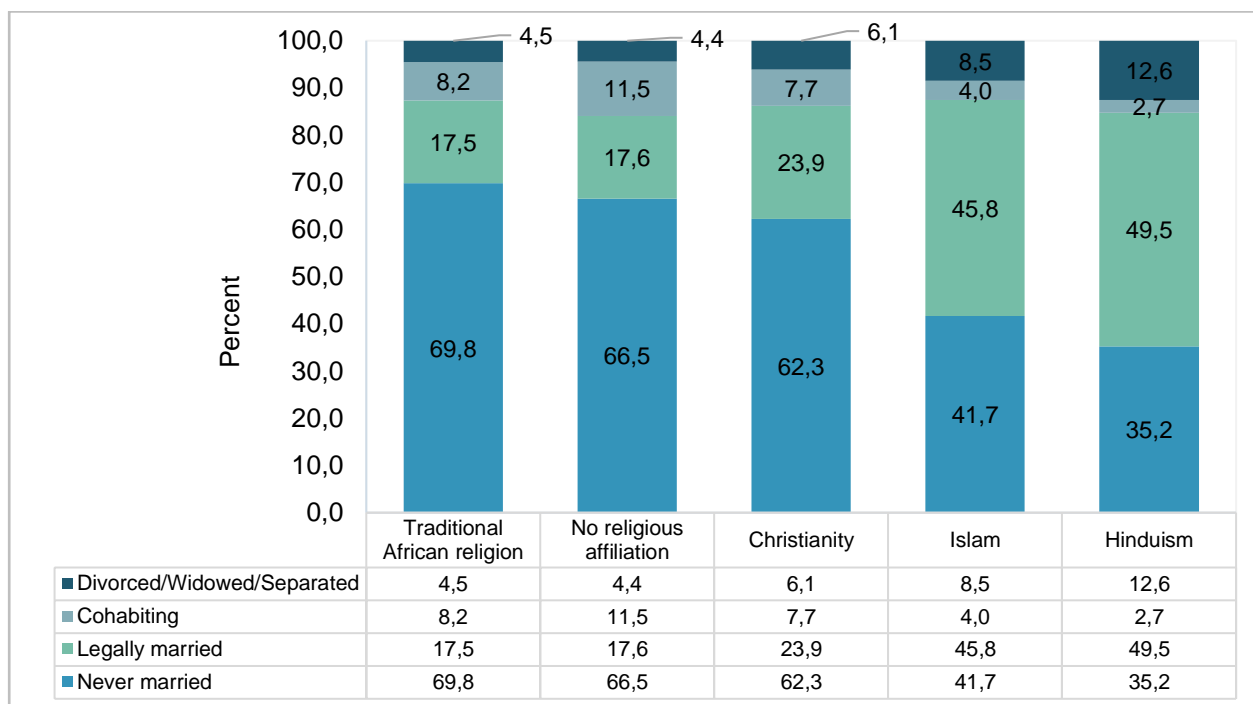


Figure 5.10 above, presents the marital status of the population by religious affiliation. The largest proportion of individuals who reported being never married were those who identified with Traditional African Religions (69,8%) or reported having no religious beliefs (66,5%). The high percentage of never-married individuals amongst those with no religious beliefs highlights the influence of individualism in secular societies as compared to more traditional religions. Secular individuals often prioritise their career, education and personal goals, leading to delayed marriage or not marrying at all (Thornton, Axinn & Xie, 2006).

Two religions with origins in Asia, Hinduism (49,5%) and Islam (45,8%), reported the highest proportions of married individuals. Both religions are considered historically conservative, viewing marriage as a sacred institution, promoting early marriage and strongly encouraging the preservation of cultural and religious traditions (Heaton & Goodman, 1985; Pew Research Center, 2016). This aligns with the odds ratio results (see Appendix 2.1) that show Muslims (AOR = 1,37) and Hindus (AO = 1,24) were more likely to get married as compared to Christians.

Among the 11,5% of the population with no religious beliefs, cohabitation was reported as their current marital status, which corresponds with the high proportion of individuals in this group who had never married. Individuals from all other religious groups are 1,7 times more likely than Christians to be divorced or separated.

5.7.2 SMAM by religious belief

Table 5.4 - SMAM by religious affiliation, Census 1996, 2001 & 2011

Religion	Census 1996			Census 2001			Census 2022		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Christianity	30,3	28,1	29,1	30,9	28,4	29,5	33,8	30,7	32,3
Islam	26,9	24,2	25,5	30,9	27,7	29,4	30,3	25,8	28,3
Traditional African religion	31,6	27,1	29,4	27,8	24,1	26,0	34,7	31,1	33,1
Hinduism	27,2	23,8	25,5	28,2	25,1	26,7	32,6	30,5	31,6
Other religions	30,1	28,1	29,1	30,6	28,3	29,4	33,1	30,2	31,8
No religious affiliation/belief	31,0	27,2	29,4	31,2	27,3	29,7	33,4	29,2	31,8

Note: The Census 2011 questionnaire did not include a question on religious belief/affiliation

Across most religious groups, except for Islam and Traditional African Religions, the SMAM for both males and females increased between 1996 and 2022. In 2022, Traditional African Religions recorded the highest SMAMs, with males marrying at an average age of 34,7 and females at 31,1 years. In contrast, Muslims recorded relatively lower SMAMs, with males marrying at an average age of 30,3 years and females at 25,8 years, the lowest among all religious groups. The significant 4.5year gap between male and female SMAMs in Muslim communities suggests that women tend to marry earlier. This can be attributed to cultural and religious norms, as well as community pressures to fulfil traditional gender roles (Ngubane, Maharaj & Dunn, 2022). In addition, Islamic law permits marriage once individuals reach puberty, which may contribute to the lower age at marriage compared to other religious groups (Hussain, Gul & Muhammad, 2023). However, it is important to emphasise that this practice is evolving, and the Muslim community cannot be seen as homogenous. The value that religions place on marriage and the chastity of women before marriage could also have an effect on age at first marriage (Garenne, 2004).

Individuals affiliated with Hinduism and other religious groups indicated a similar SMAM for both males and females and those with no religious affiliation showed an increasing SMAM. Males' SMAM rose from 31,0 years in 1996 to 33,4 years in 2022, and females' SMAM increased from 27,2 years to 29,2 years.

This pattern may reflect secular influences and personal choices leading to delayed marriages (Parkinson, 2018). Among Christians, the largest religious group in South Africa, the SMAM in 2022 was 33,8 years for males and 30,7 years for females.

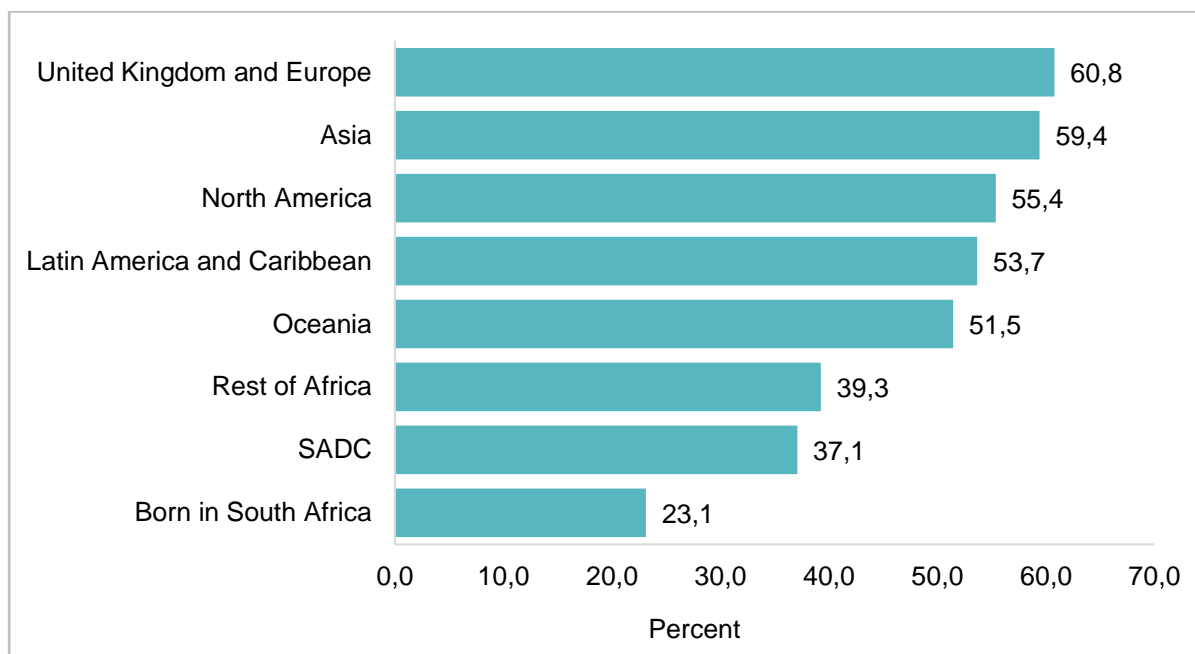
5.8 Nuptiality patterns for foreign-born and South African-born populations

Nuptiality patterns in South Africa differ considerably between those born in the country and those born abroad. South Africa's marriage trends have been shaped by colonialism, apartheid policies, and a diverse range of cultural traditions which are constantly changing. Today, marriage patterns in South Africa are characterised by high proportions of never-married individuals and cohabiting unions. The nuptiality patterns of foreign-born populations can be influenced by legal migration status, economic participation and the marriage norms in

their countries of origin (Mokomane, 2023). This section compares the nuptiality patterns of foreign-born and South African-born populations, focusing on marital status and age at marriage.

5.8.1 Marital status of foreign-born and SA-born population

Figure 5.11 - Percentage of legally married population 12 years and above by region of birth, Census 2022



When looking at the legally married population in South Africa by region of birth, as shown in Figure 5.10 above, a significantly higher proportion of individuals born in the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe (60,8%), Asia (59,4%), and North America (55,4%) are legally married, compared to those born in South Africa (23,1%). The odds ratio results in Appendix 2.1 also shows that foreign-born individuals (AOR = 1,68) are 67,9% more likely to get married than South African-born individuals. Conversely, foreign-born individuals (AOR = 0,67) are 30,4% less likely to be divorced or separated than those born in South Africa. Carmichael et al. (2016) explain that these regions have long-established legal frameworks that prioritise formal marriage. In contrast, many African countries, including South Africa, have diverse marriage practices, some of which place greater importance on customary unions rather than formal legal registration.

In some developed countries, marriage is often linked to legal benefits such as tax advantages, access to healthcare, and inheritance rights, which may provide an additional incentive for individuals to marry. In contrast, individuals born in South Africa and other African countries that are characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and economic instability may opt for cohabitation of informal unions due to financial barriers and the absence of the legal benefits linked to formal unions. Additionally, migrants may see a formal, legalised marriage as a way to gain residence rights or access to legal benefits in South Africa (Christl, De Poli & Ivaškaitė-Tamošiūnė, 2023; Kavuro, 2021).

Figure 5.12 - Percentage of legally married population 12 years and older and the top 10 sending countries to SA, Census 2022

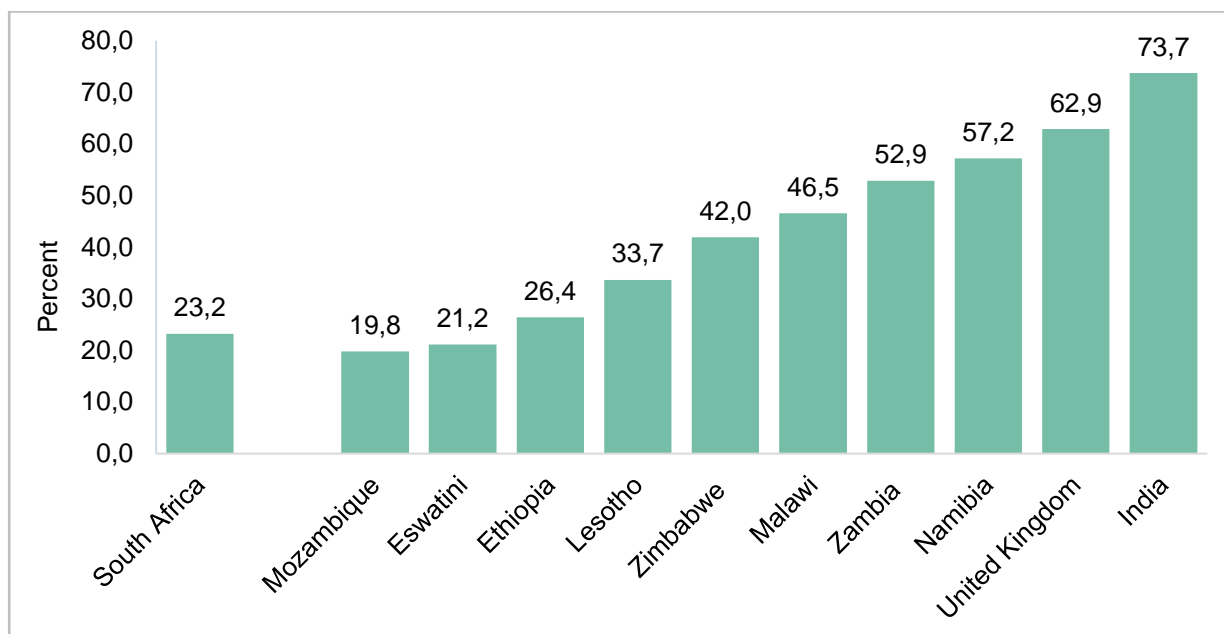


Figure 5.12 above, shows the proportion of legally married population among the leading 10 countries of origin for foreign-born individuals living in 2022. Over half of all immigrants from India (73,7%), the UK (62,9%), Zambia (57,2%) and Namibia (52,9%) are legally married.

In South Africa, where a greater diversity in family structures exists, cohabitation and informal unions are more common than formal legal marriages, with only 23,2% of the population being legally married (Mulaudzi, 2013).

5.8.2 SMAM by foreign-born and SA-born populations

Table 5.5 - SMAM by country of birth, Census 1996–2022

Census year	Sex	Born in SA	Born outside SA	Total
Census 1996	Male	30,4	27,4	30,3
	Female	27,9	24,2	27,9
	Total	29,1	26,2	29,0
Census 2011	Male	31,0	27,9	30,9
	Female	28,2	23,9	28,1
	Total	29,6	26,4	29,5
Census 2011	Male	31,6	27,9	31,1
	Female	28,4	22,0	28,0
	Total	29,9	25,5	29,6
Census 2022	Male	34,5	28,1	33,9
	Female	31,4	20,5	30,7
	Total	32,9	24,8	32,3

Table 5.5 above, shows that South African-born individuals have a higher SMAM than their foreign-born counterparts, with South African males marrying at an average age of 34,5 years in 2022, compared to 28,1 years for foreign-born males. South African females married at an average age of 31,4 years, while foreign-born females married earlier at 20,5 years. Whilst the SMAM increased for all other groups between 1996 and 2022, foreign-born females experienced a decline from 24,2 years in 1996 to 20,5 years in 2022. This could be due to immigrants maintaining the cultural norm of early marriage after relocating. Adserà & Ferrer (2015) suggest that marriage patterns are influenced by a country's cultural norms and potentially indicative of cultural differences between the immigrant and native-born populations. The pattern of delayed marriage norms among those native to the country and the traditional norms of early marriage among immigrant communities have also been observed in Europe & the USA (Mayol-García & Gurrentz, 2021). In addition, shifts in the demographic profile of migrants and the prevalence of younger female migrants could also contribute to this trend (Stats SA, 2023; Mutava, 2023).

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS

Culture is loosely defined as norms, beliefs and practices of a particular group of persons in terms of religion, food, race, ethnicity, language, marriage, music, language and how we behave and interact with loved ones and persons in communities where we live among many other aspects. Some aspects of culture measured in post 1994 South African censuses and profiled in this report included language, population group, religion, marriage, and language. Findings provide major insights on interaction of these cultural aspects in South African society in the last three decades.

Findings on trends and patterns in spoken language over the period 1996-2022 indicate that IsiZulu was the most spoken language, with almost a quarter of the population (24,4%) speaking the language and an increase of two percentage points was recorded over the same period. IsiXhosa (16,3%) and Afrikaans (10,6%) were the second and third spoken languages respectively. It is noted however that there has been a gradual decrease in the proportion of Afrikaans speakers although the actual number increased over the same period by more than 700 000 persons. Provincial variations showed that IsiZulu was predominantly spoken in KwaZulu-Natal (80%), IsiXhosa (81,8%) in Eastern Cape, Sesotho (72,2%) in Free State, Setswana (72,8%) in North West, Sepedi (55,6%) in Limpopo and Afrikaans (54,6%) in Northern Cape. The language profile in each of the outlined six provinces depict dominant cultures from language perspective. On the other hand, the three remaining provinces (Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Western Cape) depict existence of diverse cultures in spoken language, a key aspect of interaction at household and community. Furthermore, provinces sharing international borders recorded higher proportion of households speaking languages similar to those spoken in neighbouring countries; Free State and Lesotho—Sesotho; North West and Botswana—Setswana; Mpumalanga and Eswatini formerly known as Swaziland—Siswati). Such a profile of spoken languages depicts shared cultural practices beyond international borders within SADC region.

In every society, language is one cultural practice that defines one's identity and heritage. Findings depict distinct variations in language spoken across population groups. Among black Africans, a variety of languages are spoken at home; about a third of black African population speak IsiZulu (29,9%) and one in five were IsiXhosa speakers, whilst a majority of coloureds (more than 70%) were Afrikaans speakers, although they recorded a decrease of 10 percentage points over the period 1996-2022. Indian/Asian population group on the other hand predominantly speak English at home. The profile of white population group showed that two languages; English and Africans were the most commonly spoken languages, three in five (58,0%) were English speakers in 2022 and those who speak Afrikaans increased slightly from 39,1% in 1996 to 41,1%. Findings also revealed that multi-lingual households more than doubled (from 3,5% in 1996 to 9,4% in 2022), indicative of a major shift in household cultural dynamics.

Important to note is that the role of language in South Africa goes beyond promoting social interactions at household and community levels. Looking at indicator of progression at school and tertiary, the influence of language is evident on education outcomes. The results showed that English speakers consistently had the highest progression from Grade 9 to completing Grade 12 and persons progressing from Grade 12 to completing bachelor's degrees. Such education attainment profile that may be attributed to past education policies including promotion of dual-language policy that promoted use of English and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction at high school and tertiary levels. However, the gaps between different ethnic groups have and continue to narrow.

Culture interaction at household level was further explored using indicator on multi-racial households over the period 1996–2022. The trends and patterns depict some transformation in cultural integration, reflected in upward trend in multi-racial households (from 1,3% in 2001 to 11,4% in 2022). Provincial variations showed that multi-racial households were more prevalent in urban areas of Western Cape (17%) and Gauteng (14,6%), and least prevalent in Limpopo (6,7%). This emerging pattern may be attributed to modern living, where members from different racial groups/population groups are living together for economic reasons. Variations in multi-racial households at metropolitan level showed that City of Johannesburg had the highest proportion (29,7%) followed by City of Cape Town (24,5%) whilst Mangaung (1,4%) and Nelson Mandela Bay (1,6%) recorded the lowest. Important to note may be the contribution of outlawed apartheid laws that in the past prohibited marriages across population groups.

Religion, another major component of culture that influences way of living and interaction at household and community level has been profiled using trends and patterns in the last three decades using census data. Common religions in South Africa include Abrahamic religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; and Indian religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism. Findings indicated that South Africa's population is predominantly affiliated to Christianity, and persons not affiliated to any religion decreased significantly by 8,8 percentage points (from 11,7% in 1996 to 2,9% in 2022). Islamic following remained relatively unchanged between 1996 (1,4%) and 2022 (1,6%) while Hinduism slightly decreased (from 1,4% to 1,1%) in the same period.

The highest proportions of persons affiliated to Hinduism were in Kwazulu-Natal province in all the data years (1996: 5,5%; 2001: 4,7% & 2022: 4,2%) whilst Western Cape recorded the highest proportions of persons affiliated to Islam religion despite a slight decrease across all census points (6,9% in 1996, 6,5% in 2001 and 5,2% in 2022). Results further showed that Traditional African Religion was more prevalent in three provinces; Kwazulu-Natal (13,5%), Eastern Cape (11%) and Limpopo (6,3%).

Population group dynamics in religion affiliations showed that four out of every five black Africans, coloured and whites were affiliated to Christianity and figures show an upward trend in the last three decades. Indians/Asians were more affiliated Hinduism although the proportions decreased over time (from 49,9% in 1996 to 37,1% in 2022). Indian/Asian population group constituted the highest proportion of persons affiliated to Islam (24,0% in 2022). There has been significant increase in black Africans affiliated to Traditional African Religion (9,5% in 2022 compared to less than one percent in 1996 and 2001). Despite majority of South Africans

being affiliated to religion, findings indicate that there were persons not affiliated to any religion. Results on sex variations of persons not affiliated to any religion revealed that more males (61,3%) were not affiliated to any religion compared to females (38,7%). Looking at households, majority were affiliated to single religion (93,1%).

Multivariate analysis was explored to gain more insights on factors determining affiliation to a particular religion. Findings indicate that age matters when it comes to affiliation to any religious denomination, reflected in odd ratio for adults (0,92), which depicted that they were less likely to be not affiliated to a religious denomination compared to the youth. Sex variations also showed that women were generally less likely to be not affiliated to a religion, depicted by odd ratio of 0,52 compared to their male counterparts. Population group variations, depicted by odd ratio of 1.78, imply that whites were more likely to be not affiliated to any religion compared to black Africans. On the contrary, coloureds and Indians/Asians were less likely to be not affiliated to a religious denomination compared to black Africans.

Findings on household and religion dynamics showed that in most households (93,1%), all members were affiliated to same religion and households where no member is affiliated to any religious denomination were about 4%. Sex variations revealed that about 5% of households headed by males were not affiliated to any religion and this percentage was double that of their female counterparts (2,3%).

The chapter on influence of culture on nuptial trends and patterns revealed that dynamics of marriage in South Africa are shaped by a complex blend of diverse factors among others; population group/race, religion, language as proxy to ethnicity and to some extent place of birth. While trends showed decreasing rates in marriage (from 35,6% in 1996 to less than one-quarter (23,8%) in 2022, there has been sharp increase in average age at marriage and proportions of persons that were never married. Over the period 1996–2022, Singulate Mean at Marriage (SMAM) for males was generally higher than that of females in the country, indicative that female South Africans marry earlier than their male counterparts, and the gaps between the two sexes widened over the same period. SMAM for males increased from 30,3 years in 1996 to 33,8 years in 2022, while that of females increased from 27,9 years in 1996 to 30,7 years in 2022. The sharp decline in marriage rates suggest a broader societal shift away from marriage. However, looking at population group dynamics, a different pattern emerges; higher marriage rates were observed among white and Indian/Asian population groups. Findings on cohabitation showed upward trend, and almost doubled (from 4,5% in 1996 to 7,7% in 2022), and was more prevalent among black Africans, who recorded the highest percentage, above the national averages in all census years.

Findings on population and place of birth showed that South African-born individuals had a higher SMAM than their foreign-born counterparts, with South African males marrying at an average age of 34,5 in 2022, compared to 28,1 years for foreign-born males. South African females married at an average age of 31,4 years, while foreign-born females married earlier at 20,5 years. The results suggest that marriage patterns are partly influenced by one's cultural background, hence the differences observed between South African born population and foreign born population. The pattern of delayed marriage norms among those native to the country and the traditional norms of early marriage among immigrant communities have also been observed in Europe & USA (Mayol-García & Gurrentz, 2021).

Findings on religion and marriage showed that the former to some extent influences the timing of marriage as well nuptial decisions. The profile of never married population showed that largest proportion of individuals who reported being "never married" were those who identified with Traditional African Religions (69.8%) and those not affiliated to any religious beliefs (66.5%). Research elsewhere has shown that the high percentage of never-married individuals amongst individuals with no religious beliefs highlights the influence of individualism in secular societies as compared to more traditional religions secular individuals often prioritise career, education and personal goals, leading to delayed marriage or not marrying at all (Thornton, Axinn & Xie, 2006).

It is also noted that marriage was more prevalent among two religions with origins in Asia, Hinduism (49,5%) and Islam (45,8%). Literature has also shown that both religions are considered historically conservative, viewing marriage as a sacred institution, promoting early marriage and strongly encouraging the preservation of cultural and religious traditions (Heaton & Goodman, 1985; Pew Research Center, 2016). With odd ratios of 1,37 and 1,24 respectively, Muslims and Hindus were more likely to get married as compared to Christians. Results on multivariate analysis further showed that race and ethnicity were significant predictors of marital status, with Indian/Asian and white population groups exhibiting higher odds of marriage (Indian/Asians (2,28) and whites (4,60)) compared to black Africans.

The profile of married persons among the leading 10 countries of origin showed that India (73,7%), the UK (62,9%), Zambia (57,2%) and Namibia (52,9%) recorded higher proportions compared to those born in South Africa (23,1%). Further analysis showed that foreign-born individuals were more likely to get married than South African-born individuals and foreign-born individuals were also less likely to be divorce or separate compared to those born in South Africa.

REFERENCES

- Adserà, A. & Ferrer, A. (2014). *Immigrants and Demography: Marriage, Divorce and Fertility*. Working Paper 1401, Department of Economics, University of Waterloo [Online]. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/p/wat/wpaper/1401.html>
- Ahujere, L. (2020). Singulate Mean Age at Marriage in South Africa 1996-2016: Trends, Differentials and Implications. *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*, Vol.17(1), pp. 65-76
- Ahujere, L., & Malisha, L. (2024). Fertility trends and patterns among Black South Africa women in South Africa: A re-assessment using the Reverse Survival method. *9th African Population Conference*. Lilongwe, Malawi. pp. 1-26. Available at: <https://uaps2024.popconf.org/uploads/191905>
- Anukriti, S. & Dasgupta, S. (2017). *Marriage Markets in Developing Countries*. IZA Discussion Paper no10556. Bonn: Institute of Labor Economics. Available at <https://docs.iza.org/dp10556.pdf>
- Arasaratnam, L. (2013). A review of articles on multiculturalism in 35 years of IJIR. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol 37(6), pp. 676-685. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.006
- Asiedu, E., Karimu, A., & Iddrisu, A. (2024). Structural changes in African households: Female-headed households and Children's educational investments in an imperfect credit market in Africa. *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics*, Vol 68, pp. 30-42. doi:10.1016/j.strueco.2023.09.008
- Baloyi, M.E. (2023). The impact of immigration on the concept of African Marriage: A pastoral theological study. *Missionalia*. Vol 51. pp. 161–176. Available at: <https://scielo.org.za/pdf/mission/v51n1/10.pdf>
- Belsey, M. (2005). *AIDS and the Family: Policy Options for a Crisis in Family Capital*. New York: United Nations.
- Bobbitt, Z. (2021). 'Adjusted Odds Ratio: Definition & Examples', March 16. Available at: <https://www.statology.org/adjusted-odds-ratio/>
- Bongaarts, J. (2001). Household size and composition in the developing world in the 1990s. *Population Council*, Vol 55 (3), pp. 263-279. doi:10.1080/00324720127697
- Botha, T. (2022). Race, ethnicity and culture as proxies for promoting universal group identity. *Daily Maverick*, 6 February. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-02-06-race-ethnicity-and-culture-as-proxies-for-promoting-universal-group-identity/>
- Brown, S. (2022). Union and Family Formation During Young Adulthood: Insights From the Add Health. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Vol 71(6), S32-S39. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2022.06.020
- Brown, C.K. & Thakur, A.P. (1997). *Rural Sociology: A West African Reader No. 1 – Kinship, Marriage and the Family*. Accra: Ghana University Press.
- Carmichael, S.G., de Pleijt, A., van Zanden, J.L. & De Moor, T. (2016). The European Marriage Pattern and Its Measurement. *The Journal of Economic History*. Vol. 76(1). pp. 196-204. doi:10.1017/S0022050716000474
- Casale, D. & Posel, D. (2010) The male marital earnings premium in the context of bridewealth payments: Evidence from South Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. Vol 58 (2) pp. 211-230.
- CDE. (2008). *Immigrants in Johannesburg: Estimating Numbers and Assessing Impact*. Johannesburg: CDE. Available at: <https://www.cde.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Immigrants-in-Johannesburg-Estimating-numbers-and-assessing-impacts-CDE-Insight.pdf>

Christl, M., De Poli, S. & Ivaškaitė-Tamošiūnė, V. (2023). Does it pay to say 'I do'? Marriage bonuses and penalties across the EU. *Journal of European Social Policy*, Vol. 33(3), pp.317–336. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/09589287231159492>

Craig-Henderson, K.M. (2006). *Black Men in Interracial Relationships: What's Love got to do with it?* New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Cutler, J. (2005). *The Cross-Cultural Communication Trainer's Manual: Volume Two: Activities for Cross-Cultural Training (1st ed.)*. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315240466>

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa (2023). *The NA approves South African Sign Language as the 12th official language*. [Press release] Available at: <https://www.parliament.gov.za/press-releases/na-approves-south-african-sign-language-12th-official-language>

Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET) (2020). *Language Policy Framework of Higher Education Institutions*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Dolce, C. (1973). Multicultural Education—Some Issues. *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 24(4), pp. 282–284.

Drobot, I. (2021). Multilingualism and Awareness of Cultural Differences in Communication. Rijeka: IntechOpen. Available at: <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/77761>

Dube, M. & Suleman, H (2019). Language Identification for South African Bantu Languages Using Rank Order Statistics. *21st International Conference on Asia-Pacific Digital Libraries*, November 4–7, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. pp. 283–289. Available at: https://pubs.cs.uct.ac.za/id/eprint/1334/1/icadl_2019_banturecognition.pdf

Du Plessis, M. (2020). Galloway, M. (2020). *Rediscovering a Khoisan language – Fellow's Seminar by Menan Du Plessis*, Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS), 3 April. Available at: <https://stias.ac.za/2020/04/rediscovering-a-khoisan-language/>

European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. (2007) *High level group on multilingualism: Final report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b0a1339f-f181-4de5-abd3-130180f177c7>

Faust, K. (2004). 'Marriage, Divorce, and Family Groups', In Swanson, D. & Siegel, J. (eds.) *The Methods and Materials of Demography, 2nd Edition*. San Diego, CA: Elsevier Academic, pp. 201–203.

Frost, J (2018). 'How to Interpret P-values and Coefficients in Regression Analysis', *Statistics by Jim*. Available at: <https://statisticsbyjim.com/regression/interpret-coefficients-p-values-regression/>

Garenne, M. (2016). A century of nuptiality decline in South Africa: A longitudinal analysis of census data. *African Population Studies*, Vol 30(2), pp. 2403–2414. Available at: <https://aps.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/846>

Guirking, C, Platteau, J. & Wahhaj, Z (2021). *Behind the Veil of Cultural Persistence: Marriage and Divorce in a Migrant Community*. EPR Discussion Paper No. DP1634. Centre for Economic Policy Research. Available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3886836>

Hosegood, V., McGrath, N., & Moultrie, T. (2009). Dispensing with marriage: Marital and partnership trends in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa 2000–2006. *Demographic Research*, Vol. 20(13), pp. 280–309. Available at: <https://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol20/13/20-13.pdf>

Huffman-Espinosa, C., & García-Ramos, C. (2024). Living arrangements and socioeconomic-based health disparities in Mexico. *PubMed Central*, Vol. 65, pp. 446–455, doi: 10.21149/14717

Huijsmans, T., Hartevelde, E., Van der Brug, W. & Lancee, B. (2021). Are cities ever more cosmopolitan? Studying trends in urban-rural divergence of cultural attitudes. *Political Geography*, Vol 86 (102353). pp. 1-15. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629821000135>

Ifejika, N. (2006). 'What does ubuntu really mean?', *The Guardian*, 29 September. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2006/sep/29/features11.g2>

Isengard, B., & Szydlik, M. (2012). Living Apart (or) Together? Coresidence of Elderly Parents and Their Adult Children in Europe. *Research on Aging*, Vol. 34(4), pp.449-474. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0164027511428455>

Kalule-Sabiti, I., Palamuleni, M., Makiwane, M., & Amoateng, A.Y. (2007). 'Family formation and dissolution patterns', In: Amoateng, A.Y. & Heaton, T.B. (eds). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa: Socio-demographic perspectives*. Cape Town: HSRC Press. p. 89-112. Available at: <https://hsrc.ac.za/uploads/pageContent/1654/Familyformationanddissolutionpatterns.pdf>

Kavuro, C. (2021). Marriages of convenience through the immigration lens: concepts, issues, impact and policies. *Law, Democracy and Development*. Vol 25, pp. 515-545. Available at: <https://scielo.org.za/pdf/ldd/v25/17.pdf>

Khanyile, S.& Ballard, R. (2022). *Language diversity in Gauteng. Map of the Month*. Gauteng City-Region Observatory. September 2022. Available at: <https://www.gcro.ac.za/outputs/map-of-the-month/detail/language-diversity-gauteng/>

Khumalo, N. (2024). 'Ramaphosa: State working to include Khoi, San, Nama languages into school curriculum'. *EWN*, 17 December. Available at: <https://www.ewn.co.za/2024/12/17/ramaphosa-state-working-to-include-khoi-san-nama-languages-into-school-curriculum>

Kihato, C.W., Massoumi, M., Ruble, B., Subirós, P. & Garland, A. (eds.) (2010). *Urban Diversity: Space, Culture, and Inclusive Pluralism in Cities Worldwide*. Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Korabik, K., McElwain, A., & Chappell, D. (2008). 'Integrating Gender-Related Issues into Research on Work and Family', in Korabik, K., Lero, D & Whitehead, D. (eds.) *Handbook of Work-Family Integration: Research, Theory, and Best Practices*. Academic Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-372574-5.X5001-7pp.215-232>

Mafela, M.J. (2014). Marriage Practices and Intercultural Communication: The Case of African Communities. *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies*, Vol. 24(1), pp.19. Available at: <https://unisapressjournals.co.za/index.php/SAJFS/article/download/1668/827/7284>

Magagula, T.K. (2009). *Examining the effect of changing marriage patterns on fertility among African South African women*. Master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban. Available at: <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/eacc3bf0-4d5d-40c0-ab8a-1d3b6eeae73d/content>

Mayol-García, Y. & Gurrentz, B (2021). *Foreign-Born People Are Older When They First Marry, Less Likely to Remarry Than Native-Born*. Washington DC: US Census Bureau, Available at: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/05/marital-histories-differ-between-native-born-and-foreign-born-adults.html>

Mbirimi-Hungwe, V. (2024). Multilingualism: An African reality. *Per Linguam*. Vol. 40 (1) pp. 109-119. Available at: <https://perlinguam.journals.ac.za/pub/article/view/1064/830>

Mhizha, S. (n.d). 'Families in Africa: Demographic Trends and Families', *Future Africa*, University of Pretoria. Available at: <https://www.futureafrica.science/blog/news/families-in-africa-demographic-trends-and-families/>

- Mokomane, Z. (2023). *The impact of demographic trends on families*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. New York: UN. Available at: <https://social.desa.un.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/DemographicTrends-FamilyImpact%20ZITHA%20MOKOMANE.pdf>
- Mothelesi, G.A., & Mhele, K. (2024). Fertility Variations among Ethnic Groups in South Africa. *African Journal of Gender, Society and Development*, Vol. 13(2). doi:10.31920/2634-3622/2024/v13n2a3
- Msweli, S.N. (2020). *I-lobola in Contemporary South Africa: Perspectives and Experiences of Young People*. Master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban. Available at: <https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/a1a573b0-805f-4c02-bb9f-b1252c27eef9/content>
- Mulaudzi, P. (2013). Cultural perceptions and linguistic terminology regarding traditional marriage within indigenous South African communities. *South African Journal of African Languages*, Vol. 33(2). pp.153–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02572117.2013.871456>
- Municipal Demarcation Board (2018). *Municipal demarcation board seminar report: Categorisation of municipalities into metropolitan (Metro) municipalities*. 31 January 2018. HSRC Office, Pretoria. Accessed from: <https://www.demarcation.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Seminar-latest-Report-31Jan2018-final.pdf>
- Mutasa, D.E. (2015). Language policy implementation in South African Universities vis-à-vis the speakers of indigenous African languages' perception. *Per Linguam*, Vol. 31(1), pp. 46-59. Available at: <https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.5785/31-1-631>
- Mutava, M. (2023). *Contemporary Trends and Patterns in Migration in Africa*. Johannesburg: New South Institute. pp.1-54. Available at: <https://nsi.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/An-analysis-of-trends-and-patterns-of-migration-in-Africa.pdf>
- Ndhlovu, F. & Makalela, L. (2022). *Decolonising multilingualism in Africa: Recentering silenced voices from the Global South*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Ngihbi, J. & Elechi, M. (2022). The relevance of ubuntu philosophy in marriage. *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies*. Vol.4(3). pp 225-234. Available at: <https://www.sfjesgs.com/index.php/SFJESGS/article/download/329/334>
- Ortiz-Ospina, E. & Roser, M. (2020). *Marriages and divorces*. Our World in Data. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/marriages-and-divorces> (Accessed 3 January 2025)
- Palamuleni, M. (2010): Recent Marriage patterns in South Africa 1996-2007. *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 7(1). pp. 47-65. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228420623_Recent_Marriage_patterns_in_South_Africa_1996-2007
- Pappas, S. and Mckelvie, C. (2022). *What is Culture*. Live Science. Available at: <https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html> (Accessed 27 September 2024)
- Parkinson, N.P. (2018). The Future of Marriage in Secular Societies, In: Wilson R.F (ed). *The Contested Place of Religion in Family Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 617-640. Available at: <https://core-prod.cambridgecore.org/core/books/abs/contested-place-of-religion-in-family-law/future-of-marriage-in-secular-societies/>
- Pelletti, G., Boscolo-Berto, R., Barone, R., Giorgetti, A., Fiorentini, C., Pascali, J.P. Fais, P., & Pelotti, S. (2022). Gender differences in driving under the influence of psychoactive drugs: Evidence mapping of real case studies and meta-analysis. *Forensic Science International*, Vol. 341. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0379073822003097>

Pew Research Center (2016). *Religion in Everyday Life*. Washington DC: Pew Research Center: Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/04/12/religion-in-everyday-life/>

Phillips, L. (2017). 'History of South Africa's Bantustans'. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*. [Online]. Available at: <https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-80> (Accessed 2 December 2024)

Posel, D., Rudwick, S., & Casale, D. (2011). Is marriage a dying institution in South Africa? Exploring changes in marriage in the context of ilobolo payments. *Agenda*, Vol. 25(1), pp.102-111.

Rodell, J. (2019). What do secularists mean by 'secularism'? 9 January. *London School of Economics*. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2019/01/what-do-secularists-mean-by-secularism>

Salzmann, Z. (1998). *Language, Culture and Society. An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology 2nd Edition*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Sapir, E. (1970). Selected essays, In: Mandelbaum, D.G. (ed). *Culture, language and Personality: Selected Essays*. California: University of California Press.

Scroope, C. (2019). South African Culture: Religion. *The Cultural Atlas*. Mosaica. Available at: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/south-african-culture/south-african-culture-religion>

Stats SA (2013). *Key findings: Marriages and divorces, 2009-2011*, Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Stats SA (2015). *Census 2011: Fertility in South Africa/Statistics South Africa*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-01-63/Report-03-01-632011.pdf>

Stats SA (2023). *Migration Profile Report for South Africa: A Country Profile 2023*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/03-09-17/03-09-172023.pdf>

Stats SA (2023): *Provincial gross domestic product* [Media release]. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P04412/P044122023.pdf>

Stats SA (2023). *Census 2022: Statistical Release*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: https://census.statssa.gov.za/assets/documents/2022/P03014_Census_2022_Statistical_Release.pdf

Stats SA (2023). *Marriages and Divorces 2021: Statistical Release*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0307/P03072021.pdf>

StatsSA. (2023). *Mbalo Brief: the missing piece of the puzzle*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Retrieved from: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Mbalo-Brief-Issue-1-of-2023.pdf>

StatsSA. (2024). *General Household Survey 2023*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182023.pdf>

StatsSA. (2024). *Mid-year population estimates 2024*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022024.pdf>

Stats SA (2024). *Census 2022 Provincial Profile: Gauteng*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-01-76/Report-03-01-762022.pdf>

Tenny, S. & Hoffman, M.R. (2023). *Odds Ratio*. Treasure Island: Stat Pearls Publishing: Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK431098/>

Tewolde, A. I., (2021). Migrating into segregated majority-black inner cities: Racialised settlement patterns of African migrants in Pretoria, South Africa. *Cities*, Vol. 113. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0264275121000767>

The Orant Journal (2024). *The Culture of Malawi: Languages of Malawi*. Lilongwe, Malawi: Orant Charities Africa. Available at: <https://orantcharitiesafrica.org/culture-of-malawi-languages-of-malawi>

Thomas, T. A., & Maree, D. (2021). A coat of many colours: A critical race theory analysis of language uses at two South African higher education institutions. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, Vol. 23(1), pp. 96–110. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15348458.2021.1971087>

Thornton, A., Axinn, W. & Xie, Y. (2006). *Marriage and Cohabitation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thornton, A. (2023). *Household formation, living alone, and not getting married in South Africa: Working Paper*. Cape Town: Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit.

Togarasei, L. & Chitando, E. (2021). Introduction, in: Togarasei, L., & Chitando, E. (eds.) *Lobola (Bridewealth) in Contemporary Southern Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-59523-4_1

Tripathi, S. (2020). Does economic development reduce household size? Evidence from India. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 42(5), 982-999. doi:10.1016/j.jpolmod.2020.04.003

Udjo, E. (2001). *Marital patterns and fertility in South Africa: the evidence from the 1996 population census*. Poster presented in IUSSP XXIV International Population Conference, San Salvador, Brazil, August 18-24, 2001.

UNICEF (2017). *Zimbabwe: The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: evidence from eastern and Southern Africa*: Accessed from: <https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org/esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2017-Language-and-Learning-Zimbabwe.pdf>

UNICEF (2017). *Mozambique: The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: evidence from eastern and Southern Africa*: Accessed from: <https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org/esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-2017-Language-and-Learning-Mozambique.pdf>

United Nations (2018). *UN report highlights the importance of language in preserving cultural diversity*. [online] Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/02/1003191>

United Nations (2012). *World Fertility Report*. New York: UN. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/02/1003191>

UN. (2024). *30 years on, South Africa still dismantling racism and apartheid's legacy*. New York: United Nations Human Rights. Available at: November 27, 2024, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2024/04/30-years-south-africa-still-dismantling-racism-and-apartheids-legacy>

Venzke, S. 2002. The relationship between proficiency in English, Grade 12 English results and the academic success of first year students (Unpublished M. ED thesis) Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Veriava, F., Thom, A. and Hodgson, T.F. Basic education rights handbook : education rights in South Africa. SECTION27, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, 2017

Wardhaugh, R. An introduction to sociolinguistics (Fourth Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers; 2002.

Yan, L., Huimin, X., Xiuyan, L., Shuangshuang, W., & Shaoshao, B. (2020). Living arrangements and life satisfaction: mediation by social support and meaning in life. *BMC Geriatrics*, 20(136). doi:10.1186/s12877-020-01541-8

Ziehl, S. (2002). Black South Africans do live in nuclear family households — a response to Russell. *Society in Transition*, 33(1), 26-49. doi:10.1080/21528586.2002.10419050

Zulu, E., & Sibanda, A. (2005). Racial Differences in Household Structure. In T. Zuberu, A. Sibanda, & E. Udjo, *The Demography of South Africa* (pp. 218-252). New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Distribution of the population 12 years and above by language spoken (official & non-official) and marital status, Census 2022

Marital status	South African official languages	Non-official languages	Total
Never married	29 255 321	425 472	29 680 793
Legally married	10 995 240	429 958	11 425 198
Living together like husband and wife/partners	3 554 254	158 619	3 712 873
Widowed	1 898 862	11 144	1 910 006
Divorced/Separated	961 527	13 608	975 136
Total	46 665 205	1 038 801	47 704 006

Note: Totals exclude Unspecified language (194 578), Do not know Marital status (69) and Unspecified Marital status (9 062)

Appendix B - Odds of getting married amongst the population 12 years and older, Census 2022

Marital_Status_Married 0 = Never married 1 = Married	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.Interval]	
Population group						
Coloured	1.106264	.0177787	6.28	0.000	1.071961	1.141664
Indian/Asian	2.276081	.0530605	35.28	0.000	2.174424	2.38249
White	4.598895	.0797503	87.99	0.000	4.445214	4.757889
Sex						
Female	1.130944	.0041401	33.61	0.000	1.122859	1.139088
Highest level of education						
Some primary	1.041693	.0092569	4.60	0.000	1.023707	1.059995
Completed primary	.7561174	.008462	-24.98	0.000	.7397127	.7728859
Some secondary	.5186287	.0037703	-90.32	0.000	.5112915	.5260712
Completed secondary	.4564638	.0033074	-108.23	0.000	.4500271	.4629925
Higher	.8294955	.0071584	-21.66	0.000	.8155832	.8436451
Language						
English	1.273777	.0143791	21.44	0.000	1.245904	1.302274
isiNdebele	.6452754	.0134288	-21.05	0.000	.619485	.6721395
IsiXhosa	.556423	.0094662	-34.46	0.000	.5381755	.5752893
IsiZulu	.4353733	.0075683	-47.84	0.000	.4207895	.4504625
Sepedi	.6667189	.0118612	-22.79	0.000	.643872	.6903765
Sesotho	.6302905	.0110239	-26.39	0.000	.6090501	.6522716
Setswana	.5533808	.009762	-33.54	0.000	.5345746	.5728486
Sign language	.4847055	.0781519	-4.49	0.000	.3533733	.6648477
SiSwati	.4409862	.0092854	-38.88	0.000	.4231576	.4595659
Tshivenda	.716651	.0145696	-16.39	0.000	.6886565	.7457834
Xitsonga	.5491914	.0101818	-32.33	0.000	.5295936	.5695144
other	1.116268	.0242954	5.05	0.000	1.069651	1.164916
Country of birth						
Foreign-born	1.679422	.0199007	43.75	0.000	1.640867	1.718883
Religion						
Islam	1.373756	.0239049	18.25	0.000	1.327693	1.421417
Traditional African religion	.911528	.0060152	-14.04	0.000	.8998142	.9233942
Hinduism	1.244259	.0336467	8.08	0.000	1.18003	1.311984
Other	.4836681	.0178594	-19.67	0.000	.4499009	.5199697
_cons	1.230234	.0224132	11.37	0.000	1.18708	1.274957

Appendix C - Odds of cohabiting amongst the population 12 years and older, Census 2022

Marital_Status_Cohabiting 0 = Never married 1 = Cohabiting	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.Interval]	
Population group						
Coloured	1.002773	.0249051	0.11	0.911	.9551284	1.052793
Indian/Asian	.9406822	.0438353	-1.31	0.189	.8585733	1.030644
White	1.87835	.0501663	23.60	0.000	1.782555	1.979293
Sex						
Female	1.143225	.0062117	24.63	0.000	1.131115	1.155465
Highest level of education						
Some primary	1.125708	.0157244	8.48	0.000	1.095306	1.156953
Completed primary	1.080668	.0180907	4.63	0.000	1.045786	1.116713
Some secondary	1.013953	.0111881	1.26	0.209	.9922604	1.036121
Completed secondary	.7360478	.0081762	-27.59	0.000	.720196	.7522485
Higher	.6511758	.0093899	-29.75	0.000	.6330297	.6698422
Language						
English	.9558065	.0183218	-2.36	0.018	.9205627	.9923996
isiNdebele	.5640826	.0177406	-18.21	0.000	.5303617	.5999474
isiXhosa	.6655181	.0174941	-15.49	0.000	.6320987	.7007045
isiZulu	.6811871	.0177785	-14.71	0.000	.6472182	.7169389
Sepedi	.7375636	.0198993	-11.28	0.000	.699575	.777615
Sesotho	.8000423	.0209302	-8.53	0.000	.7600539	.8421346
Setswana	.6691024	.0176729	-15.21	0.000	.6353455	.7046528
Sign language	.9079029	.1678136	-0.52	0.601	.6319843	1.304285
SiSwati	1.020762	.0304438	0.69	0.491	.9628038	1.082209
Tshivenda	1.482592	.0431195	13.54	0.000	1.400443	1.56956
Xitsonga	1.246607	.0332866	8.26	0.000	1.183045	1.313585
Other	.8633261	.0260547	-4.87	0.000	.8137407	.9159329
Country of birth						
Foreign-born	2.591164	.0360325	68.47	0.000	2.521496	2.662758
Religion						
Islam	.6074173	.0221539	-13.67	0.000	.5655121	.6524278
Traditional African religion	1.140864	.0108053	13.91	0.000	1.119881	1.162239
Hinduism	.8936555	.0598059	-1.68	0.093	.7838001	1.018908
Other	1.340884	.0609166	6.46	0.000	1.226651	1.465755
_cons	.2325436	.0065122	-52.09	0.000	.2201239	.2456641

Appendix E - Odds of divorce/separation amongst the population 12 years and older, Census 2022

Marital_Status_Divorced 0 = Married 1 = Divorced/separated	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf.Interval]	
Population group						
Coloured	1.726191	.0717545	13.13	0.000	1.591131	1.872715
Indian/Asian	1.288018	.0698515	4.67	0.000	1.158137	1.432465
White	1.497047	.0615333	9.82	0.000	1.381174	1.622641
Sex						
Female	1.532642	.0165677	39.50	0.000	1.500511	1.56546
Highest level of education						
Some primary	1.328811	.0363815	10.38	0.000	1.259384	1.402065
Completed primary	1.499981	.0489757	12.42	0.000	1.406997	1.599109
Some secondary	1.462667	.0351011	15.85	0.000	1.395463	1.533107
Completed secondary	1.266651	.0306876	9.76	0.000	1.20791	1.328248
Higher	1.249863	.033168	8.40	0.000	1.186517	1.316592
Language						
English	1.271857	.0248372	12.31	0.000	1.224097	1.32148
IsiNdebele	.9523521	.0568863	-0.82	0.414	.8471361	1.070636
IsiXhosa	1.249378	.05552	5.01	0.000	1.145165	1.363075
IsiZulu	.9601542	.0434962	-0.90	0.369	.8785782	1.049304
Sepedi	.7484641	.0362713	-5.98	0.000	.6806454	.8230402
Sesotho	1.310418	.0581173	6.10	0.000	1.20132	1.429423
Setswana	1.493875	.0670789	8.94	0.000	1.368022	1.631306
Sign language	1.330425	.5383986	0.71	0.481	.6019009	2.940736
SiSwati	.9405065	.0593787	-0.97	0.331	.8310389	1.064394
Tshivenda	.9709104	.0539232	-0.53	0.595	.8707719	1.082565
Xitsonga	.859998	.0436434	-2.97	0.003	.778575	.9499362
Other	.5629405	.0360062	-8.98	0.000	.4966139	.6381256
Country of birth						
Foreign-born	.6962997	.0226361	-11.13	0.000	.6533177	.7421095
Religion						
Islam	.8269306	.0309953	-5.07	0.000	.7683587	.8899674
Traditional African religion	1.215268	.0256231	9.25	0.000	1.166071	1.26654
Hinduism	.8119021	.0484729	-3.49	0.000	.722245	.912689
Other	1.701312	.0957636	9.44	0.000	1.523601	1.89975
_cons	.0391989	.0019259	-65.93	0.000	.0356003	.0431613

Appendix F - Multi-racial households by metropolitan area in 2022

Metropolitan	N	%
City of Cape Town	286 978	24,5
Buffalo City	30 692	2,6
Nelson Mandela Bay	19 181	1,6
Mangaung	16 026	1,4
eThekweni	136 523	11,6
Ekurhuleni	195 099	16,6
City of Johannesburg	347 817	29,7
City of Tshwane	140 305	12,0
Total	1 172 621	100,0

***This excludes unspecified and do not knows

Appendix G - Adjusted odds ratios of not being affiliated to any religion, Census 2022

Religious affiliation	Adjusted Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P>z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Population group						
Black African (R)						
Coloured	.2343408	.0016933	-200.80	0.000	.2310454	.2376833
Indian/Asian	.2413645	.0021509	-159.51	0.000	.2371854	.2456171
White	1.781103	.0049145	209.20	0.000	1.771497	1.790761
Sex						
Male (R)						
Female	.5175877	.0009343	-364.84	0.000	.5157597	.5194221
Province						
Western Cape (R)						
Eastern Cape	.5286124	.0026159	-128.83	0.000	.5235102	.5337644
Northern Cape	.1810592	.0031609	-97.89	0.000	.1749688	.1873617
Free State	.4977758	.0032955	-105.37	0.000	.4913585	.5042769
KwaZulu-Natal	1.44786	.0053362	100.42	0.000	1.437439	1.458356
North West	.4675421	.0028984	-122.64	0.000	.4618956	.4732576
Gauteng	1.503055	.0051675	118.53	0.000	1.492961	1.513217
Mpumalanga	.7248856	.00356	-65.51	0.000	.7179416	.7318967
Limpopo	2.135806	.0081976	197.71	0.000	2.119799	2.151933
Age						
15-34 (R)						
35-64	.9236459	.0016819	-43.62	0.000	.9203554	.9269481
65+	.6954749	.0025687	-98.33	0.000	.6904585	.7005276
Country of birth						
SA born (R)						
Foreign-born	1.587062	.0050941	143.90	0.000	1.577109	1.597078
_cons	.0392735	.0001348	-943.44	0.000	.0390103	.0395385

Binary outcome variable: Religiously affiliated = 0; No religious affiliation = 1

Note: (R) = reference category

