

A test of indirect procedures for the estimation of mortality
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Mortality data are believed to be the least reliable of all demographic statistics from countries that lack an adequate system of vital registration. This is due to, in the main, the people's reluctance to answer questions about the dead. Over the last two decades, demographers working in Africa have strived to extract usable mortality indices through answers to indirect and therefore less sensitive questions. A through registration system cannot be devised overnight and such techniques will continue to be the basis for collection and analysis of demographic statistics from tropical Africa for some time. It is expensive to ask extra questions in a census except if they are to lead to meaningful results, yet to ascertain this, the new methods need to be tested on some data. For this reason, several African surveys have had a dual role; to provide estimates on the one hand and to test and appraise methods on the other. The National Demographic Survey of Tanzania (NDS, 1973) was no exception. Chapter II deals with Trussel's modification of Brass's method of estimating infant and child mortality starting from proportions of children dead among those born to women in particular age groups. Orphan hood and adult mortality are related in a fairly obvious way; one being the consequence of other. Louis Henry was the first person to develop a means of estimating adult mortality indices from parental survival data. Since Henry, a number of modifications have been made. One modern form of the technique is due to Brass and Hill and this is the subject for Chapter III. In the fourth chapter, attempts are made to link infant, child and adult mortality estimates derived in the two preceding chapter. Model life tables are used for converting the different indices- pertaining to infant, child and adult mortality- into a common measure. Three model life table systems- regional, Brass logit and Ledermann – are discussed, The last chapter summarizes findings on both the methods used in deriving mortality indices and estimates of mortality levels Tanzania.