

Table 1. Thematic synthesis of findings: Negotiating tradition and modernity in fertility, gender, and contraception among the Batak Toba

Theme	Sub-theme	Category / Illustrative findings
1. Persistence of Traditional Values	Sons as Heirs of Lineage (Marga)	Sons are still considered lineage successors; families without sons are seen as “incomplete”; women are referred to as <i>sipatimbo parik ni amanta</i> .
	Children as Symbols of Social Status	Having many children is viewed as a sign of success; “many children, much fortune” remains a belief; childless families bear the stigma of <i>mate pupur</i> .
	Rituals as Cultural Reinforcement	Fertility values are reinforced through rituals such as <i>mambosuri</i> , traditional marriage ceremony, <i>saur matua</i> ceremony; <i>umpasa</i> express the ideal of having many descendants.
2. Shifts in Gender Roles	Patriarchal Role Differentiation	Men are heirs of lineage and inheritance; women remain in a subordinated position; domestic roles are still dominant.
	Negotiating Roles through Education	Education enables women to negotiate contraceptive use and express their opinions more confidently to their husbands.
	Economic Participation and Empowerment	Women’s involvement in the economy (tourism, trade) strengthens their decision-making power in the household.
3. Modernization and Cultural Transition	Urbanization and Migration	Migration to urban areas brings smaller family ideals; value differences arise between urban and rural families.

	Changing Fertility Ideals	The shift from quantity to quality in valuing children; the ideal number of children has become two or three.
	Health as Legitimate Reason	Contraceptive use is accepted when justified by health reasons (birth spacing, maternal fatigue); traditional norms reject permanent contraception without a male heir.
4. Negotiating Contraceptive Acceptance	Religious Interpretation	The church promotes “be fruitful but be wise”; children are seen as God’s blessings, but humans are given wisdom to plan families.
	Selective Adaptation to Modernity	Traditional values persist but selectively adapt to modernity (health, education, economy).
	Evolving Son Preference	Preference for sons declines among younger generations; daughters are increasingly equal in inheritance and family status.
5. Cultural Change and Fertility Transformation	Transformation of Ritual Meanings	<i>Saur matua</i> is no longer always seen as the ultimate honor; personal happiness is valued more.
	Hybrid Value System	Tradition and modernity interact, producing new hybrid meanings in reproductive practices and the concept of children.