

Socio-economic factors influencing acceptance of orphans by extended families: a case of Mbeya city

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The intent of this study was to examine how socioeconomic factors influence acceptance of orphans by extended families. The targeted socioeconomic factors were: income, education levels, marital and employment statuses and house ownership. The study was done in Mbeya city, the headquarter of Mbeya region in Tanzania. This area was chosen because Mbeya region has 15.9% of HIV/AIDS prevalence while the national prevalence rate is around 7 percent. Also the city is one of the ten districts in the country with the highest orphanage rates. Data was collected from randomly selected 218 households by using structured interviews. Data was processed and analyzed by using SPSS computer software. The findings of the study were as follows: more people with low incomes, low education, non formal employment and those who are separated from their spouses and own the houses they live in accept orphans than people with higher incomes, higher education, employments and those in marital unions and in rented houses. The following are the recommendations: households have to be supported economically by employment, cooperatives, subsidies to agricultural inputs and building materials, extension of financial services and provision of free education to orphans and free and accessible Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) services and Anti Retroviral Therapies (ART) to people. The public is also recommended to defend orphans' rights.