

**Household economic status and early marriage in rural Tanzania:  
a case study of Kyerwa district**

**Theodory Theonest**

**Master of Arts (Demography)**

**University of Dar es Salaam, College of Social Sciences, 2016**

Despite the fact that child marriage has severe effects on the victims; the available literatures concentrate on socio-cultural factors for early marriage but not about household economic status on early marriage in rural Tanzania. This study assessed the association between household economic status and early marriages in Kyerwa District. It specifically examined the factors influencing child marriages. The study also investigated the association between household economic status and early marriages. Lastly it evaluated the intervention measures of early marriages. Detailed information on the association between household economic status and early marriages was collected from a sample of 170 women of age 15-49 who had ever married at least once and from focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The findings exposed that 41.8% of respondents entered into early marriage in Kyerwa District. The study further revealed that the rate of early marriage increases with the lowering rate of household economic status. The findings from logistics regressions indicated that education, occupation, household environment and income status of the household are the most important determinants of early marriage. It was also found that policy and programming initiatives to fight the practice of early marriage are enhancing the accessibility and equality of formal schooling, offering economic support and incentives for girls and their families, educating and mobilizing parents and fostering and enabling legal and policy framework. It is hopeful that the findings of this study will be an important contribution to the design, implementation and monitoring of strategies to fight the practice of early marriages in Tanzania and more specifically in Kyerwa District. It recommends that policy and programming initiatives need to be considered so as to end early marriage with its severe consequences to the victims.