Researchers
Constantine Manda
University of California, Irvine

Donald Green
Columbia University

Dylan Groves
Columbia University

Bardia Rahmani
Columbia University

Beatrice Montano
Columbia University

Staff
Zachary Isdahl
Country Director, Tanzania

Martin Zuakulu
Senior Research Associate

Timeline
2018-2020

Study Status
Results

Study Type
Randomized Evaluation

Sample Size
1,200 individuals in 30 villages in Tanzania’s Tanga region

Research Implemented by IPA
Yes
A Radio Drama’s Effects on HIV Attitudes and Policy Priorities: A Field Experiment in Tanzania

Donald P. Green, PhD,1 Dylan W. Groves, MA,1 and Constantine Manda, MA1

Abstract
A growing body of evidence suggests that entertainment education influences knowledge about HIV, stigma toward those with HIV, and openness to disclosing one’s HIV status. The present study shows that, in addition to these effects, mass media interventions can influence audiences’ policy priorities, such as their demand for local access to HIV/AIDS medical care. A randomized (2 groups) version of a popular Swahili radio drama was presented in rural Tanzania as part of a placebo-controlled experiment, clustered at the village level. A random sample comprising 1,200 participants was interviewed at baseline and again to assess a presentation of the radio drama, and 83% answered baseline respondents were reinterviewed 1 week later with a response rate of 95%. In addition to increasing listeners’ knowledge and support for disclosure of HIV status, the radio drama produced stable and statistically significant effects on listeners’ preferences for hypothetical candidates promising improved HIV/AIDS treatment.

Keywords
attitudes, entertainment education, HIV/AIDS, media

A large body of research investigating the effects of media and entertainment education (“education”) on knowledge about HIV/AIDS and stigma toward those living with HIV (Phelan et al., 2010; Boardman, 2006; LaCroix et al., 2015). These interventions are generally premised on one or both of the following propositions. First, changing individual-level knowledge of HIV/AIDS, the pathways of HIV transmission, and the efficacy of HIV treatment reduces risky behaviors and promotes the adoption of effective treatments (Phelan et al., 2010). Second, changes in knowledge are associated with changes in behaviors (Brown et al., 2010). However, the evidence is mixed around whether HIV/AIDS decreases the likelihood that individuals with HIV/AIDS are more likely to disclose their status to others (Brown et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the relative importance of media education is among government priorities.

In this study, we present evidence from a field experiment in Tanzania’s northwest. We hypothesized that entertainment education campaigns aimed at reducing stigma would decrease the likelihood that individuals with HIV/AIDS are more likely to disclose their status to others (Brown et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the relative importance of media education is among government priorities. Our findings demonstrate the powerful influence that entertainment education can have on audiences’ demand for services to address the epidemic and its consequences.

Corresponding Author:
Donald P. Green, Department of Political Science, Columbia University, 408 Widener Hall, 535 West 116th St, New York, NY 10027, USA.
Email: ngg111@ Columbia.edu

A Radio Drama’s Effects on Attitudes Toward Early and Forced Marriage: Results From a Field Experiment in Rural Tanzania

Donald P. Green1,2, Dylan W. Groves1,2, Constantine Manda1, Beatrice Moniano1,2, and Baridi Rahman1

Abstract
Early and forced marriage (EFM) is an increasing focus of international organizations and local and government organizations. This study assesses the extent to which attitudes and norms related to EFM can be changed by locally tailored media campaigns. A randomized (2 groups) version of a popular Swahili radio drama was presented in rural Tanzania as part of a placebo-controlled experiment randomized at the village level. A random sample of 1,200 villagers was interviewed as baseline and invited to a presentation of the radio drama. On average, 99% of baseline respondents were reinterviewed 2 weeks later, and 99% 15 months after that. The radio drama produced stable and statistically significant effects on attitudes and perceptions toward EFM, as well as more general attitudes about gender equality. Fifteen months later, treatment effects diminished; but we continue to see evidence of EFM-related attitude change.

1Columbia University, New York, NY, USA
2Economic & Social Research Foundation, Tanzania

Corresponding Author:
Donald P. Green, Department of Political Science, Columbia University, 408 Widener Hall, 535 West 116th St, New York, NY 10027, USA.
Email: ngg111@Columbia.edu
The Impact of a Radio Program on Challenging Early and Forced Marriage Norms in Tanzania

Researchers evaluated the impact of a radio drama in Tanzania on attitudes toward early and forced marriage. Exposure to the program substantially increased the proportion of listeners who rejected early and forced marriage three weeks later. After 15 months, the effects were smaller but remained positive.

Between 2018 and 2030, approximately 150 million girls under the age of 18 will be subjected to marriage globally. This practice can restrict the autonomy of women and girls, increase the likelihood that they are subject to intimate partner violence, and limit their economic and social empowerment. In Tanzania, 36 percent of women enter into marriage before the age of 18, and 30 percent report having limited or no decision-making power when choosing their life partners. In the northeastern Tanga region, more than 40 percent of rural citizens accept early and forced marriage in at least some circumstances.

Evidence suggests that mass media campaigns can effectively change community perceptions and behaviors regarding gender-based violence. For instance, a study conducted in rural Uganda demonstrated that screening videos encouraging viewers to speak out against violence against women led to a decrease in reported rates of such incidents in the villages where the videos were shown. The rapid expansion of radio coverage in Tanzania has dramatically increased the reach of radio programs that address social issues, including gender relations. Radio may therefore serve as a valuable platform to foster positive changes in attitudes and behaviors related to early and forced marriage and promote gender equality.

Researchers partnered with IPA and the community-based non-governmental organization UZIKWASA to evaluate the impact of a radio program on changing attitudes toward early and forced marriage and gender relations. The radio program, Tamapendo, was a drama written, acted, and produced in Tanga that focuses on locally recognizable Islamic teachings about a girl’s right to resist early forced marriage. In 15 randomly selected villages, 40 villagers were invited to a community event to listen to Tamapendo. In 15 other randomly selected villages, 40 villagers were invited to a community event to listen to an unrelated radio drama about HIV and served as the comparison group. Select villagers were asked about their views on early and forced marriage and gender equality before the screenings, 3 weeks after the screenings, and again 15 months later.
Tamapendo had a significant positive impact on listeners’ beliefs about early and forced marriage. Three weeks after the screenings, listeners were 9.3 percentage points more likely to reject a girl’s forced marriage (from 82 percent to 91.3 percent) and 4.8 percentage points more likely to reject a girl’s early forced marriage (from 94 percent to 98.8 percent). 15 months later, the effects of Tamapendo weakened — dropping to a 2.5 percentage point difference in listeners rejecting forced marriage relative to the comparison group — but remained significant.

Sources


August 04, 2023
Related Content

Discover more from IPA

View All Studies View All News View All Blogs View All Events View All Publications