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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

The Journal of Politics
**The Effects of Independent Local Radio on Tanzanian Public Opinion: Evidence from a
Planned Natural Experiment**
--Manuscript Draft--

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Abstract:	We describe a natural experiment occasioned by an abrupt increase in the transmission range of an independent Tanzanian radio station whose broadcasts emphasize human rights and gender equality. Some villages that formerly lay outside the catchment area of this radio station could now receive it, while nearby villages remained outside of reception range. Prior to the change in transmission range in 2016, we conducted a baseline survey in both treated and untreated villages and found them to be similar in terms of prevailing social attitudes and political interest. An endline survey conducted in 2020 shows that respondents in areas that received the new radio signal were substantially more likely to listen to the station, and their levels of political interest and knowledge about domestic politics were significantly higher than their counterparts in villages where the signal could not reach. Attitude change on a range of gender issues, however, was sporadic.
Additional Information:	
Question:	Response

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HIV Prevention and Treatment



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A Radio Drama's Effects on HIV Attitudes and Policy Priorities: A Field Experiment in Tanzania

Donald P. Green, PhD¹, Dylan W. Groves, MA¹, and Constantine Manda, MA²

Abstract

A growing body of evidence investigates how 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 may influence audiences' policy priorities, such as their demand for local access to HIV/AIDS medical care. A condensed (2-hour) version of a popular Swahili radio drama was presented to rural Tanzanians as part of a placebo-controlled experiment, clustered at the village level. A random sample comprising 1,200 participants were interviewed at baseline and invited to attend a presentation of the radio drama, and 83% attended. Baseline respondents were re-interviewed 2 weeks later with a response rate of 95%. In addition to increasing listeners' knowledge and support for disclosure of HIV status, the radio drama produced sizable and statistically significant effects on listeners' preference for hypothetical candidates promising improved HIV/AIDS treatment.

Keywords

attitudes, entertainment education, HIV/AIDS, media

A large body of research investigates the effects of media and entertainment education ("edutainment") on knowledge about HIV/AIDS and stigma toward those living with it (Banerjee et al., 2019; Rutland, 2005; LaCroix et al., 2016). These interventions are generally premised on one or both of the following propositions. First, changing individual beliefs about the risks of HIV/AIDS, the pathways of HIV transmission, and the efficacy of HIV treatments reduces risky behaviors and promotes the adoption of effective treatments (Bogale et al., 2011; McGill & Joseph, 1996; Vokonas & Bhattacharya, 1999; Vaughan et al., 2000; Xiaoming et al., 2000). Second, reducing stigma around HIV/AIDS decreases the harmful social effects of living with HIV and encourages HIV-positive people to disclose their status and seek medical care (Bakula et al., 2014; Crut et al., 2011; Mbwana et al., 2009; O'Leary et al., 2007).

However, the literature on edutainment strategies to address HIV/AIDS has generally neglected a third channel of media influence: changing the policy preferences of citizens with respect to government provision of HIV/AIDS medical care. In addition to their effects on individual knowledge and social attitudes, narrative media interventions may increase citizens' demand for government action by highlighting the social costs of HIV/AIDS and the value of government health services, especially in areas where those services are generally unavailable.

In this study, we present evidence from a field experiment in Tanzania's northeastern Tanga Region designed to test the effects of an entertainment education campaign to address HIV/AIDS. The radio drama *Mwakupokea* was developed by a Tanzanian media organization to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS treatment, reduce stigma toward HIV-positive individuals, and increase listeners' willingness to disclose their HIV status. We conducted a cluster-randomized trial testing the effects of exposure to a condensed version of *Mwakupokea* in 30 villages in Tanga. In addition to measuring standard outcomes about knowledge and stigma, we also measure a category of outcomes that has largely been overlooked in prior edutainment studies on HIV/AIDS, namely, the relative importance of access to HIV/AIDS medical care among government priorities.

Our findings demonstrate the powerful influence that entertainment education can have on audiences' demand for government action in domains of public health. When interviewed 2 weeks after exposure to the radio program, villagers

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Article

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

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Abstract

Early and forced marriage (EFM) is an increasing focus of international organizations and local non-government organizations. This study assesses the extent to which attitudes and norms related to EFM can be changed by locally tailored media campaigns. A two-hour radio drama set in rural Tanzania was presented to Tanzanian villagers as part of a placebo-controlled experiment randomized at the village level. A random sample of 1,200 villagers was interviewed at baseline and invited to a presentation of the radio drama, 83% of whom attended. 95% of baseline respondents were re-interviewed two weeks later, and 97% 15 months after that. The radio drama produced sizable and statistically significant effects on attitudes and perceived norms concerning forced marriage, which was the focus of the radio drama, 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.

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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.¹ 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 18,² and 30 percent report having limited or no decision-making power when choosing their life partners.³ 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.⁴ The rapid expansion of radio coverage in Tanzania has dramatically increased the reach of radio programs that address social issues, including gender relations.⁵ 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

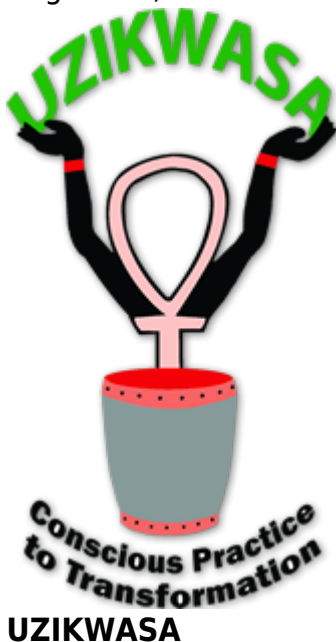
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