

This study investigated the factors associated with forced early marriage among women who originate from Karenga County. The objectives of the study were as follows; 1) to determine the prevalence of forced early marriage, 2) to assess the personal factors of forced early marriage, 3) to assess the psychological factors of forced early marriage, 4) to identify the social-economic factors of forced early marriage, 5) to identify the environmental factors of forced early marriage among women aged 10 – 18 years in Karenga County.

Methodology

A cross-sectional study was carried out in Karenga County on women aged 10 -18 years. The questionnaires were pre tested among 10 women aged 10 -18 years in Kathile sub county for validity and reliability. A total of 218 respondents were then sampled.

Results

Of the 218 respondents, 83.5% had forceful early marriage while 16.5% had un forceful early marriage, personal factors ; Majority of the respondents 88 (40.4%) were in age group 10- 12 years most of them 154 (70.6%) were Christians. Ninety, 41.3% of the respondents had never gone to school and most of them 101 (46.3%) were student at the time before marriage , and educational level ($X_2=1.536$, $P=0.046$) were the demographic factors associated with force early marriage. The socio-economic factors that had significant association with forced early marriage were; family financial status before marriage ($X_2=2.222$, $P=0.032$), domestic violence at home or conflicts/disaster/emergency ($X_2=5.966$, $P=0.014$) decision makers at home ($X_2=4.674$, $P=0.046$), motives for the marriage($X_2=33.362$, $P=0.021$), and age at marriage ($X_2=33.362$, $P=0.000$).

Conclusions and recommendations;

The prevalence level of forced early marriage was high at 83.5% Socio-economic factors that had significant association with forced early marriage were; family financial status before marriage), domestic violence at home or conflicts/disaster/emergency decision makers at home, motives for the marriage, and age at marriage .The environmental related factors that had significant association with force early marriage were; reason for the marriage, marriage procedure/tradition, and type of marriage preferred (arranged and forced) The most common psychological factors of force early marriage were, physical and sexual abuse, isolation, reproduction health issues and dropping out schools.

The following are recommended in response to findings revealed by this study

- To sensitize the community about the dangers and effects of forced early marriage.
- To ensure that the laws are put in place regarding the abuse of human rights.
- To make sure that girls try to achieve education because low level of studied increases the prevalence of forced early marriage.