

**Title:** Women's Marriage Migration as Old Age Insurance :  
Evidence from Rural Tanzania

**Author:** Yuya Kudo

**Abstract:** In a traditional system of exogamous and patrilocal marriage prevalent in much of Sub-Saharan Africa, a rural woman is often forced to leave her kin to reside with her husband living outside her natal village when she marries. Since a village allowing a woman to inherit a husband's properties following his death can provide old age security, single females living outside the village are more likely to marry into the village. Using a natural experiment in rural Tanzania from 1991 to 2004, during which several villages that initially banned widows' land inheritance removed the discrimination, this paper explores the relationship between a customary rule of land inheritance in a village and the pattern of women's marriage migration. I expect that a village empowering widows by changing a customary rule of land inheritance in their favour increases the probability of males marrying in the village. This is because external females compete to marry into the village, and this competition might reduce the marital cost incurred by males living in the village (e.g., search cost, bride wealth payments from a man to a woman's family). Using an instrumental variable approach, this paper provides evidence to support it and the effect survives after controlling for village fixed effects. In accordance with the evidence, I also find that the probability of observing both a general and polygynous mating is higher in a village which customarily allows widows' land inheritance. Legislating for women's rights in a society with traditional rules may change the pattern of economic development by unintentionally influencing the long-term distribution of population and welfare in an overall economy.