

# **Title: Urbanization and living away type of marriage: The case of Kampala city- Uganda.**

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## **Abstract**

*Living away type of marriage was found to be on an upward trend and more common in urban (36.1%) than rural areas (19.2%). Logistic regression analysis showed that urban residents were 2 times more likely to be in living away type of marriage than their rural counterparts. Area of residence was the most significant factor in influencing living away type of marriage.*

*The study revealed that living away type of marriage was due to some married men being migrant workers leaving their wives at home to maintain their family investments and the nature of jobs that make separation of spouses inevitable. The problem of accommodation in urban areas due to shortage of houses was evident from being responsible for 17% of urban residents in living away type of marriage.*

*Living away type of marriage was implicated as being one of the causes of the spread of HIV/AIDs. Separation of couples predisposes these groups to have sexual contacts with multiple partners. Married spouses that stayed together were at lower risk of being HIV seropositive than those staying apart (UNFPA, 2006).*

## **Introduction**

Although the level of urbanization is low in Uganda, it is rising very fast. While in 1950 Uganda's urban population was only 3%, it increased to 6.6% in 1969, 7.4% in 1980, 11.3% in 1991 and 12.3% in 2002. It is projected to increase to 30% by 2030 (UBOS, 2002). The majority of the urban population (80%) is classified as poor or low-income earners and lack access to adequate housing and infrastructure. For example, 60% of the residents in Kampala live in slums (UNFPA, 2004). As a result, urbanization influences marriage patterns, one of which is living away type of marriage.

Kampala is the capital city of Uganda and the largest urban area in terms of population and size. The primacy rate of Kampala has varied from 54% in 1969, 48% in 1980, 41% in 1991 and 40% in 2002. Kampala remained the primate city because of in-migration and immigration rather than natural population increase. Over half (53%) of residents of Kampala were born outside the city. It is the largest recipient of internal migrants, having 15.1% of all the total internal migrants (UBOS, 2002).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the background factors and reasons for living away type of marriages.

### **Data sources and methodology**

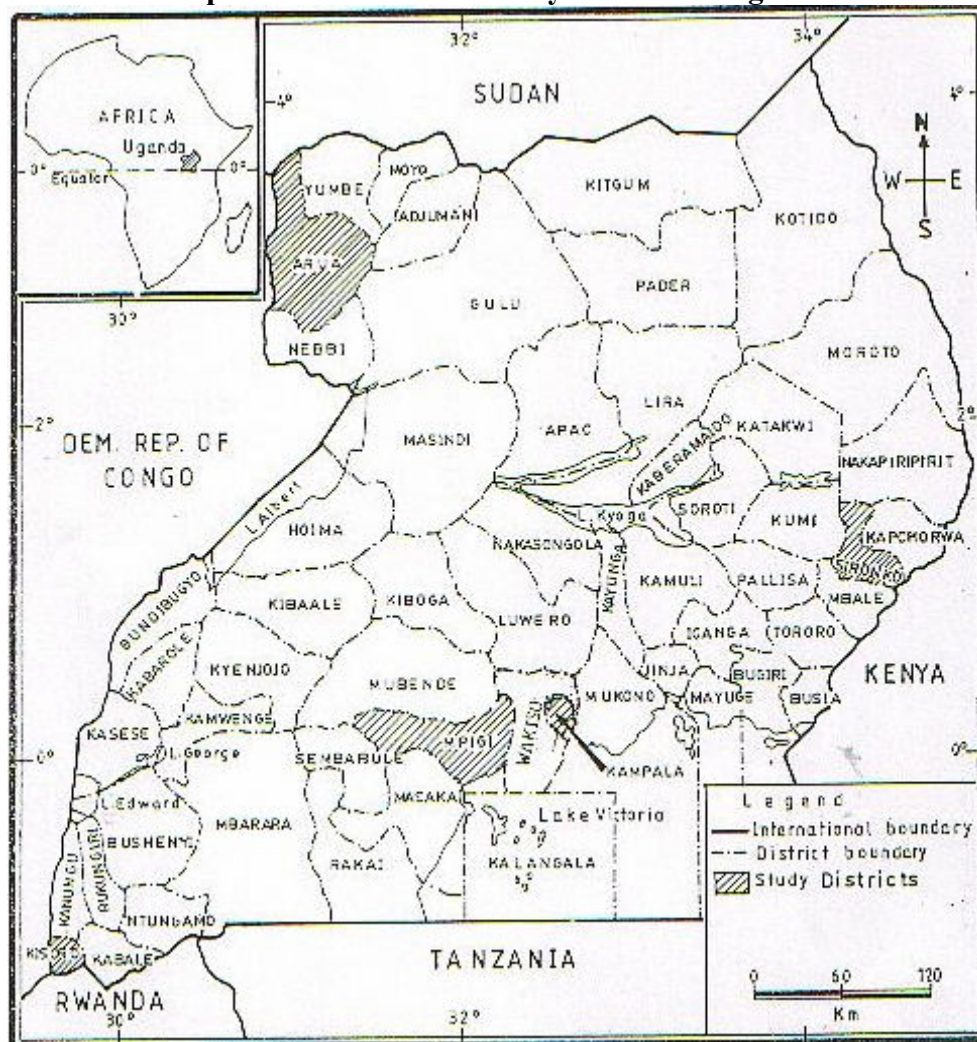
The study was based on primary data collected in 2004 using a questionnaire and focus group discussions (FGDs) in Kampala city and rural districts of Mpigi, Kisoro, Sironko and Arua. Four ethnic groups namely: Baganda in Mpigi; Bafumbira in Kisoro; Bagisu in Sironko and Lugbara in Arua who are the majority in the respective districts and many of them have migrated to Kampala city were interviewed.

A total number of 301 respondents were studied in the quantitative sub-study. Questions in the sub-study included: Do you stay with your spouse throughout the year? If no why? Those who stayed with their partners most of the time in the year fell in the living with partner type of marriage and those who did not, belonged to the living away type of marriage.

Focus Group Discussions were conducted in the qualitative sub-study. A total number of 16 Focus Group Discussions were utilized. In both Kampala city and the rural areas, males and females formed separate discussions groups.

Both bivariate and multivariate analysis methods were applied to the data collected.

**Map 1: Location of the study districts in Uganda.**



Source: UBOS (2002)

## Background factors associated with living away type of marriage.

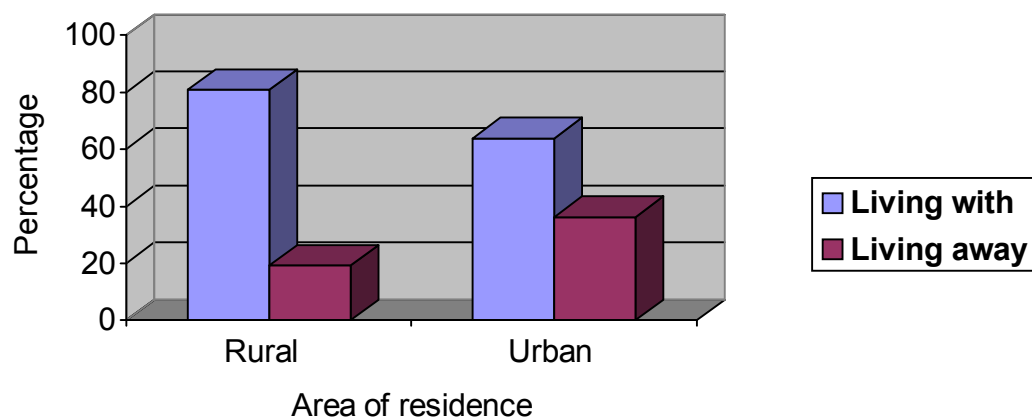
### *Area of residence*

Living away type of marriage is much higher among urban respondents (36%) than with rural respondents (19%) as observed from Table 1 and Figure 1. This is supported by 24% of the urban residents who attributed their living away type of marriage to having left their wives in the village and 24.7% whose spouses work far away from Kampala in Table 7. Female respondents have a higher percentage (31%) of living away type of marriage than males (24%). This could be as a result of polygamy. Men with two or more wives may not stay with all the wives at the same time. This is more common when a man has one wife in Kampala and another in the village. Also, some monogamous men who work in Kampala, leave their wives in the villages due to economic reasons. Chi-square test shows a strong association between area of residence and living with and living away types of marriage ( $p = 0.000$ ).

**Table 1: Living with and living away types of marriage by sex and area of residence**

Area of residence						
	Rural		Urban		Total	
<b>Males</b>	N	%	N	%	N	%
Living with	271	90.0	157	60.2	428	76.2
Living away	30	10.0	104	39.8	134	23.8
Total	301	100.0	261	100.0	562	100.0
Chi-square = 68.731, $p = 0.000$						
<b>Females</b>						
Living with	200	70.9	178	67.7	378	69.4
Living away	82	29.1	85	32.3	167	30.6
Total	282	100.0	263	100.0	545	100.0
Chi-square = 0.673, $p = 0.412$						
<b>Both sexes</b>						
Living with	471	80.8	335	63.9	806	72.8
Living away	112	19.2	189	36.1	301	27.2
Total	583	100.0	524	100.0	1107	100.0
Chi-square = 39.614, $p = 0.000$						

Figure 1: **Area of residence and living with/away types of marriage**



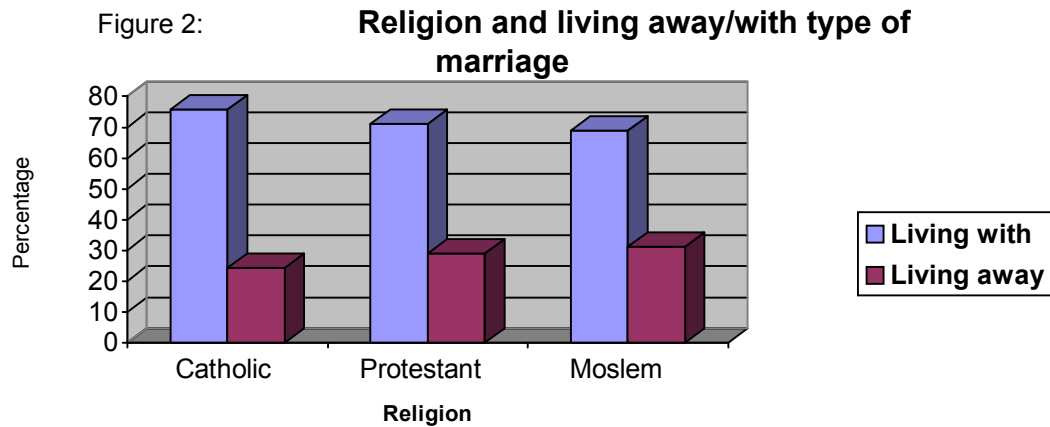
## Religion

Moslems reported the highest incidence of living away marriage pattern (31%) compared with 29% for the Protestants and only 24% for the Catholics as evident in Table 2 and Figure 2. This could be attributed to the fact that Moslems are more polygamous than Christians and therefore couples do not stay together all the time. On the other hand, Christianity stresses that man and wife should be together all the time as observed from the following scriptures in the Bible: *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”* Ephesians 5:31.

**Table 2: Living with and living away types of marriage by sex and religion**

Religion								
	Catholic		Protestant		Moslem		Total	
Males	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Living with	204	81.0	183	73.8	41	66.1	428	76.2
Living away	48	19.0	65	26.2	21	33.9	134	23.8
Total	252	100.0	248	100.0	62	100.0	562	100.0
Chi-square = 7.390, p = 0.025								
Females								
Living with	158	69.9	184	68.4	36	72.0	378	69.4
Living away	68	30.1	85	31.6	14	28.0	167	30.6
Total	226	100.0	269	100.0	50	100.0	545	100.0
Chi-square = 0.313, p = 0.855								
Both sexes								
Living with	362	75.7	367	71.0	77	68.8	806	72.8
Living away	116	24.3	150	29.0	35	31.2	301	27.2
Total	478	100.0	517	100.0	112	100.0	1107	100.0
Chi-square = 3.863, p = 0.145								

Figure 2:



### ***Education***

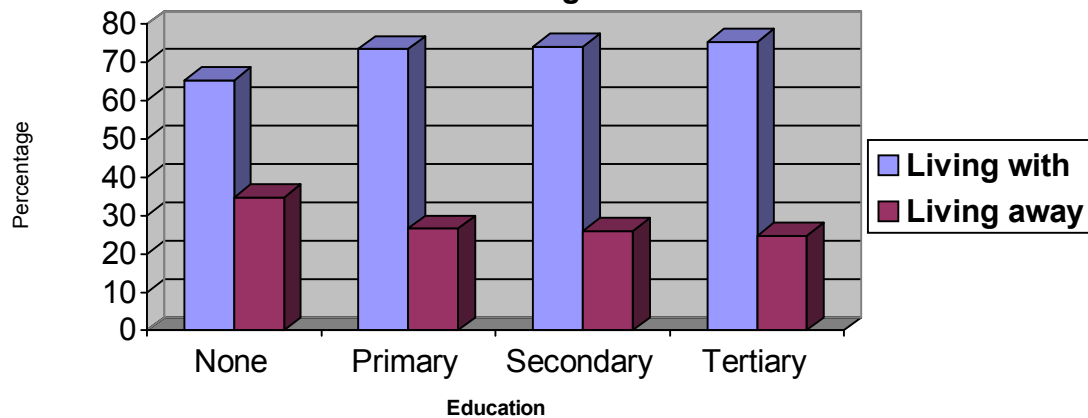
Table 3 and Figure 3 show that the lower the level of education the higher the chances of spouses living separately. Respondents with no education showed the highest percentage of living away pattern (34.7%). Those with primary education (27%), secondary (26%) and tertiary (25%) followed in that order. The least educated men do not move to urban areas to seek employment with their wives. They leave them at home in the village. The highly educated men in many cases marry fellow educated women who are likely to be employed as well. It is also observed that the females reported far much higher incidences (30.6%) of living away than the males (23.8%).

**Table 3: Living with and living away types of marriage by sex and education**

<b>Education</b>										
	<b>None</b>		<b>Primary</b>		<b>Secondary</b>		<b>Tertiary</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Living with	31	81.6	176	74.6	144	78.7	77	73.3	428	76.2
Living away	7	18.4	60	25.4	39	21.3	28	26.7	134	23.8
Total	38	100.0	236	100.0	183	100.0	105	100.0	562	100.0
Chi-square = 2.047, p = 0.563										
<b>Females</b>										
Living with	63	59.4	161	72.2	103	68.2	51	78.5	378	69.4
Living away	43	40.6	62	27.8	48	31.8	14	21.5	167	30.6
Total	106	100.0	223	100.0	151	100.0	65	100.0	545	100.0
Chi-square = 8.386, p = 0.039										
<b>Both sexes</b>										
Living with	94	65.3	337	73.4	247	74.0	128	75.3	806	72.8
Living away	50	34.7	122	26.6	87	26.0	42	24.7	301	27.2
Total	144	100.0	459	100.0	334	100.0	170	100.0	1107	100.0
Chi-square = 4.963, p = 0.175										



Figure 3: **Education and living with/away types of marriage**



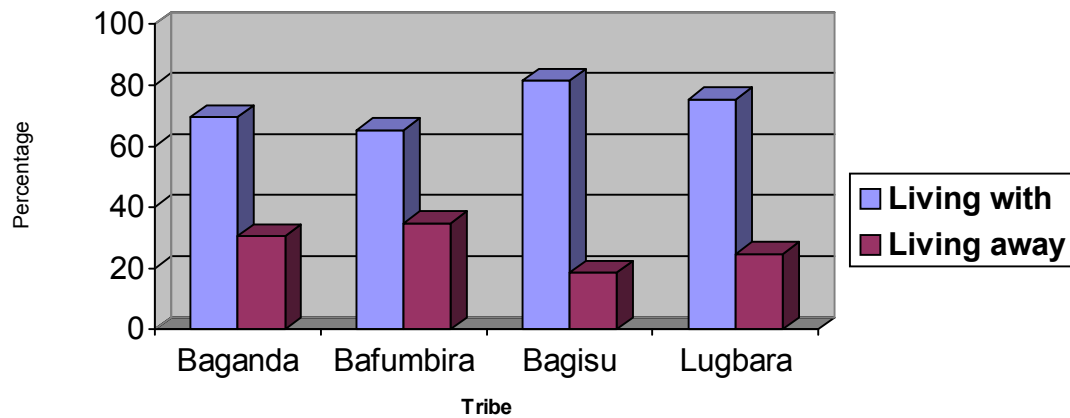
### Tribe

According to the study, the Bafumbira have the lowest percentage (65%) of the respondents who stay with their partners most of the time in the year as shown in Table 4 and Figure 4. This could be attributed to rural–urban migration. Many Bafumbira men leave their wives back home in Kisoro as they seek for employment in urban areas. On the other hand, the Bagisu respondents reported the lowest incidence of living away marriage pattern (18.6%). This is probably because the rural Bagisu depend on coffee and bananas, which are perennial crops and are involved in trade at a higher rate than the Bafumbira although both face the problem of land scarcity. Therefore, a smaller proportion of Bagisu are affected by rural-urban migration.

**Table 4: Living with and living away types of marriage by sex and tribe**

Tribe										
	Baganda		Bafumbira		Bagisu		Lugbara		Total	
<b>Males</b>	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Living with	55	73.3	114	68.3	118	83.1	134	78.4	421	75.9
Living away	20	26.7	53	31.7	24	16.9	37	21.6	134	24.1
Total	75	100.0	167	100.0	142	100.0	171	100.0	555	100.0
Chi-square = 10.171, p = 0.017										
<b>Females</b>										
Living with	123	68.0	83	61.5	61	78.2	96	71.6	363	68.9
Living away	58	32.0	52	38.5	17	21.8	38	28.4	165	31.2
Total	181	100.0	135	100.0	78	100.0	134	100.0	528	100.0
Chi-square = 7.140, p = 0.068										
<b>Both sexes</b>										
Living with	178	69.5	197	65.2	179	81.4	230	75.4	784	72.4
Living away	78	30.5	105	34.8	41	18.6	75	24.6	299	27.6
Total	256	100.0	302	100.0	220	100.0	305	100.0	1083	100.0
Chi-square = 19.045, p = 0.000										

Figure 4: **Tribe and living with/away types of marriage**



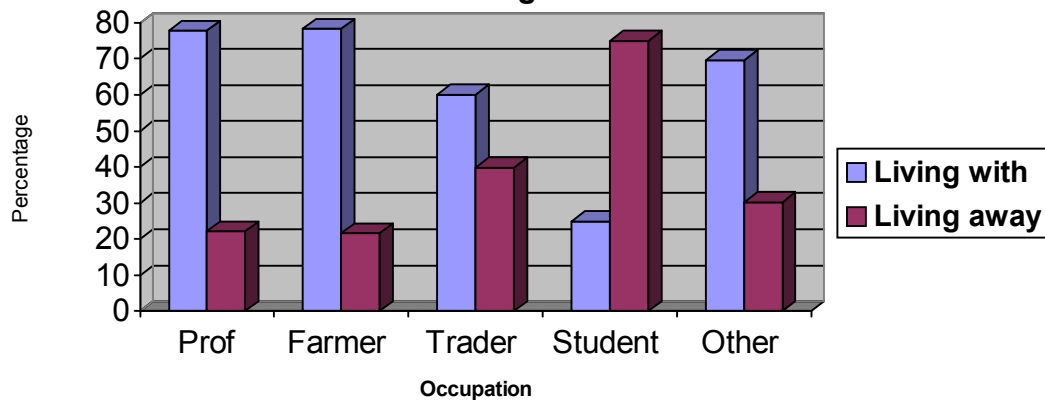
### ***Occupation***

The study further found that respondents of the following occupations stay with their partners most of the time in the year: professionals (77.8%) and farmers (78%) as evident in Table 5 and Figure 5. On the other hand, only 25% of the students stay with their partners all the year around because very few are formally married. It was observed that 100% of students started by co-habiting before they formalized their marriages (Tumwine, 2006).

**Table 5: Living with and living away types of marriage by sex and occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>												
	Professional		Farmer		Trader		Student		Other		Total	
<b>Males</b>	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Living with	103	78.0	173	90.1	47	56.6	1	25.0	104	68.9	428	76.2
Living away	29	22.0	19	9.9	36	43.4	3	75.0	47	31.1	134	23.8
Total	132	100.0	192	100.0	83	100.0	4	100.0	151	100.0	562	100.0
Chi-square = 48.434, p = 0.000												
<b>Females</b>												
Living with	48	77.4	158	68.7	45	64.3	1	25.0	126	70.4	378	69.4
Living away	14	22.6	72	31.3	25	35.7	3	75.0	53	29.6	167	30.6
Total	62	100.0	230	100.0	70	100.0	4	100.0	179	100.0	545	100.0
Chi-square = 6.584, p = 0.160												
<b>Both sexes</b>												
Living with	151	77.8	331	78.4	92	60.1	2	25.0	230	69.7	806	72.8
Living away	43	22.2	91	21.6	61	39.9	6	75.0	100	30.3	301	27.2
Total	194	100.0	422	100.0	153	100.0	8	100.0	330	100.0	1107	100.0
Chi-square = 32.498, p = 0.000												

Figure 5: **Occupation and living with/away types of marriage**



#### **Regression analysis showing area of residence vis-à-vis selected factors and living away type of marriage**

In order to test the hypothesis that living away type of marriage is likely to be more practiced by urban than rural residents, logistic regression was applied. When running the regression model, value 1 stands for living with marriage and 0 for living away marriages. The results in Table 6 show that area of residence significantly influences living with and living away types of marriage. In fact, residence is the most significant factor in influencing living with and living away types of marriage. The negative B values (-0.98) for urban show a negative relationship between living with type of marriage and urban residence. This result implies that, urbanization encourages living away type of marriage pattern. The hypothesis that: “living away type of marriage is likely to be more practiced by urban than rural residents” is accepted.

Tribe was the second most important factor in affecting living with and living away types of marriage. The Bagisu were found to stay with their spouses about 2 times (Exp (B) = 1.9) more than the Bafumbira (reference category). The Lugbara were 2 times (Exp (B) = 1.5) more likely to stay with their spouses than the Bafumbira. The Baganda were not found to be different (Exp (B) = 1.1) from the Bafumbira. The Bafumbira were least likely to be living with their spouses because many men leave their wives in Kisoro and migrate to work in Kampala.

Professionals were 9 times (Exp (B) = 9.0), farmers 8 times (Exp (B) = 8.0), other category 8 times (Exp (B) = 7.9) and traders 6 times (Exp (B) = 5.6) more likely to be living with their spouses than students (reference category). This is expected because students spend most of their time in institutions of learning.

Considering education, the higher the level, and the higher the chances of spouses living together. Respondents with primary education were 2 times ( $\text{Exp (B)} = 1.8$ ), those with secondary education 2 times ( $\text{Exp (B)} = 2.1$ ) and those with tertiary education were 3 times ( $\text{Exp (B)} = 2.7$ ) more likely to be living with their spouses than those with no education (reference category).

**Table 6: Logistic regression analysis showing impact of residence and selected factors on living with type of marriage**

Living with type of marriage		B	Std. Error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Residence	Intercept	-1.318	.908	2.105	.147	
	Urban	-.978	.200	23.998	.000	.376
	Rural #	0(a)	.	.	.	.
Religion	Catholic	-.053	.251	.045	.832	.948
	Protestant	-.157	.250	.397	.528	.854
	Moslem #	0(a)	.	.	.	.
Education	Primary	.576	.229	6.312	.012	1.778
	Secondary	.760	.270	7.927	.005	2.139
	Tertiary	.978	.318	9.426	.002	2.658
	None #	0(a)	.	.	.	.
Tribe	Baganda	.082	.209	.154	.695	1.086
	Bagisu	.650	.226	8.313	.004	1.916
	Lugbara	.426	.201	4.500	.034	1.532
	Bafumbira #	0(a)	.	.	.	.
Occupation	Professional	2.198	.848	6.718	.010	9.005
	Farmer	2.080	.871	5.702	.017	8.006
	Other	2.074	.844	6.033	.014	7.953
	Trader	1.732	.855	4.102	.043	5.651
	Student #	0(a)	.	.	.	.

# = Reference category

## REASONS FOR LIVING AWAY TYPE OF MARRIAGE

The respondents who declared that they were in living away type of marriage were asked to give the reasons for the situation. Respondents who practiced living away type of marriage were also asked to give reasons why they did not stay with their spouses most of the time. The responses are summarized in Table 7 and shown on Figures 6 and 7. There were more reasons given by urban residents than their rural counterparts. Half of the respondents (50%) in the rural areas who practice living away type of marriage indicated that their partners work in Kampala. Mbiti (1986) regards this type of marriage as “separation out of economic necessity”. He also identifies the causes of the separation of working partner as failing to take the wife to city due to shortage of housing and inadequate money. Another reason is for the wife to stay looking after the family property.

Having another wife (polygamy) was also responsible for living away pattern of 20% in the rural compared to 9% of the urban areas. This was due to higher levels of polygamy in the rural areas. It was observed that polygamous marriages were 19.8% in rural areas as opposed to only 10% in the urban areas (Tumwine, 2006).

The most significant reason for living away type of marriage in urban areas was working away from Kampala as indicated by 25% of the respondents. This was more common among occupations such as police and army who are always being transferred. It was observed that when the husbands are transferred, the wives remain in Kampala with the children who are in school in many cases. To avoid disrupting the education of the children, living type of marriage becomes inevitable. However, this is noted as a big problem according to UNFPA (2006):

*“Truck drivers are always on the move and the police personnel leave solitary lives, often being transferred from one station to another. Such movements predispose these groups to have sexual contacts with multiple partners”.  
“Married spouses that stayed together were at lower risk of being HIV seropositive than those staying apart”.*

**Table 7: Reasons for living away type of marriage according to sex by residence.**

<b>Rural</b>						
<b>Reason</b>	<b>male</b>		<b>female</b>		<b>total</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Works away in Kampala	7	36.8	31	54.4	38	50.0
Has another wife in the village	4	21.0	11	19.3	15	19.7
Do not want to stay with her/ him	2	10.5	8	14.0	10	13.2
Has another wife in Kampala	4	21.0	4	7.0	8	10.5
Works in another village	1	5.3	1	1.8	2	2.6
Partner still a student	1	5.3	0	0.0	1	1.3
Not yet officially married	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	1.3
Problem of accommodation	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	1.3
Total	19	100.0	57	100.0	76	100.0
Rural Chi-square = 15.941, p = 0.014						
<b>Urban</b>						
Works away from Kampala	25	26.6	14	21.9	39	24.7
Wife/ husband in the village	23	24.5	15	23.4	38	24.0
Problem of accommodation	14	14.9	13	20.3	27	17.0
Not yet officially married	11	11.7	6	9.4	17	10.8
Has another wife in the village	8	8.5	6	9.4	14	8.9
Has another wife in Kampala	8	8.5	6	9.4	14	8.9
Do not want to stay with her/him	2	2.1	2	3.1	4	2.5
Works in another town	1	1.1	1	1.6	2	1.3
Partner still a student	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	0.6
No enough money to stay with her	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	0.6
Spouse not willing	0	0.0	1	1.6	1	0.6
Total	94	100.0	64	100.0	158	100.0
Urban Chi-square = 13.989, p = 0.173						



Figure 6: **Reasons for living away marriage by sex of respondents**

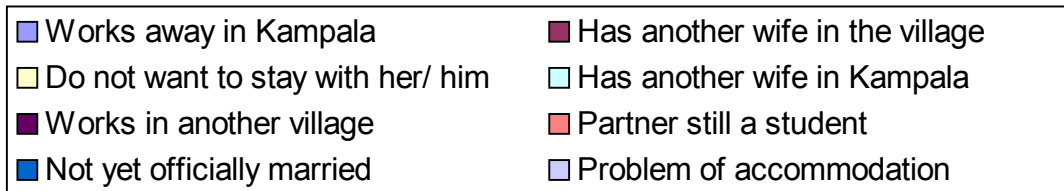
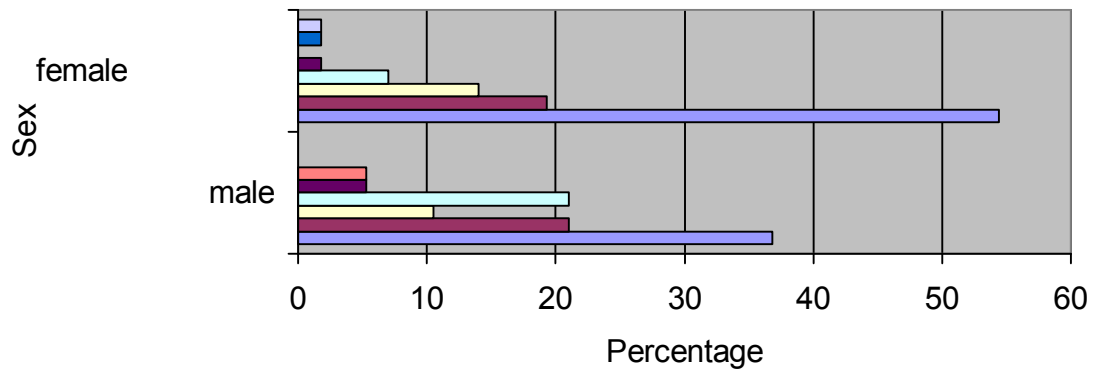
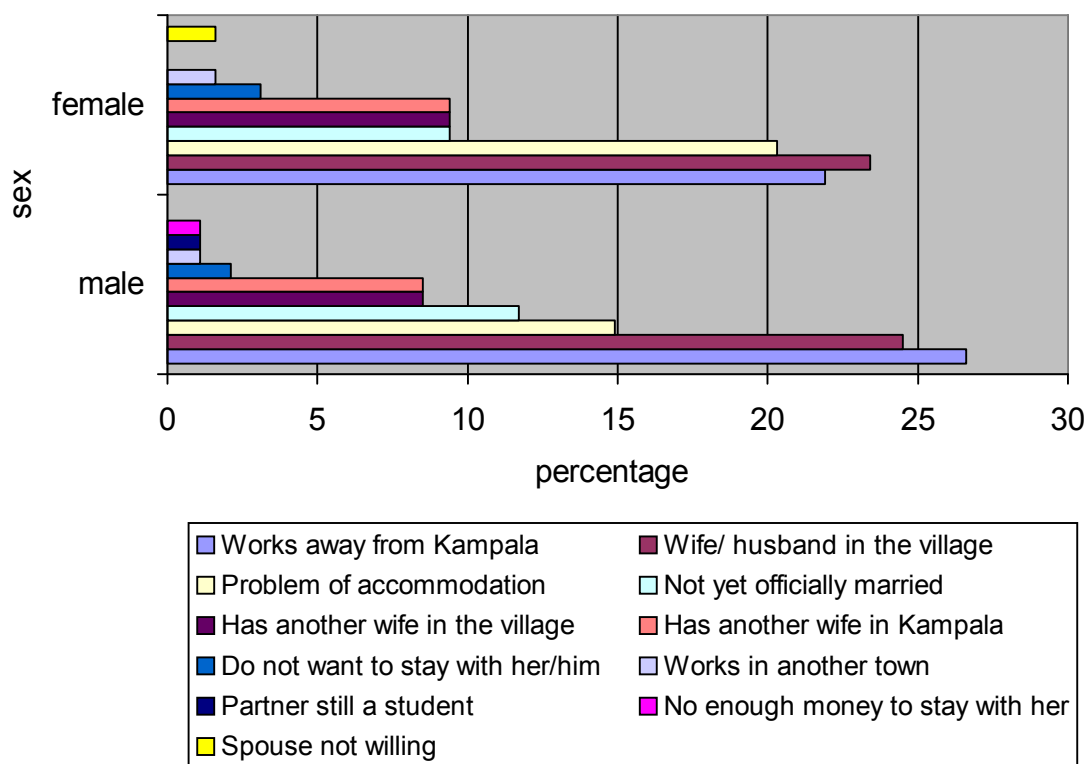


Figure 7: **Reasons for urban living away marriage by sex of respondents**



The results further show that 11% of the urban and 1.3% of the rural respondents were practicing living away type of marriage because they were not yet officially married. This could be attributed to co-habitation. The problem of accommodation was responsible for the existence of living away type of marriage with 17.0% of the urban and 1.3% of the rural respondents. The higher percentage of living away pattern due to accommodation in urban areas could be as a result of the high cost of housing.

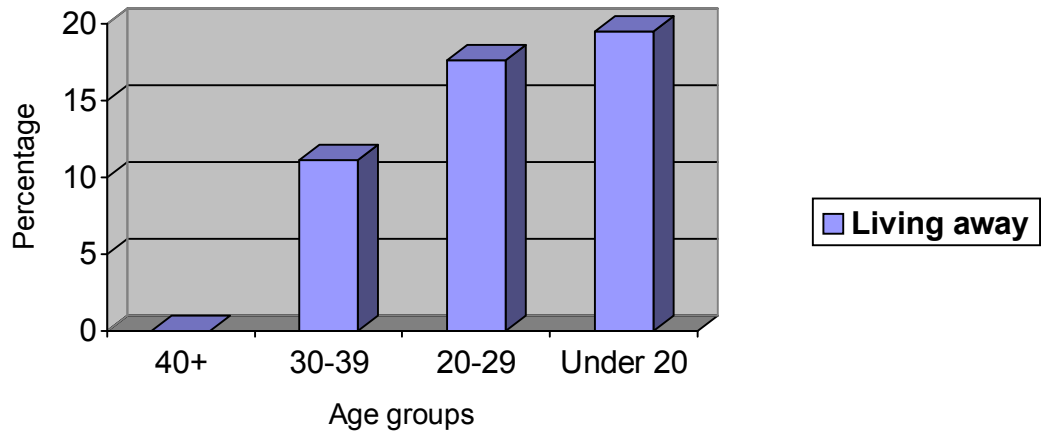
### **Trends in living away type of marriage**

Figures 8 and 9 show that living away type of marriage is increasing with time. The younger the age group, the higher the level of living away type of marriage in both the rural and urban areas. Urban respondents in living away type of marriage double those in rural areas.

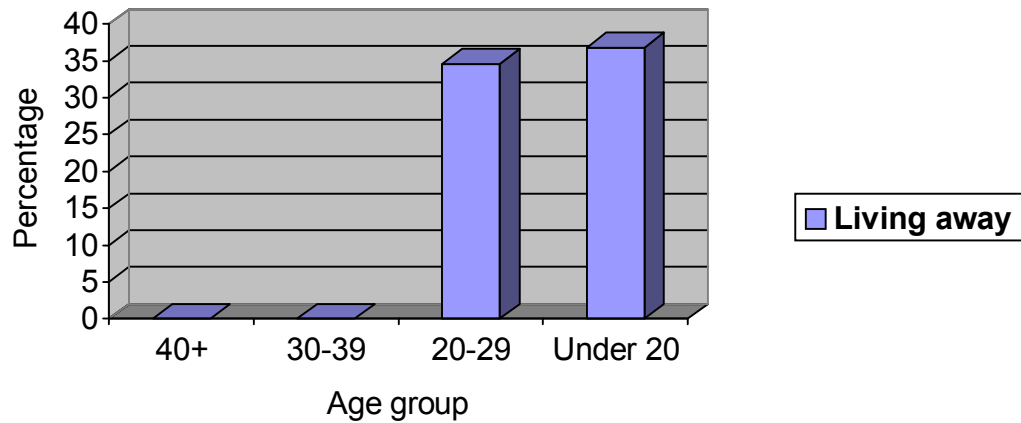
Table 8: Trends in living away type of marriage

		<b>40<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>Under 20</b>
<b>Rural</b>	Living with	100.0%	88.9%	82.4%	80.5%
	Living away	0.0%	11.1%	17.6%	19.5%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Urban</b>	Living with	0.0%	100.0%	65.4%	63.2%
	Living away	0.0%	0.0%	34.6%	36.8%
	Total	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Figure 8: Rural trends in living away marriages for various age groups**



**Figure 9: Urban trends in living away marriage for various age groups**



## Conclusion

Urbanization in Uganda like else where is an inevitable process and is therefore expected to continue. Urbanization was found to be the most significant factor in influencing living away type of marriage. Housing estate developers should be supported and encouraged to provide affordable houses especially to low income earners. Government policy of encouraging all the districts in the country to set apart land for the establishment of industries should be taken seriously and supported by district and municipal leaders. This will go a long way in decongesting Kampala.

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