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Assessment of Gender Influence in Household's Responsibility and Supervision (In Mbeya Rural Utengule-USongwe Ward-Tanzania)

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to assess gender influence in household and resources allocation in Mbeya Rural District. The process of resources allocation at household level involves two different genders whereby male dominates female in all sphere of life. It was discovered through many literatures that women were discriminated, oppressed, not access to, control and inherit of land by customary law.

The study was carried out in Mbeya Rural District at Utengule-USongwe ward, which involved 196 households, comprised of married, widow/widower, cohabiting and divorced. The data were collected using questionnaires, interview, Focus Group Discussions and documentary review. The data were edited, coded, and analyzed using SPSS version 16.0 computer program. The qualitative data were analyzed and integrated in the report according to the objectives of the study.

The findings of the study revealed that, the majority of the respondents had knowledge about the cultural influence in the household which discriminate and oppress women's rights and favour men as superior over women. The respondents were also aware about the tendency of the societies to allocate the available resources at household level more to boys than girls. The study revealed that the majority of decision makers and heads of the households were men. However, the study confirmed that culture plays a great role in discriminating and oppressing women at household level. The findings show clearly that gender inequality is mainly based in relation to access and control over domestic resources in the household, whereby men are still dominating all sphere in the households.

Basing on the findings, the study recommends that there is a need to filter and alleviate the harmful elements in culture which lead to ill-treatment of women and hinder women's rights at household level. Also there is a need to teach statutory laws in primary and secondary in order to raise awareness about gender equality and empowerment.

Key words: Allocation, Culture, equality, Gender, Household, Resource, Responsibility, Supervision,

1.0 Introduction

In African culture and African traditional life, gender is defined according to roles and functions in the society. It is what it means to be male or female in a certain society that shapes the opportunities one is offered in life, the roles one may play, and the kinds of relationships one may have (Ngubane , 2010).¹

Household responsibility and supervision has attracted many researchers especially when evaluating responsibility and supervision in the household. This process of responsibility and supervision involves two different genders whereby in many societies male dominates female in all spheres of life in the household. This happens due to cultural background especially in patriarchal societies. The females are now looking for equal power in household responsibility and supervision through the empowerment movements. Schrijvers (1991) defines empowerment as a process to self-propelled and self-propelling process which enables a person to gain insights and have an awareness of what is undesirable and unfavourable about the individual's current situation.

In many African societies resource allocations are subjected to some specific constraints due to gender inequalities. This has created the superiority complex in males and created a gap between males and females in terms of decision making and access to resources. In spite many challenges they face, they are obliged to find ways to ensure that households' basic needs are met (Birch and Shuria, 2002). The constraints most frequently identified are lack of access to and control of available resource like livestock, credit and land, poverty, marginalization, discriminatory as well as inadequate law, lack of decision making power, unjust and unfair cultural practices, lack of education (Conserve Africa Foundation, 2008).

The study examined the assessment of gender influence in household resources' allocation and the roles played by the household members and to promote gender equality. According to Study conducted by Mbise (2009) showed that women participate less in the distribution of household resources, although females work longer hours than males. They are responsible for child care; they walk far from their homes in search for water, firewood collection and market services.

¹ (Ngubane, 2010), Gender Roles in the African Culture: Implications for the Spread of Hiv/Aids

They participate more in productive activities. Almost all domestic work is in the hands of women, and includes fetching water and fuel wood, food preparation, laundry and cleaning (Omary, 1988).

Also Mwisomba (1997), stated that resource distribution at the household level is increasingly man dominated in all forms related to resources if the activities are those where women labour is predominant. Men dominate household decision especially in such cases where income use is concerned.

It is well known that households are not perfectly harmonious entities in which individual preferences are subordinated to common goals, and in which resources go to a common pool and are then channeled towards the best uses of the family. In particular, a substantial body of research indicates that familial allocation decisions are affected by the resources that individual decision-makers bring to the table (Thomas 1990; Schultz 1990; Duflo 2003).

There are some evidence in other part of the world whereby women have limited control and access to resources in the household. Recent studies underscore their restricted access to knowledge and information, their constrained authority to make independent decisions, their enforced lack of physical mobility, and their inability to forge equitable power relationship within families (Basu 1992).

Also some of the customary laws accelerate the gender bias between man and women, for instance customary laws on right of inheritance, The law of person declaration No.4 Order 1963 states that, "Women and girls are not granted any right of inheritance of clan's properties which were left behind by the deceased. Normally the first son is in the first degree, other son's second degree and the daughters are in the third degree. The customary law creates a gap between men and women in our society (Rutazaa 2005).

In this study the household was recognized as a group of more than one individual with household couples who stay together, while the household with a single individual was excluded because in this study, the household was recognized as a group of more than one individual (although a single individual can also constitute a household) who share economic activities

necessary for survival of the household and for the generation of well-being for its members. The widows/widowers, cohabitations and divorced were included since they have experienced marriage life. Although household members have varying aims and objectives as well as individual goals, they also share a common concern for the well-being of each other (Mattila, 1999).²

2. 0 Data and Measures

The study was conducted in Mbeya rural at Utengule-Usongwe ward in Mbeya region which is located on the south-west of Tanzania mainland, commonly known as Southern highland. It borders with six regions namely Rukwa, Tabora, Iringa, Ruvuma, Njombe and Songwe. Mbeya region is located on the south-west of Tanzania mainland, commonly known as Southern highland.

The data were collected to 196 households and this was done through simple random sampling. It should be noted that the sample size is a function of the absolute number of sample units, not the sampling fraction. As Best and Kahn (1989) argued that “The ideal sample is large enough to serve as an adequate representation of the population about which the researcher wishes to generalise and small enough to be selected economically, in terms of subject availability, expense in both time and money, and complexity of data analysis. The following table shows the selected households of Mbalizi small town and other villages.

The selection of households was done randomly after having a list of households from the Ward Executive Office. This study employed a sample design of simple random in order to get appropriate respondents for intended information.

In order to obtain appropriate sample size three criteria were to be specified: the level of precision (sampling error), the level of confidence, and the degree of variability in the attributes being measured (Miaoulis and Michener, 1976). The sampling error (level of precision) is 7%;

² The definition of household has been adapted to Mattila, 1999.

95 confident that the sample is correct, hence α is 5% (0.05).The following formula will be used to compute the proportional sample size;

$$N = \frac{Z_{\alpha/2}^2}{e^2} pq$$

Whereby $P = 0.5$, $q = 1 - P$, $e = 0.07$, Confidence interval (C.I.) =95% and $\alpha = 0.05$, N is the sample size required for the study, e is sampling error, P is estimated proportion, $Z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$ is constant coefficient obtained depending on confidence interval which is being used, normally obtained from the table with areas under standard normal curve (Miaoulis and Michener, 1976).

$$\begin{aligned} N &= \frac{(1.96)^2 \times (0.5)^2}{(0.07)^2} \\ &= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0049} = \frac{0.9604}{0.0049} = 196 \end{aligned}$$

The assumption of Non-Response is 10% of the sample size which is equivalent to 20 households.

$$= \frac{20 \times 100}{196} = 10.2\%$$

Therefore the Sample size was $196 + 20 = 216$, 20 households were added to cover the non-responsive error.

Utengule-Usongwe ward is comprised of famous and commercial Small Town called Mbalizi which is growing very fast. The total number of the households in this ward was 9609, from

Mbalizi (Small Town) 7580 households, Iwala 566 households, Idugumbi 541 households and Ihombe 922households (Utengule-Usongwe ward, 2015).

Then, the following mathematical formula was used to get sample size of each village in the ward.

$$n = N \frac{P_i}{P}$$

n = sample proportionate to a given village

N= sample size, P_i=village household population and P=ward household population

Table 2.1 Distribution of Study across Utengule-Usongwe ward

Study village	Total households	Sample size per village	Percent (%)
Mbalizi (small town)	7,580	153	78.1
Iwala	566	12	6.1
Idugumbi	541	11	5.6
Ihombe	922	20	10.2
Total	9,609	196	100

Source: Field Study (2019).

Simple random sampling technique was used in this study. The total number of households selected was 196. In this study the Ward Executive Officer (WEO) and Village Executive Officers of respective villages were very cooperative and helpful in identifying the households. The total number of the households of each village was displayed in the village offices.

In this study the household was recognized as a group of more than one individual with household couples who stay together, while the household with a single individual was excluded (although a single individual can also constitute a household) who share economic activities necessary for survival of the household and for the generation of well-being for its members. The study included the widows, divorced, cohabitations since they have experienced marriage life.

The study used both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were observed or collected directly from the first-hand experience by the researcher in the field. The primary data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, observations and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), while the secondary data were collected from various literatures. Secondary data were obtained from various documentary reviews related to assessment of gender influence in household and resources allocation. The major secondary sources were University of Dar-es-salaam main Library, Demographic Training Unity Library, Text books, internet, journals and other published materials related to the study.

The data collected which were in the form of quantitative were coded, edited, classified, tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme version 16. Therefore, the SPSS was used to analyse the data obtained in from the field in frequencies and cross-tabulation so as to make interpretation meaningful. The qualitative data were easily presented in tables and graphs as SPSS provided the output of the data fed, while qualitative data from in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were collected, well organized and arranged in the tally form in order to facilitate analysing and interpretation of the data.

3.0 Results and Discussion

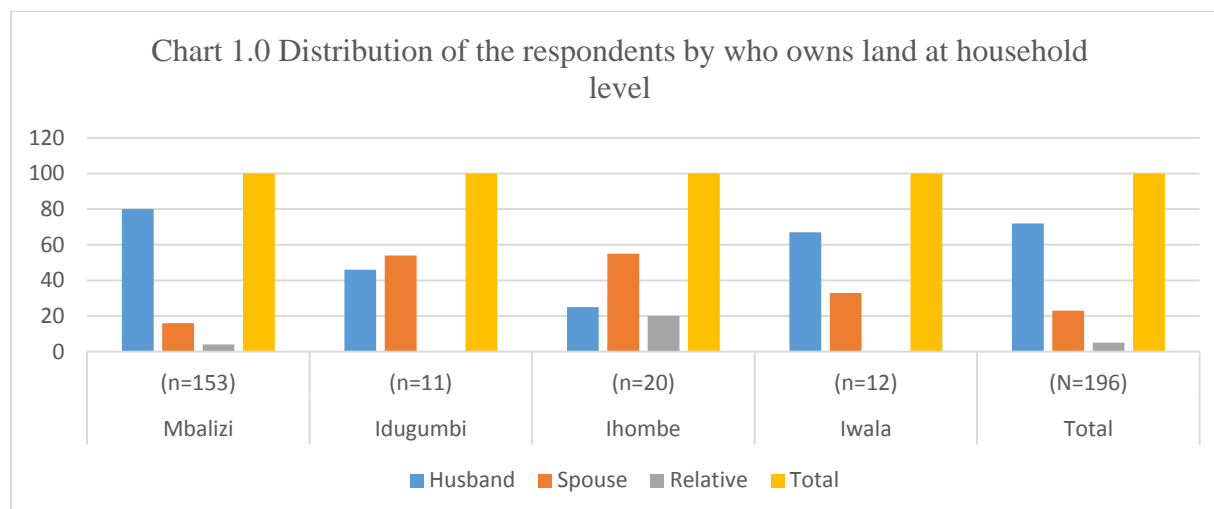
The main aspects dealt about gender influence in household's responsibility and supervision in Utengule-Usongwe ward were, land ownership, supervision of livestock, business, means of transportation, agricultural activities, influence of religion on equality between husband and wife and influence of Tanzanian law on equality between husband and wife.

3.1 Land ownership at household level

The woman's right to own land in Utengule-Usongwé ward was mainly dependent on her relationship with her husband's relatives and not otherwise. The study revealed that about 72% of the respondents indicated that husbands owned the land, 23% spouses owned the land, while 5% was owned by relatives. Despite many seminars and campaigns about the rights on land ownership (National Land Policy 1997 art.No.4.2.6), but the land is mainly dominated by men. As observed by Pelt (1971), traditionally, the right to own the resources was based on men in patrilineal societies. This is similar with the study conducted by Mbise (2009), on Economic Empowerment and Women Development whereby she noted that, ownership of land and property at household level was commonly by men.

However, this is also supported by Shiviji (1988), who observed that the control of land was mainly in the men's hands because of the poverty and patriarchal practices within families, and communities and society at large. There are various cultural obstacles which affect the women rights in decision making and land ownership despite having equal rights in the society. For instance, customary laws do not give the right to land ownership to women. As Pelt (1971), observed that, culturally women were not given inheritance rights in patrilineal societies.

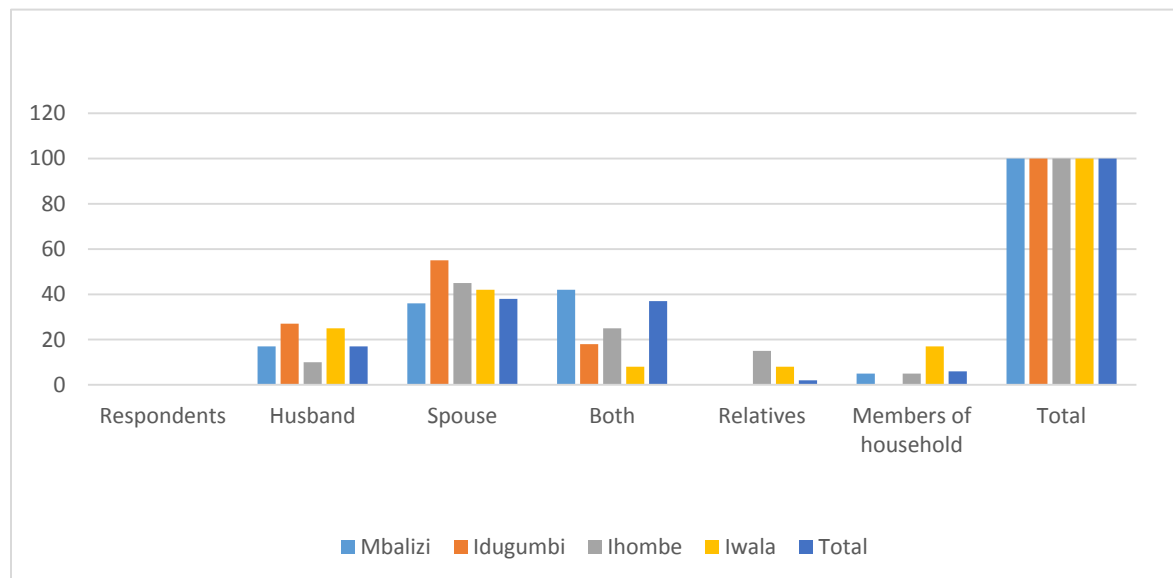
The women land ownership was rare in Utengule-Usongwé ward despite their main contribution in household as shown on chart 1.0.



3.2 Role of supervision of livestock in the household

According to United Republic of Tanzania (2012), states that the livestock sector including poultry plays a significant role in the economy of agricultural households in Tanzania Mainland. According to the study conducted in Rural Ethiopia by Sambrook (2004), observed that women played a key role in both livestock management and household activities besides farming activities. They are household managers but their work is considered as non-productive, unorganized and undocumented. Chart 2.0 is in agreement with Sambrook's Study (2004), whereby the study revealed that 38% of spouses played a key role in livestock compared to husbands (17%), it was almost twice, while (37%) were both husbands and spouses participating together in supervision. The husbands and wives participated equally (37%) in supervision of livestock in various households.

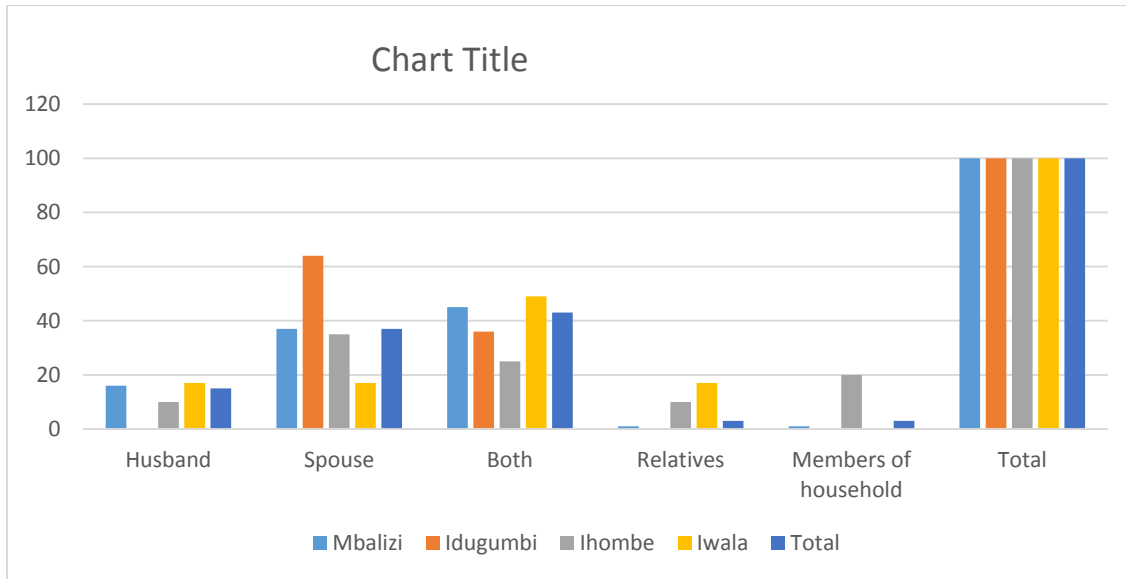
Chart 2.0 Distribution of Respondents by Who Supervises Livestock in household



3.3 Role of supervision of business in the household

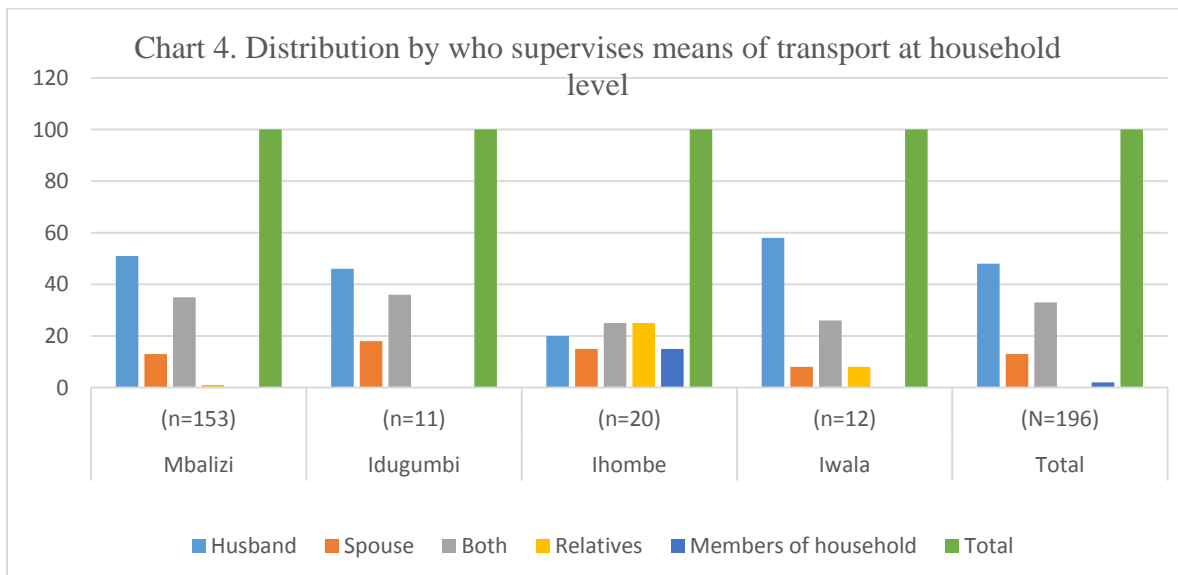
According to Chart 3.0 the study revealed that the business activities in the households were carried by both husband and spouse (43%), while spouse were (37%), were husband (15%). The relatives and members of households shared the same percentage (3%). The findings revealed that husbands and spouses participated equally (43%) in supervision of their business. In terms of gender participation in supervision of business, wives (37%) surpassed the husbands (15%) at the household levels.

Chart 3.0 Distribution of Respondents by Who Supervises of Business in household



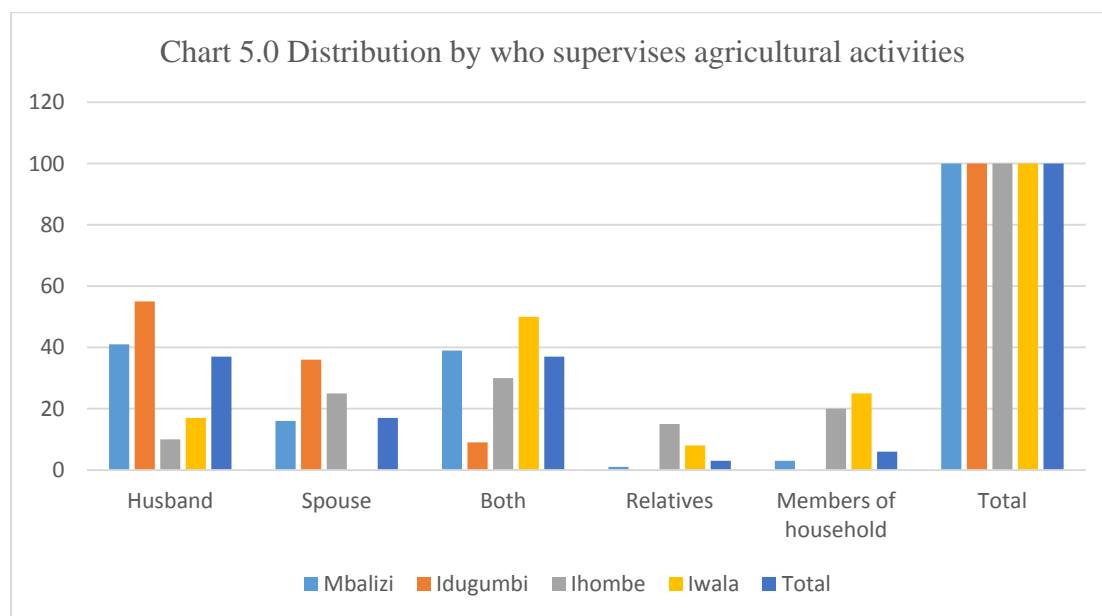
3.4 Role of Supervision of Means of Transport at Household

Data in Chart 3.0 revealed that husbands were the main supervisors of means of transport in the households (48%), followed by (both) husbands and spouse (33%), while spouses (13%), then relatives (4%) and members of households (2%). The degree of participation on supervision of means of transport by wives was minimal compared to husbands.



3.4 Role of supervision of agricultural activities at household

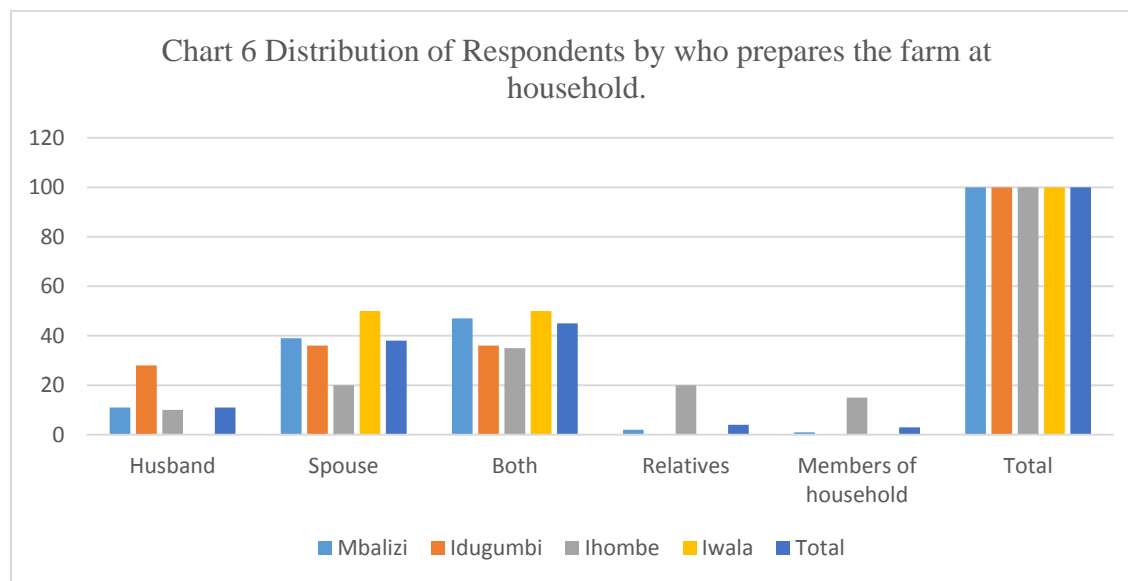
According to data in Chart 5.0 the study revealed that the majority of agricultural activities were supervised by husbands (37%), while spouses (17%). Then 37% shared by both husbands and spouses, members of the household were (6%) and relatives (3%). In most of the households (37%) husbands and spouses participated equally in supervising the agricultural activities while at Iwala village (0.0%) no spouses identified participating in supervision of agricultural activities compared to other villages, probably because of its cultural background.



3.5 Role of farm preparation in the household

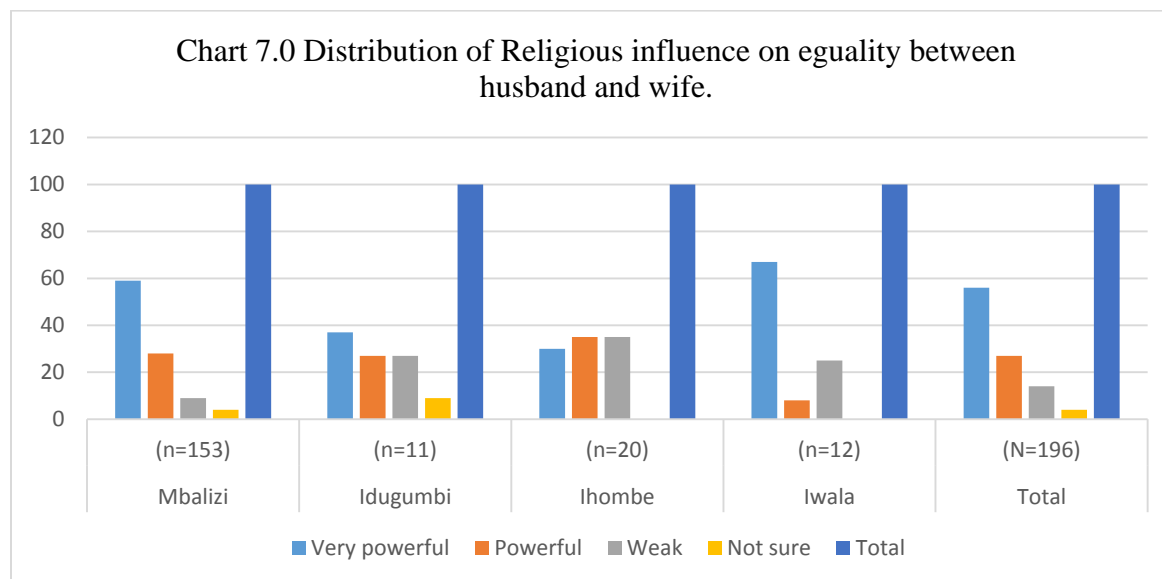
Before cultivation farms are always prepared for next agricultural season. Most people depend on rain as the sign for farm preparation. Rain is the major determine factor for farm preparation in villages. The data in Chart 6.0 indicate that 45% (husbands and spouses) participated actively in the preparation of the farms. But according to gender, spouses (38%) were involved more on

farm preparation than husbands (11%). The major part of farm preparation activities were done by spouses at household levels, while relatives (4%) and other members of household (3%).



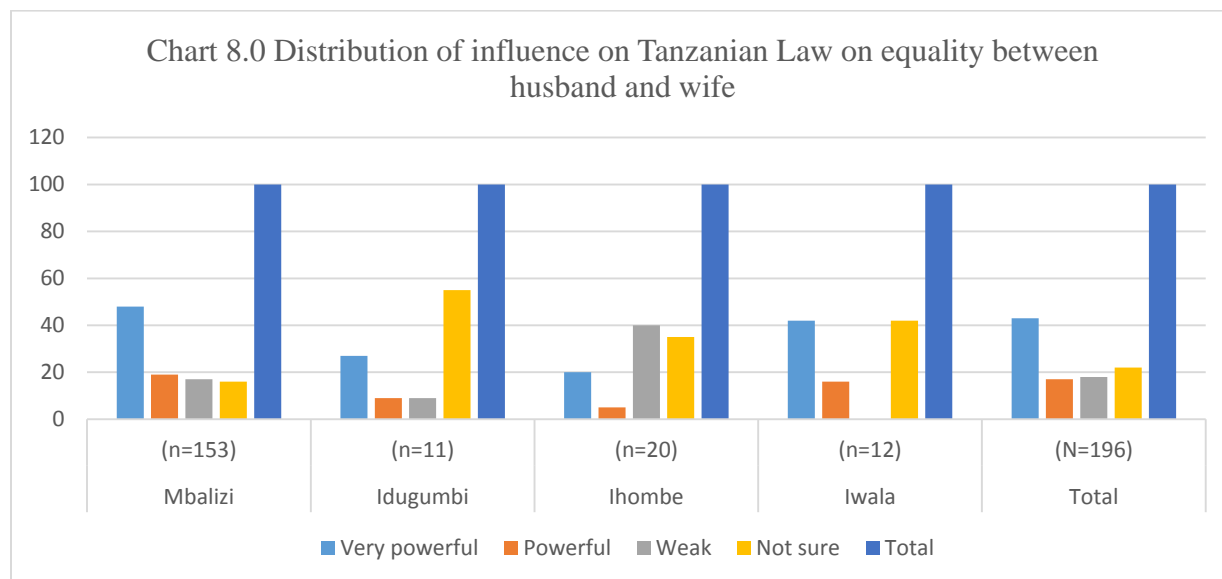
3.6 Religious influence on equality between husband and wife at household level

Religion has great impact in the life of human being for it's based on belief in the creator. People have to observe some commitments and a devotion which may alter the life of an individual depends on how he/she perceives the doctrines. The data from Chart 7.0 revealed that the majority of respondents 56% (very powerful) agreed that religion had influence on equality in the household, while 27% of respondents (powerful) , 14% of respondents (weak) and 4% of respondents were not sure whether religion had influence on equality in the household. Many religious people believe that obedience and submission of the women in their marriage stabilize their households. In the views of religion women are obedient and submissive to their husbands.



3.7 Influence of Tanzanian law on equality between husband and wife

Tanzanian laws are well organized and operating very well, but the majority of people especially in villages are not acquitted with these laws. Therefore, many of them do not feel the operation of the statutory laws instead they are based on customary laws. Therefore, the study revealed that Tanzanian law was very powerful (43%) in terms of influencing equality in the household, while other respondents (17%) powerful, (18%) weak and (22%) respondents were not sure of role played by laws (Table 8.0). The study was similar to Rutazaa (2005), who did a study on Tanzanian Women and Access to law (case study of Kilimanjaro) where she noted that (75%) of her respondents reflected that Tanzanian laws were more influential than culture and customary practices towards equality (25%). Almost 22% of the respondents were not sure of the role played by the statutory laws. This implied that there was lack of mass education on statutory laws to the people in this ward.



4.0 Conclusion

The study revealed that, there were many factors which influenced the resources allocation in the household level. The factors revealed were culture, gender, individual income and religious factors. The major factor was culture whereby the majority of respondents acknowledged it as the source influencing resources allocation in the household level. The majority of respondents recognized culture as discriminatory and oppressive based on gender whereby men were taken as superior over women. The majority of the respondents understood gender in the context of the roles and functions played by each individual in the society. Gender norms influence discriminatory and oppressive behaviour against women in the households.

5.0 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion made from this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

- (i) The government should make some of amendments in customary law which favours most men than women. In this law there some elements of discrimination and oppressive against women's rights.
- (ii) The Government should filter and alleviate the harmful elements in culture which lead to maltreatment of women and hinder the rights of women at the household level.
- (iii) The Government should address and involve women concerning their needs in developing the strategies to solve the women's problems and empower them.
- (iv) People should recognize the importance of education in order to be aware of the statutory and customary laws which will help them to know their rights and abandon from harmful culture.

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