



ASSESSMENT OF GENDER INCLUSIVENESS IN DECISION MAKING AT HOUSEHOLDS LEVEL: A CASE OF MKUNDI WARD IN MOROGORO MUNICIPAL

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Abstract: Decision-making between males and females at household level can be one of the indicators of gender empowerment, thus inclusiveness in decision-making processes in household matters consider that a female is accounted for in the family. Women's participation and how they participate; economically, socially and culturally is imperatively important in all democratic societies. The findings of study conducted at Mkundi Ward in Morogoro Municipality and involved 98 respondents revealed that 30 (30.6%) of the respondents have shown cooperation in reaching decisions on matters related to home provisions like food stuff for welfare of household members. However 23 (23.4%) of the respondents do agree that decisions making on matters related to un-paid domestic activities basing on gender roles and, although women want their partners to assist them mutually like accompanied to clinic men would wish to assist their partners financially rather than physical involvement. The findings were maintained by the respondents response whereby 80 (81.6%) have positive attitudes toward decision making in relation to gender roles. The study employed quantitative method of data collection where questionnaire was used as tool. The data collected were coded and assign values: entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and then use descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentage and cross tabulation) for data analysis.

Therefore it is recommended that all development partners (public, civil society organizations, media and religious institutions) should continue to sensitize communities on the importance of gender equality by mainstreaming gender equality issues in their programmes in order achieve gender equality.

Key words: *Gender inclusiveness, Decision Making, Household, Gender Roles.*



1.0 Introduction

Gender equality is considered a critical element in achieving decent work for all women and men, in order to effect social and institutional change that leads to sustainable development with equity and growth. Also it is a way of looking at how social norms and power structures impact on the lives and opportunities available to different groups of men and women (ILO, 2019). For this matter all major global commitments today address gender equality in the context of their thematic concerns, as have a range of international, regional and national norms, standards and commitments. However women are still inadequately represented in the decision-making process at all levels, despite affirmative actions taken by the government in the past years. For instance at household level, attitudes that men are automatic heads and breadwinners are still exist. These attitudes based on the patriarchal structures limit women's voices to adequately be heard and influence family decisions on resources and other social matters. Equality has not been deep enough, nor has it been irreversible, this because the Millennium Development Goal 3 has left out all issues needed to achieve gender equality and women empowerment including eliminating violence. Discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes remain pervasive across formal and informal institutions and continue to hold back progress towards gender equality.

Further the social norms that condone violence against women and girls prevent them from full and equal participation in social, economic and political life (ILO, 2014). Studies about decision-making in family life show that males usually have power in economic resource, they decide how to manage the general financial affairs of the family and determine the framework of many other aspects of family life while women are left with just responsible for decisions which are considered to be unimportant and trivial by both husband and wife (Rezapour and Ansari, 2014). In Tanzania, women are continued to be perceived as the main providers of unpaid care work in the household, even in cases where women engaged in paid work, most male consider this as a symptom of their household's poverty rather than an ideal situation (Idris, 2018). The question is what causes this situation? Perhaps is the intra-household dynamics of decision making and resources allocation. If the household members: males and females have different preferences, it is expected that households' members behave differently depending on who controls household resources. Hence it is imperative to uncover the situation of gender inclusiveness in decision



making in the household since traditional cultures favours males and discourage women from claiming their rights.

2.0 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive cross- sectional research design. The study targeted all the household members from four villages of Mawasiliano, Kilongo A, Bwawani and Mlimani at Mkundi ward in Morogoro Municipality which is made up of 11villages/Mitaa. According to 2012 census, Mkundi Ward had a population of 24,578 people. The four, village/mtaa of Mawasiliano, Kilongo A, Bwawani and Mlimani had a population of 11,836 people. Since the population of the area is given, the sample size was calculated by using Yamane formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n = Sample size, N = Population (11,836) and e = level of precision (0.1). Therefore the sample size was 118 but turn up was 98 participants. The villages were selected purposely due to their accessibility, but the participants were selected randomly. The study employed quantitative method of data collection. The data were collected from the household members by using questionnaire which were coded and assign values, and then entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences tool (SPSS) and then descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentage and cross tabulation) were used to analyze data.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Social Demographic Characteristics

3.1.1 Sex of the respondents

Social demographic characteristics of respondents (sex, marital status and level of education) were important variables in the study because they help in understanding tasks related to gender division of labour, gender roles in the household and decision making. The study findings show that women were involved in the study by 82.7% and men by 17.3% (Table 1). This is because during data collections only a few number of men were found at their home different from women, perhaps because normally, men go out to perform instrumental works while women remain at home doing domestic chores.



3.1.2 Marital status of respondents

Marital status was of necessary to this study as far as gender inclusiveness is concern. This is because decision are either made between wife and husband or between parents and children or individually. The results of marital status from the respondents indicate that the majority of the respondents 87 (88.7%), were married, this corresponds to the target group of the study that is households, while the rest were single and widowed 5 (5.1%), 6 (6.1%) respectively (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Social Demographic Characteristics (n=98)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	17	17.3
	Female	81	82.7
Marital status	Single	5	5.1
	Married	87	88.8
	Divorced	6	6.1
Level of education	Primary	72	73.5
	Secondary	19	19.4
	College	7	7.1

Sources: Research Findings. (2019)

3.1.3 Level of education of respondents

Education is a tool and a means by which a person exploits his or her environment. Educated people are empowered in terms of access to information, knowledge on his/her civil and human rights and perhaps legal frameworks which provide protective measures against evils. Also education in this study helps in gathering knowledge of people about gender inclusiveness in decision making as opinions of people differs according to their level of education (Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents had acquired primary education 72 (73.5%), while secondary and University level was at 19 (19.4%) and 7 (7.1%) respectively. Although the majority of participants acquired primary education, it doesn't mean they do not understand issues of gender relations because it is the matter of awareness raising. In the same note the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE 2019) addressed gender awareness as a process that helps to facilitate the exchange of ideas, improve mutual understanding and develop competencies and skills necessary for societal change. The process intends to change attitudes, behaviours and beliefs that reinforce inequalities between women and men.



3.2 Gender Roles in the Households in Relation to Decision-Making Process

The response relating to gender roles on decision making at household level are presented on table 2.

Table 2: Response on Gender Roles in Decision Making at Households' Level (n=98)

Items	Respondents responses based on sex		
	Male	Female	Both
Un-paid domestic activities based on resources	11 (11.2%)	12 (12.2%)	23 (23.4%)
Un-paid domestic activities based on social services	2 (2.0%)	10 (10.2%)	12 (12.2%)
Paid domestic activities based on resources (own)	7 (7.1%)	14 (14.3%)	21 (21.4%)
Paid domestic activities based on access to Basic home provider in giving food	6 (6.1%)	6 (6.1%)	12 (12.2%)
	21 (21.4%)	9 (9.2%)	30 (30.6%)

Sources: Research Findings. (2019)

The response show that 23 (23.4%) of the respondents agree that decisions making on matters related to un-paid domestic activities basing on gender roles. Un-paid domestic activities refer to the willingness of the household members: normally female to offer her labour to perform reproductive activities. Cooperation then means males and females agree to perform un-paid domestic activities at household level based on resources like cash that could be applied to. Also 2 (2.0%) of males respondents against 10 (10.2%) of females respondents agree that there is joint decisions when it comes to matters related to un-paid domestic activities basing on social services however the number of male respondents is five times less the number of females. This could mean that, gender stereotype is still exists on domestic social services like cooking, washing and caring children. In the same note, Maluka and Peneza (2018) had found that, women do prefer to be accompanied by their partners to clinics, especially on the first antenatal care visit, but men do not wish to be more actively involved in antenatal care and delivery, instead men would like to support their partners financially. In addition there was equal response between males and females on paid domestic activities based on access to resources 6 (6.1%). This could mean that gender inclusiveness on decision making about issues pertaining payment to access to domestic activities is much more agreeable than physical involvement. Conversely the data show that, although males and females decide jointly on paid domestic activities based on resources ownership it was only 7 (7.1%) of males' respondent against 14 (14.3%) females respondents who have agreed to have cooperation. Gibore *et al* (2019)



commented that in most families around the world, men tend to be responsible for important choices relating to the allocation of household resources. However, this could have been caused by the presence of single and widowed respondents in the study.

Further, the data show that 30 (30.6%) of the respondents have shown cooperation in reaching decisions on matters related to home provisions like food stuff for welfare of household members, whereby 9 (9.2%) of male respondents and 21 (21.4%) female respondents indicate that decisions on matters related to home provisions are made by male or female respectively.

The findings therefore show that, although there are joint decisions making at the household level between males females on reproductive, productive and community managing activities, decision making processes can be influenced by many factors including gender roles, economic status, and level of education, culture and social interactions. In the same manner Kandusi, (2015),commented that, throughout the history, participation in decision making through processes like voting and vying for leadership positions has been blinded by discrimination and limitation to some members of community specifically women.

3.3 Attitude towards Decision Making in Relation to Gender Roles

The response of the respondents on the attitudes towards decision making in relation to genders roles is presented on table 3 and discussed basing on the categories of males and females at household and leaders

Table 3: Attitude towards Decision Making in Relation to Gender Roles

Sex	Categories of respondents		Total
	Household	Leaders	
Male	14 (14.3%)	4 (4.1%)	18 (18.4%)
Female	74 (75.5%)	6 (6.1)	80 (81.6%)
Total	88 (89.8%)	10 (10.2%)	98 (100%)

Sources: Research Findings. (2019)

The response of the respondents on attitudes towards decision making in relation to gender roles show that 80 (81.6%) have positive attitudes toward decision making in relation to gender roles whereby 75.5% of female respondents were representing households and 6.1% of respondents were female community leaders. Also from males category, 18 (18.4%) that is all males respondents, have shown positive attitudes toward gendered decision making. The findings therefore show that people would prefer decision made basing on gender roles as the discussion



from table 2 on the above highlighted that, only 2.0% of males' respondents agreed joint decisions when it comes to matters related to un-paid domestic activities basing on social services where Maluka and Peneza (2018) supported the idea that the society perceive men as breadwinners and their main role in pregnancy and child birth is primarily to support their partners financially. However attitudes sometimes change due to circumstances as Löfstrand (2018) wrote that, attitudes and opinions change all the time, even within the same individual and in the same conversation. Therefore it is possible to change males' attitude to perform reproductive activities at the household.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

Basing on the findings of this study, there is gender inclusiveness in decision making in the household to some aspects especially on matters pertaining payment to access to domestic activities but decision making on matters related to un-paid domestic activities are still differentiated. There is differentiation of gender roles in relation to involvement of men and women in reproductive activities in the household like child care and escorting partners to clinics. Further the findings show that people would prefer decisions made basing on gender roles where men would like the society to perceive them as breadwinners, contrary to women who would wish their partners (men) assist them like accompanying them to clinics. The condition of differentiating decisions basing on sex is a prolonged tradition. The roles of women and men and gender stereotypes involve feelings, beliefs and behaviours that are formed, nurtured and perpetuated by society, family, institutions, education and religion (EIGE, 2019). However Cooperation between men and women is of important as it has multiplied effects in the economic, social, political, cultural and technological spheres. These effects end up improving the wellbeing of household members. Meena, Rusimbi and Israel (2017) in the study on Women and Political Leadership: facilitating factors in Tanzania had found correlated findings in relation to gender inclusiveness in decision making in the household that women's political leadership lies in socialization processes that begin in the family and community. Therefore societies need to continue receiving awareness in order to bring about change.

4.2 Recommendations

Gender issues are cross cutting thus all development partners (public, civil society organizations, media and religious institutions) are called upon to continue sensitize communities on the



importance of gender equality by mainstreaming gender equality issues in their programmes because gender awareness raising intends to change attitudes, behaviors and beliefs that reinforce inequalities between women and men including gender based violence.



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