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ROLE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON WOMEN'S RIGHT TO LAND OWNERSHIP

A Case of Ifakara Morogoro, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Context and background

Access to and ownership of land are important for reducing discrimination. Women's right to land ownership is a growing challenge to different communities, especially in developing countries, whose most of their societies are patrilineal including Tanzania.

Goal and Objectives:

Assess the gender-based opinions on the effect of the socio-cultural factors on women's right to land ownership and the extent to which communities perceive women's right to land to contribute to community development.

Methodology:

The study used cross-sectional data and applied quantitative and content analysis. Sample selected using random sampling to select 120 households that participated in the Land Tenure Support Programme in the Ifakara town Council located in the Morogoro region in Tanzania. Data collected using structured questionnaire and checklists for Focus group discussion and Key informants interviews. Content and descriptive analyses were applied to examine the socio-cultural factors that affect women's right to land ownership.

Results:

The study found that six socio-cultural claims namely property ownership, polygamy, the reproductive role of women, men's supremacy, migration of men and property inheritance impeded women's right to land ownership. The findings showed statistical significance for claims that contribute to impeding women's official land ownership. The study recommended that the government should reinforce the right of women to land ownership within marriage through bylaws; promote a gender-responsive land tenure system through locally made bylaws; and support all training programs about women empowerment.

Keywords

Socio-cultural factors, Land ownership, Women's right, Access to land

1. INTRODUCTION

Women's land rights and tenure security are important for gender equity, contributing to social, cultural and economic development and reducing poverty (Doss & Meinzen-Dick, 2020). In many societies globally, land ownership is often associated with economic, social, and cultural aspects. For underdeveloped nations in the world, gender inequalities in land ownership, has been one of critical challenges. As such, countries have realized that the formalization of land as an asset and important production input provides women with access to and control over land, and as a result, may increase production and contribute to social and economic development. Since Tanzania is among the low-income countries in the world, it faces many challenges, including gender inequalities in access to, and ownership of land.

In recent years, gender equality on access to, and ownership over land and other properties has been the subject of debate, especially when looking into women's rights to property in different countries. In Tanzania, access to and ownership over land follow different cultures, norms, traditions, and laws. In the country, the government has initiated land formalization programme under the auspices of land laws, aimed at providing equitable land ownership rights and finally issuing of Land Certificates. Land formalization can be defined as the process of change of informal ownership, access, and economic activity officially and in writing by the authority board of rights and given by law the right to access, control and ownership of decimated piece of land (Hall *et al.*, 2011; Kelly & Peluso, 2015). In the context of this paper, formalization is the systematization of rights to own, access, control, or transfer land in a written legal or regulatory standard that the government accepts.

According to Akinola (2018) land resources continue to be important in developed and developing countries; therefore, the lack of effective land management and gender structure in allocations has resulted in gender inequality and limited women's development. This may be coupled with the lack of a proper land titling system that may result in conflict and discrimination (Aikaeli & Laseko, 2015).

While land is an important resource in the lives of people in most developing countries, its access and control may favour a certain group of community based on social and cultural factors. In these countries, communities use the land as an asset for different purposes. It constitutes a productive asset and is a major source of capital (Lipton, 2009). As such, rural people depend on the land for their livelihood. They do farm, graze animals, build their shelters, exchange for other assets, and transfer for different purposes.

Laws and policies on land rights exist in societies, but there still prevails marginalization of people, including women and young people, who are often faced with the challenge of claiming and retaining land rights (Kivaria, 2020). Women's rights to access land mostly depend on social and cultural ties that link with the rights over customary land (Kuusaana *et al.*, 2013). A major element of the enduring challenge revolves around enforcing and implementing the policies and laws

associated with social and cultural determinants. The social and cultural factors for women's rights to access land, control, and transfer are weaker than men's (Kuusaana *et al.*, 2013; Kivaria, 2020; Nyukuri, 2006).

Albert *et al.* (2004) contend that women's property rights are essential, as secured land access, ownership, and other natural resources are at the heart of progressive living. Women's rights to the land are a fundamental aspect necessary for modernizing rural communities. Male land ownership and access dominance are among the obstacles to household livelihood improvements. The formalization of customary land rights should be encouraged to promote land tenure security (Allanic *et al.*, 1999) for all gender groups including men and women, and youth. Thus, ready access to land for investment is a key factor influencing progress in these initiatives and the general business environment, influencing equitable economic development of social communities.

Discrimination is among the challenges critical to women's rights to land ownership. Despite the fact that a reasonable percentage of women (95%) account for the agricultural labour force for different activities in low-income countries including Tanzania, only a small amount of production land is owned by women (Kongela, 2020). According to Kinoti (2012), the implementation of laws and policies regarding land ownership in many countries is impaired by women's lack of knowledge of their entitlements and socio-cultural factors. According to Doss and Meinzen-Dick (2020), social norms influence how women are regarded as legitimate property owners on the land in terms of cultural appropriateness for them to have the right to own property legally. For example, some studies have indicated that marriage has a crucial influence on women's access to land, particularly in patrilineal societies (Nyukuri, 2006), which shapes the way women may contribute to economic development by using land as a major resource. However, women are socially and culturally discriminated against even for those with titles (FAO, 2005, cited by Kuusaana *et al.*, 2013). In some instances, social and cultural norms have been reported to prevent women from owning land when divorced or when a husband died. A case in question is exemplified in a study by Nyukuri (2006) who observed some cases in Kenya where women were forced to surrender their titles to male relatives, renounce their inheritance rights and sometimes sell land cheaply due to social pressure. The role of socio-cultural factors has often been hard to generalise because such factors are derived from an individual's cultures customs, traditions, perceptions, and beliefs (Rosegrant, 2002). They include prevailing beliefs and considerations that manage and manoeuvre day-to-day activities, which affect the access to and control over productive resources, decision-making, and are also considered influential in the division of resources and labour along gender lines.

Women's access to and control of land is essential for food production, access to capital, and sustainable livelihoods. According to TZ NBS (2014) and Kongela (2020) the percentage of women involved in agricultural production is higher than that of men. So, hindering women's access to and control over land reduces agricultural production. Akinola (2018) asserts that women's contributions to developmental initiatives are hindered by different variables, including social and cultural factors. However, the influence of socio-cultural factors may vary depending on the context.

For example, According to Akinola (2018) for most of the tribes in different locations in Tanzania, marriage provides secure access to land, but only as long as a woman remains married. However, the experience may be different for women in polygamous marriage who may have low chance to rights to land ownership because their husbands have all the decision power to transfer and use the land without even consulting them. Following systematic land formalization in Ifakara Town Council in Tanzania, whose aim is to enhance women's access to and ownership of land, it is crucial to investigate the influence of socio-cultural factors. This is due to anecdotal evidences that seem to indicate that the implementation of land formalization in the study area is being challenged by social and cultural attributes.

This study focuses on social and cultural factors such as property ownership, polygamy, women's reproductive role, and men's supremacy, migration of men and property inheritance how these factors influence women's access, control and ownership of land for different economic development activities. The study assessed the roles of socio-cultural factors in women's right to land ownership. Specifically, it firstly assessed the communities' perceptions on extent that women's right to land access, control and ownership; secondly, investigated the extent socio-cultural factors affect women's land ownership; thirdly, assessed the contribution of women's education level to land ownership, control and access; and fourthly, assessed the gender-based opinions on the effect of the socio-cultural factors on women's right to land ownership.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by a systematic land titling theory. According to De Soto (2000), the systematic land titling theory states that the replacement of customary tenure through systematic titling will lead to increased economic activity for the benefit of the poor. This theory seems to assume that when a customary land is formalised, social and cultural impediments to poor's access to and ownership over land, will be overcome. It further tends to assume that the formalization would enhance community's awareness about land registration, and thus improve women's access to, and control and ownership of land. Such enhanced access to, and ownership of land would improve the way community members interact, value the land, and formally recognize the women's right to land ownership. This is expected to transform the community members' behaviour, perception and attitude towards women's right to land ownership. The theory further states that a land title provides security of tenure that can then be used as collateral for the mortgage, finance, stimulating economic development, and rapidly reducing poverty within different cultural settings. The theory, nonetheless, has some shortcomings. One of the shortcomings is that the formalization process has some high running costs causing the value of land to be high and unaffordable to vulnerable groups; hence it is not pro-poor (Fontana, 2016; Gilbert, 2002; Siaastad and Cousins, 2008). Another shortcoming (Fontana, 2016) is that the poor, the intended beneficiaries of formalization, are not a homogenous group but rather they are different in many aspects, including socio-cultural values and norms. In this regard, the theory can be criticised by its oversimplification of the role of social and cultural context. Furthermore, there is little evidence to support the hypothesis that formalization will generally lead to improved access to, and control and ownership of land. Despite the above-mentioned shortcomings, the theory is relevant for this study because the purpose is to

investigate the influence of social-cultural factors on women's rights to land in the wake of an intervention, systematic land formalization, in particular, among the rural people in Tanzania.

Conceptual Framework

Influence of social-cultural factors is investigated in relation to women's access to and ownership of land following systematic land formalisation intervention that is premised on the tenets of land titling theory by De Soto (2000). While according to the theory, the influence of social-cultural factors would be attenuated by formalisation practice, preliminary investigation indicates that the influence of social-cultural context is active. As such, it is assumed in the present study that social-cultural factors are influencing the attainment of the ultimate goal of land formalization that of ensuring inclusion of women in land access and ownership. Using Ifakara Town Council as the case, this study employs the constructs namely land registration awareness creation, socio-cultural factors, women's land ownership status, community attitudes, perceptions, behaviours and demographic factors to investigate their role in influencing the right to land ownership. It is similarly assumed that, demographic factors such as gender, level of education, marital status, and position as head of household contribute to enhanced awareness on the women's right to own land.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in Ifakara Town Council which is one of the nine Local Government Authorities in Morogoro Region. Ifakara Town Council is situated in South-western part of Morogoro Region. It borders Kilombero District Council to the North, South and South west. The Council, also, borders Ulanga District to the South East (along Kilombero River) and Kilolo District in North West. The town is potential for agricultural production of different crops, is accessible by roads and railways, and has many entrepreneurial and business centres. The study area was purposively selected based on the completion of the Land Tenure Support Programme (LTSP), implemented by the government of Tanzania, which used a systematic land formalization approach. The study area is also considered appropriate for this study because it comprises people from different ethnic communities and groups, and poor people with different social and cultural backgrounds that might affect women's right to land ownership. The study was conducted in three wards which are Signal, Kiberege and Mkula and six villages which are Kiberege, Magombera Nyamwezi, Sighali, Katurukila and Sagamaganga.

2.2 Sampling and Data Collection

This study used a cross-sectional research design to collect data from the landowners with certificates in Ifakara Town Council. Data were collected through structured and semi-structured interviews under the phased-out programme titled "Land Tenure Support Programme in Ifakara town Council". The programme's objective was to deliver a road map for accountable land governance and effective land administration systems that would significantly contribute to securing legitimate tenure rights, particularly for the rural poor, women and the vulnerable, and increasing incomes and jobs.

A sample of 120 households that participated in the programme was randomly selected for the survey. Multistage sampling techniques were employed to select villages and households from each ward and village. First, based on their participation in the project, three wards were selected purposively from nineteen wards of the Ifakara Town Council in the Morogoro Region of Tanzania because they were the wards where the programme was implemented. Second, six villages were randomly selected out of 28 villages found in selected wards. Third, a list of landowners in each village who participated in the project was identified then a random sampling was applied to choose 120 households from the list of project beneficiaries.

Data collection for this study was done in April 2022 through face-to-face administration of questionnaires, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. Data were collected by using gadgets under the android application Open Data Kit (ODK), which included the questionnaire in both Swahili and English languages for quantitative. The checklists were used for 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for women and men separately that comprised of 8 to 11 participants and 9 Key Informants Interview (KII). FGD was conducted separately to avoid biasness answers and to increase freedom of expression for each side of the group. The survey collected information on household demographics, socio-cultural attributes, land ownership status, and participants' perceptions on women rights to land ownership.

2.3 Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to analyse data. The quantitative techniques included descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics entailed frequencies and percentages. For qualitative data, content analysis (conceptual and relational) was used to determine the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents on women's right to land ownership socio-cultural factors. It entailed practices related to land ownership, including socio-cultural status attached to women's land ownership.

A non-parametric Mann-Whitney test was done to establish the relationship between the rankings of opinions by the respective gender on socio-cultural factors about women's right to land ownership and use. A Mann-Whitney - non-parametric test analysed the hypothesis about opinions on the effect of socio-cultural factors on women's right to land ownership by their respective gender. The test was used to determine the difference that exists between two gender groups, that is, men and women. These groups were used to seek opinions and understanding about how socio-cultural factors affected women's participation in decision regarding land rights and terms of accessibility to and control over land and participation in management. This is because both women and men are affected differently when it comes to the land resources ownership and management. Traditionally, men determine women's access to, control and ownership of land in rural areas.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. The results show that the majority (67.8%) of the women respondents were married to single woman orientation (i.e., one woman, one man). Most of these women owned plots which were between 1 and 2 (51%), followed by those who owned 3 to 4 plots (15%), and few of them (2%) owned five and above plots. Polygamy is the marriage orientation inheritance from descendants to some tribes and part of the religious ideology, which brought about challenges of distribution of production resources, including land, to wives. Polygamy practiced by the community members in the study area accounted for 30.5%. Based on the number of plots owned by women, there is an indication that polygamous tendencies have hindered women's access to and control over land, which is the main factor of production in rural areas. The polygamists' plots ranged between 1 and 2, and a few fell between 3 and 4. Therefore, the land owned by the women is relatively small. Most households (82.5%) owned land ranging from 1 to 2 plots, followed by those that owned 3 to 4 plots (16.7%). Very few (0.8%) owned plots between 5 and above. The findings showed that out of female-headed households, only 52.5% owned land officially in the area where all parcels were supposed to be systematically formalized. About 42.5% of female-headed households owned plots ranging between 1 and 2. This indicates that despite systematic land formalization the majority of women have not benefited yet. Fewer of them (9.2%) owned between 3 and 4 plots.

FGDs results revealed that most women in the polygamous marriage model have less chance to inherit, control and get access to land because the access to land by these women depended on land-based decision making by their husbands. Furthermore, the women FGD participants revealed that their husbands transfer and sometimes sell land without their consent and use the money for their personal use and is therefore not channelled back for the use by the family. The KII, the Town land officer, also confirmed this finding by stating that *"during land formalization in the Town, the majority of women in polygamous marriage is not involved by their husbands in land ownership"* (KII, Ifakara Town, 19.4.2022).

The results from this study also indicated that the age of marriage contributed to decision-making on resource management at the family level. Fewer (3.4%) women got married at the age between 25 and 33 years whereas most of women got marriage at the age above 18 years, yet they were not given opportunity to make land-based decision at family levels. Generally, majority of marriages occurred at the age from 18 to 25 years (67.8%); at this age, the majority of the married couples depended on their parents for resources, including land ownership through the inheritance modality. This modality might hinder the partners, and mostly women, on land ownership, access, and even control over it. Most of the families are patrilineal whereby inheritance goes to men and sons excluding women and daughters regardless of their ages.

The results further indicated that the second category is those who got married at the age range of 14 to 17 years (28.8%); this indicates that a significant number of women got married as teenagers. A person of this age is termed as an infant child by the law of Marriage Act 1971 of Republic of Tanzania (RITA, 2022). This age restrains them from making decisions as adult people, and it is likely for women to be left behind in resource access and ownership, particularly land. This age

category is not recognized by Land Act as entitled to be granted land titles. The Land Act No. 4 of 1999 provides for the right of occupancy of land to people aged 18 and above (Aikaeli & Markussen, 2017).

Parameter	Owned plots				
	1-2 plots	3-4 plots	5 and above plots	None	All
Gender of Household Head					
Female headed household	60.0	17.1		0.0	77.1
Male headed household	17.1	4.3		0.0	22.9
Type of marriage (Per cent)					
One (single) woman	50.8	15.3		0.0	67.8
Polygamy	23.7	6.8		0.0	30.5
Co-habiting	1.7	0.0		0.0	1.7
Age category when married (Per cent)					
14-17 years	20.3	8.5		0.0	28.8
18-24 years	55.9	10.2		0.0	67.8
25-30 years	0.0	1.7		0.0	1.7
31-33 years	0.0	1.7		0.0	1.7
Level of Education of Household head					
None (illiterate)	24.3	7.1		0.0	31.4
Primary Education	42.9	10.0		0.0	52.9
Secondary education (O-level)	0.0	0.0		1.4	1.4
Secondary education (A-level)	1.4	0.0		0.0	1.4
Tertiary education (VETA/DIPLOMA)	2.9	4.3		0.0	7.1
College/University Education	5.7	0.0		0.0	5.7
Sampled household-owned land (per cent)	82.5	16.7		0.83	100
A female household headed own land with the title deed or official certificate (per cent)	42.5	9.2		0.0	52.5

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of households (n=120)

Source: Field primary data; **Note:** one plot is equivalent to 0.5 to 1 acre

Education is an important instrument for individuals to claim their right and use it. The result in Table 1 shows that the majority of women (52.9%) attained, as their highest level of education, primary education. However, this level does not provide enough knowledge for women to participate in administrative decision-making at different administrative levels in the village, wards, and even town levels. The reasonable number with no formal education (31.4%) is a barrier for women to decisions making, including participation in the land formalization process. This finding agrees with the finding reported by Nuggehalli and Prokopy (2009) which indicated that women's participation in resource management positively correlates with their higher education level. Aikaeli and Markussen (2017) indicate that highly educated households are more likely to own their land, with certificates like titles, officially. Furthermore, according to Beard (2005), college and university education levels are associated with women's contributions to resource

management activities and thus support a woman's involvement in different actions for development including decision making at different administrative levels.

The education levels contribute to the women's right to land ownership and acceptance by the community members in decision-making. The effect of high education status is tied to ownership, control, and access rights to land ownership. The use of land in Ifakara depends much on access and not control or ownership of land. According to Ross (2009) and Ahuja (2005) lack of property ownership hinders land resource management.

Socio-Cultural Factors and Women's Land Ownership

The Mann-Whitney test was conducted for socio-cultural factors perceived by the respondents as determinants of women's land ownership. The results in Table 2 indicate that property ownership (95%), polygamy (75.8%), inheritance system (38%), and adherence to men's supremacy (20%) are key socio-cultural factors that affect women's rights to land ownership in Ifakara Town.

Most of the families culturally give the right to men to control all the properties and execute all the rights to land including transfer. This brings challenge to women in land ownership in the study area. This finding is aligned with the findings from the study conducted by Choudhry et al. (2019) in Pakistan which indicates that socio-cultural factors limit women to possess and use property.

Claims	Ranking		
	Low (n=120)	Moderate(n=120)	High(n=120)
Property ownership	2 (1.7%)	4 (3.3%)	114 (95.0%)
Polygamy	1 (0.8%)	28 (23.3%)	91 (75.8%)
Cultural reproductive role of women	82 (68.3%)	33 (27.5%)	5 (4.2%)
Men's supremacy	10 (8.3%)	85 (70.8%)	25 (20.8%)
Migration of Men	114 (95.0%)	5 (4.2%)	1 (0.8%)
Property inheritance	10 (8.3%)	65 (54.2%)	45 (37.5%)
Total	120 (100%)	120 (100%)	120 (100%)

Table 2: Mann-Whitney test rankings of opinions on socio-cultural factors

Source: Field primary data

On the other hand, female respondents referred to polygamy as a factor leading to a lack of support from husbands physically and financially, both of which limit their right to land ownership. The property inheritance system in this community goes to male family members giving no equal opportunity for the female to inherit. This finding conforms with the findings reported in a study by Moyo (2017), which indicate that cultural practices prohibit women from possessing individual properties and even inheritance. Adherence to male supremacy was found to be a challenging factor because most married women wait upon their husbands to determine their fate of land ownership. The culturally constructed reproductive role of women and the migration of men are socio-cultural factors that rank low in affecting women's right to land ownership. According to Wahaga (2018) and Fajarwati et al. (2016), reproductive role is a role that is associated with tasks and responsibilities undertaken by men and women which are affected by socio-cultural norms.

Influence of Education level

Education is as well an important instrument for individuals to claim their right like land ownership, access and control. According to Abrar et al. (2017), a good education is allied with women's personality, decision-making ability, resources ownership and it also contributes to individual and household community, and national development.

Mann Whitney test ranking of women's education status has something to do with the right to land ownership. The claim about the contribution of education to women's rights, land ownership, control, and accessibility was tested by Mann Whitney and then ranked to get a level of acceptance as socio-cultural aspects.

Claim	Parameter	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
<i>Ranking of opinions about the level of education contributes to the right to land ownership</i>				
Ownership	Female with High education (Tertiary and college)	72	62.28	4484.5
	Female with lower education (Primary and informal)	48	57.82	2775.5
	Mann-Whitney (U)			1599.5
	Z			-0.774
	p (2-tailed)			0.044
Control	Female with High education (Tertiary and college)	72	63.78	4592
	Female with lower education (Primary and informal)	48	55.58	2668
	Mann-Whitney (U)			1492
	Z			-1.329
	p (2-tailed)			0.018
Accessibility	Female with High education (Tertiary and college)	72	62.5	4500
	Female with lower education (Primary and informal)	48	57.5	2760
	Mann-Whitney (U)			1584
	Z			-0.819
	p (2-tailed)			0.041

Table 3: Mann-Whitney test ranking of opinions about the contribution of the level of education

Source: Field primary data

The findings indicate the mean rank of female with high education (Tertiary and college) (62.28, 63.78, and 62.50) was higher than that of female with lower education (Primary and informal) (57.82, 55.58, and 57.50). This indicates that respondents considered that females with high education have a more chance to ownership, control and accessibility of land as compared to the females with lower education level. This is revealed by the fact that females with good education in the study area have been accepted by community members and have owned land, and even their contribution to the family, particularly in rural areas is valued differently. Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test indicates a statistically significant difference between female with high and lower education rankings on the claims of land ownership, control, and accessibility ($U = 1599.0$, $p = 0.044$),

(U= 1492, P=0.018) and (U= 1584, P=0.041) (Table 3), respectively. Therefore, the findings indicate that the level of education of the women in the study area influences women's rights to land ownership.

Perceptions of men and women on the contribution of education to women right to land ownership

The findings in Table 4, indicate the mean rank of males (54.04, 51.25, and 51.16) was lower than that of females (65.11, 67.11, and 67.17), which indicates that males considered the claim on level of education as lower in negatively affecting women's right to ownership, control and accessibility of land as compared to the men. This finding may imply that men in different cultures do not value women's education, including its contribution at the family level, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test indicates a statistically significant difference between male and female rankings on the claims of land ownership, control, and accessibility (U= 1427, p=0.053), (U= 1287.5, P=0.01) and (U= 1283, P=0.008) (Table 4), respectively.

Claim	Parameter	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Ownership	Male	50	54.04	2702
	Female	70	65.11	4558
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1427		
	Z	-1.932		
	p (2-tailed)	0.053		
Control	Male	50	51.25	2562.5
	Female	70	67.11	4697.5
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1287.5		
	Z	-2.589		
	p (2-tailed)	0.01		
Accessibility	Male	50	51.16	2558
	Female	70	67.17	4702
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1283		
	Z	-2.639		
	p (2-tailed)	0.008		

Table 4: Perception of men and women on contribution of education to women right to land ownership

Source: Field primary data

Therefore, women with higher education elicited statistically significant higher consideration for the chance of land ownership, control, and accessibility claims than the males. This is because women's higher levels of education give them more chances of right to land ownership than those with lower education. The women asserted that with good education, their husbands respected and sometimes allowed them to own land, which is not part of the inheritance. The finding is consistent with that reported in a study by Ahuja (2005), which indicated that many communities, particularly poor women's survival and that of their households, depend on access to and control of resources, including land.

Socio-cultural opinion

Mann-Whitney test ranking of opinions about the right to land ownership

To further elucidate the effect of socio-cultural factors, a non-parametric Mann-Whitney test was done to establish the relationship between the rankings of opinions by the respective gender on socio-cultural factors about women's right to land ownership and use.

The claim about property ownership, polygamy, and property inheritance in the study area is a socio-cultural belief that women do not own key properties like land necessary for economic production. Therefore, this study sought the opinion of respondents regarding whether property ownership, polygamy, and property inheritance affect women's participation in land ownership, and mixed responses were received along gender lines. The mean rank of males (57.48, 58.34, and 56.50) was lower than that of females (62.66, 62.04, and 63.36), which indicates that the males considered the claim on property ownership, polygamy, and property inheritance as lower in affecting the right to land ownership as compared to the females. This is because, in many tribes, polygamy is part of their marriage orientation; likewise, the inheritance goes to males, not women.

Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test indicates a statistically significant difference between males' and females' rankings of the claims for property ownership, polygamy, and property inheritance, respectively (Table 5). Therefore, the females elicited statistically significant higher consideration for property ownership claims than the males ($U=1599$, $p=0.033$). This is because the land is considered to be men's property, even after the production and sale of produce; women have no independence over their income.

The married women reported that their husbands sell the farm produces and sometimes land without their consent, use the money for their personal use, and therefore money is not channelled back to the family. This finding concurs what Josh et al. (2004) reported: women have limited chances of operating on land which is not theirs for investment, production, and for other management practices due to rights insecurity. Likewise, females drew statistically significantly higher consideration for polygamy claims than males ($U= 1642$, $p= 0.044$). This can be attributed to the fact that female respondents considered polygamous families as draining the resources such as land and finance that would otherwise facilitate caring of a family. On the other hand, men considered polygamy a channel of accruing resources from different sources, such as labour, to participate in agriculture and dowry from their daughters as far as economics is concerned.

The Mann-Whitney U test indicates a statistically significant difference between males' and females' rankings of the property inheritance claim ($U=1550$, $p= 0.023$). Therefore, the females elicited statistically significantly higher consideration for property inheritance claims than the males. This is because the majority female respondents considered that the distribution of resources like land through inheritance affects how they make decisions and manage such resources. The FGD showed that only men (sons) inherit land from their fathers. On the other hand, male respondents ranked this factor low as affecting women's efforts in managing production resources. They think women are given enough freedom to indulge in management even though they don't own key resources like land.

The findings are aligned with those reported by a study by Ross (2009), which indicated that in most African countries, the land inheritance is predominantly patrilineal and where it is not, it is legally allocated and distributed through lineage. Most of the wives of male members and daughters of the lineage have no right to possess the land from their husbands and fathers respectively. These complex and generally limiting situations of women's access to and use of land for their important role of family food provision and other economic and social obligations make their status in this respect insecure and precarious.

Socio-cultural factor	Parameter	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Property ownership	Male	50	57.48	2874
	Female	70	62.66	4386
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1599		
	Z	-2.129		
	p (2-tailed)	0.033		
Polygamy	Male	50	58.34	2917
	Female	70	62.04	4343
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1642		
	Z	-0.774		
	p (2-tailed)	0.044		
Cultural reproductive role of women	Male	50	62.96	3148
	Female	70	58.74	4112
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1627		
	Z	-0.806		
	p (2-tailed)	0.420		
Men's supremacy	Male	50	55.95	2797.5
	Female	70	63.75	4462.5
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1522.5		
	Z	-1.52		
	p (2-tailed)	0.129		
Migration of Men	Male	50	58.69	2934.5
	Female	70	61.79	4325.5
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1659.5		
	Z	-1.276		
	p (2-tailed)	0.202		
Property inheritance	Male	50	56.5	2825
	Female	70	63.36	4435
	Mann-Whitney (U)	1550		
	Z	-1.199		
	p (2-tailed)	0.023		

Table 5: Mann-Whitney test ranking of opinions about socio-cultural factors

Source: Field primary data

Other socio-economic factors indicate some different outputs. Due to their motherly role and strong ties with the family, women have been believed to remain with limited time to participate in most social and development activities. The mean rank of males (62.96) is higher than that of women (58.74), which indicate that the men consider the claim on the cultural reproductive role of women as high in affecting their participation in resources management like land as compared to the

women. However, the difference is not large enough to be statistically significant, as depicted in the Mann-Whitney U test ($U = 1522.5$, $p = 0.420$) (Table 5).

This lack of a statistically significant difference can be explained by the fact that both men and women believe that reproductive roles affect women's participation in ownership of resources, including land, negatively and positively alike. Such the belief affects women negatively because men consider reproductive role as the principal role for women whereas women have a different view. On the other hand, the motherly role has pushed and encouraged women to look for all possible ways of managing land resources because they depend on these resources to provide food for their families. The study by Boserup et al. (2007) and Tamale (2001) found that women's reproductive roles limit their participation in development programmes. However, contrary to these researchers, the present study has observed that the reproductive role does not limit women to the right to land ownership but rather it is a socially constructed phenomenon, that is, men's perception.

Men's supremacy and migration

The findings showed men's supremacy and migration of men among socio-cultural factors that might affect women's right to land ownership. Furthermore, the finding indicates that the mean rank of males (55.95) is lower than that of females (63.75), which indicates that the males considered the claim on men's supremacy as lower in affecting women's right to land ownership as compared to the females. Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test qualifies that there is no statistically significant difference between males' and females' rankings of the claim on men's supremacy ($U = 1522.5$, $p = 0.129$) (Table 5). This is because, in most cases, women do not make independent decisions without men's consent in the home, while men freely make decisions without consulting the women. For example, FGD results indicate that in Ifakara, men usually sell family land without consulting their wives. Concerning that, married women find it hard to make land-use choices without consulting their husbands. While women view this factor as hindering their ownership, access, and control, men find it normal and not necessarily affecting women's right to land ownership and management.

Furthermore, the mean rank of females (61.79) is high than that of males (58.69), which indicates that the females considered the claim on the migration of men higher in affecting women's right to land ownership as compared to the males. However, the difference is not large enough to be statistically significant as depicted in the Mann-Whitney U test ($U = 1659.5$, $p = 0.202$) (Table 5). This is because both men and women believe that migration and the absence of men affect women's right to land ownership negatively and positively alike. It affects negatively because husband's relative sometime encroach the right of women's resources including land in the absence of husbands. On the other hand, men migration may affect the women positively particularly when women have fully mandate in utilization of resources for investments.

Reflection on the results in relation to the theory of systematic land titling

While the theory of Systematic land titling hypothesizes about the realization of many contributions in favour of women when the customary land tenure is formalized, the findings from this study indicate that women's right to land ownership is still challenged by social-cultural factors in spite of the implementation of the Land Tenure Support Programme in Ifakara Town. Nevertheless, the results have indicated that some contributions were observed for women with good education level

in terms of land access, control and ownership. Adding to the theory of systematic land titling, this study argues that women's rights to land ownership can be enhanced not by land formalization alone, but also by creating other strategies for ensuring that cultural values and norms are taken into consideration in programme design and implementation, and that women are empowered (e.g., by providing them with training) to uplift their abilities to optimize the opportunities created for them through land formalization.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Different societies still apply their tribe's socio-cultural values and norms to discriminate against women from the right to own productive resources. Although it is true women are the major agents in fortifying their offspring with land management by transmitting traditional knowledge through socio-cultural values. However, the female members of the family are not considered in terms of the land inheritance right as men. This limited land and lack of property rights have hindered women from managing and transferring land. In addition, polygamy, as marriage orientations contribute, impedes women from the right to land ownership officially. The socio-cultural factors in the study were found to limit women from participating in systematic land formalization and acquiring title deeds in the study area, affecting women's right to land ownership a great deal. Likewise, low levels of education of the women contribute to impeding them from accessing and claim for their right to land ownership.

As women's right to land ownership was affected by socio-economic factors namely ownership of properties, a factor originating from inheritance culture, the study recommends the local government of Tanzania promotes a gender-responsive land tenure system through locally made bylaws. These will increase the number of women that will legally own land by reducing or removing the socio-cultural barriers. Also, the government should reinforce women's right to land ownership within marriage through bylaws.

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9. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Socio-cultural factors: These are influences prevailing beliefs and considerations that govern people's lives and the operation of day-to-day activities which affect women from ownership, access and control of resources. These are considered to be influences in roles along gender lines.

Land Ownership: states that an individual has the right to possess a piece of land through inheritance through a customary tenure system, buying, given by the government. This individual has the right to transfer, sell, and use for investment or production without interference.

women’s rights: These are the rights embedded in the cultural and social systems, regulated through marriage and kinship ties and laws.

Access to Land: is the right of the individual to use the land for production, and rent that is governed by the customs, rules, and regulations of the community.