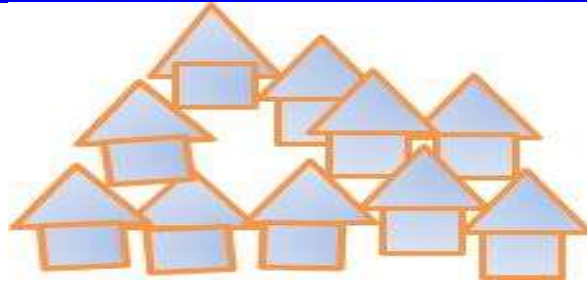
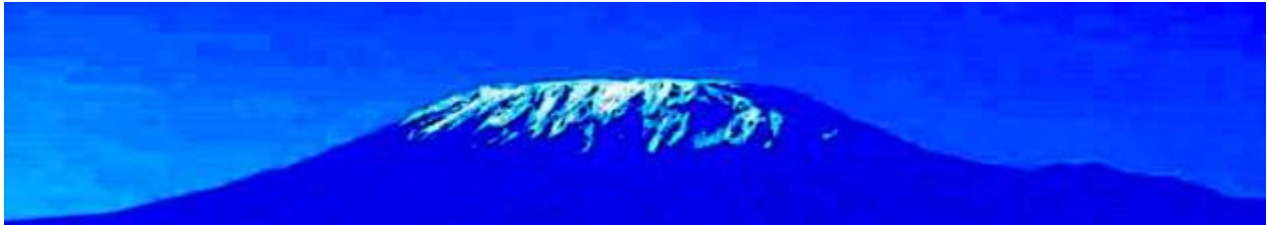


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## Why are Couples Struggling So Much? An Aggregate Analysis of Procuring Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities in Busega District, Tanzania

Deborah Andrew Ngusa<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

#### Article history

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couples, domestic, work-simplifying facilities, power relations, procuring

This article answers a pressing question: “why are married couples struggling so much?”. The article analyses the challenges facing couples during decision-making on procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in Busega District, Tanzania. The study employed a cross-sectional research design to conduct a household survey from 288 respondents by administering questionnaire. Checklists were used to conduct non-participant observations, focus group discussions, life history interviews, and key informant interviews. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis and ideal typical trajectory patterns. Quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive statistics. The results indicate a stark disparity, with 100.00% of female respondents (144 out of 144) reporting a lack of authority in the decision-making process for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. In contrast, 95.83% of male participants acknowledged having authority during the decision-making process. The chi-square test showed a significant link ( $p=0.024$ ) between marital power relations in decision-making and procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities, reaching statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The study concludes that, men hold more authority and tend to dominate decision-making processes regarding the purchase or non-purchase of the necessary domestic work-simplifying facilities. The study recommends that development experts should provide training to men and women to promote equitable decision-making in addressing household needs..

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## 1.0. Introduction

The article seeks to unravel the intricate dynamics behind the pervasive struggles experienced by couples, posing the fundamental question: "Why are couples struggling so much?" This study embarks on an aggregate analysis, delving into the challenges associated with the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities. Domestic work-simplifying facilities are highly required by women to reduce their workload in performing their domestic duties (Orkoh, 2019; Rowland et al., 2022). Domestic work-simplifying facilities refer to tools, technologies, or practices implemented within a household to reduce the time and effort required for various tasks. These mechanisms are designed to enhance efficiency and ease the burden of domestic responsibilities, particularly for women who often bear the primary duties. These facilities, necessary for women to perform recurring domestic tasks, include water supply systems and harvesting techniques, such as water pipes, reservoirs, and pumps, to reduce the efforts required for fetching water over long distances. Additionally, rural women require cooking facilities, such as electric, gas, and solar energy-saving stoves, to minimize the demand of gathering firewood from various locations (Owoo et al., 2022). Furthermore, they need the means of transportation, such as bicycles, motorcycles, wheelbarrows, and carts, to save time when traveling to obtain items for household consumptions. However, marital power relations dominate decision-making regarding which type of domestic work-simplifying facility to procure. Marital power relations play a significant role in partner dynamics for effective and efficient decision-making in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities for household duties, ultimately saving time. The time saved could be dedicated to diversifying livelihood strategies to reduce income poverty in households.

This article links marital power relations with the possibility of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in households among couples. This is due to the fact that marital power relations refer to the distribution and dynamics of power within a marriage or intimate partnership that influences resources ownership in households. It involves the negotiation, exercise, and balance of authority, decision-making, and control between couples (Ambler et al., 2021). Power within a marital relationship is not always equal, and various factors can influence its distribution (Gay et al., 2018). Traditionally, power imbalances have often been associated with gender roles, where societal norms and expectations may assign certain roles and responsibilities to husbands and wives. In such cases, one partner may have more decision-making authority or control over resources than the other (MacDonald et al., 2022). However, contemporary perspectives on marital power recognize that it can be influenced by a range of factors, including individual personalities, communication styles, financial contributions, and cultural contexts. Healthy marital power dynamics typically involve mutual respect, effective communication, and a collaborative approach to decision-making, where both partners contribute to and share power within the relationship. In this article marital power relations in gender studies delves into the nuanced interplay between power dynamics and resource ownership within relationships. It offers insights into how control over financial assets, property, and other resources contributes to the broader impact on individuals and households. Access to resources, decision-making authority, and support from a spouse can significantly impact the success and sustainability of ownership (Rola-Rubzen et al., 2020).

The article builds upon existing literature by reviewing scholarly insights into the relationship between marital power relations in decision-making authority and procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples. It begins with a comprehensive literature review, drawing insights from relevant scholarly texts to inform and frame the study's discussion. The dynamics of marital power relationships play a significant role in the decision-making processes related to the identification and procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities for alleviating the workload, along with other available resources within the household. The responsibility for household chores predominantly falls on women, underscoring the importance of seeking domestic work-simplifying

facilities that mitigate the challenges associated with their household responsibilities. Recognizing the pivotal role of marital power relationships in these decisions is crucial for understanding the struggles surrounding the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities designed to ease the burden of household work for women.

The discourse centres on determining who holds the capacity to drive, mandate, authorize, direct, or influence the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities, particularly among men and women. In Tanzania, as in other sub-Saharan countries, marital power dynamics between couples delineate their ability to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities within households. Notably, the study focused on Busega District as the research location, driven by the acknowledgment that women in this area encounter limited opportunities for active engagement in comprehensive decision-making processes (Tesha et al., 2023). The district is characterized by deep-rooted cultural norms that prescribe distinct roles for men and women (Mungure, 2022). As such, the extent to which women in Busega District can access and benefit from these domestic work-simplifying facilities is heavily influenced by marital power relations. Traditional gender norms and disparities in decision-making authority within households often result in women having input into the acquisition and use of such technologies (Shibata et al., 2020). Experiences indicate that men, who frequently wield more power in these relationships, may dominate the decision-making processes related to acquisition of these crucial resources (Fine et al., 2020). Understanding the intricate interplay between marital power relations and procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples in Busega District is crucial for addressing the challenges they face in decision-making processes.

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

Globally, marital power relations intricately shape the dynamics between couples, fostering interdependence in decision-making concerning procurement of domestic resources (Joshnloo & Jovanović, 2020). In China, the importance of marital power relations on the decision-making process for procuring resources is underscored by the imperative to mitigate the challenges associated with domestic responsibilities (De Bruin & Liu, 2020). However, a notable challenge has surfaced in the sub-Saharan African context, particularly impacting women's decision-making agency, as men wield considerable power in these determinations. This imbalance in decision-making authority within marital dynamics adds a layer of complexity to the process of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities designed to alleviate the burden of household work for women. Studies indicate that in sub-Saharan Africa, women face a dependency status on decision-making regarding the identification and procurement of resources in their households, presenting a challenge influenced by their specific marital power relations (Abate, 2019; Arthur-Holmes & Busia, 2020; Donald et al., 2023). In countries such as Tanzania, Malawi, and Uganda, marital power relations play a significant role in determining women's procurement of resources, thereby contributing to the existing gender gap in development (Torkelsson & Onditi, 2018). In addition scholars have primarily focused on the influence of gender power relations on collective ownership of resources, such as land, water sources, irrigation systems, fishing grounds, pastures, forests, livestock, crops, and assets (Darmastuti and Wijaya, 2018; Haller et al., 2019; Udas et al., 2019; Cifuentes-Espinosa et al., 2021; Sommer et al., 2020).

However, the specific dynamics of how marital power relations influence the decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples in Busega District, Tanzania remain less explored. The gap in understanding includes the nuanced interactions between power dynamics, decision-making processes, and the practical procurement of these facilities. This article sets itself apart from other studies by focusing on marital power relations that dictate decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities, recognizing these as essential resources for streamlining household duties.

This article addresses the research question: Why are couples struggling in decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in Busega District, Tanzania? This research question was addressed by examining the status of marital power relations and their application during the decision-making process among couples, particularly during discussions related to the attempt to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities. Furthermore, the article presents two case studies on marital power relations in decision-making and the attempt of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in Busega District, Tanzania. Thus far, the study is worth undertaking as it offers insights into the potential disparities and barriers that women encounter when trying to improve their quality of life and reduce the time and energy expended on domestic chores. Additionally, such knowledge can inform targeted interventions and policies aimed at promoting gender equity, enhancing women's empowerment, and improving the overall well-being of communities in Busega District, Tanzania. This article aims to address the identified gap by thoroughly examining the problem of couple's struggles on decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in Busega District, Tanzania.

## **2.0. Methodology**

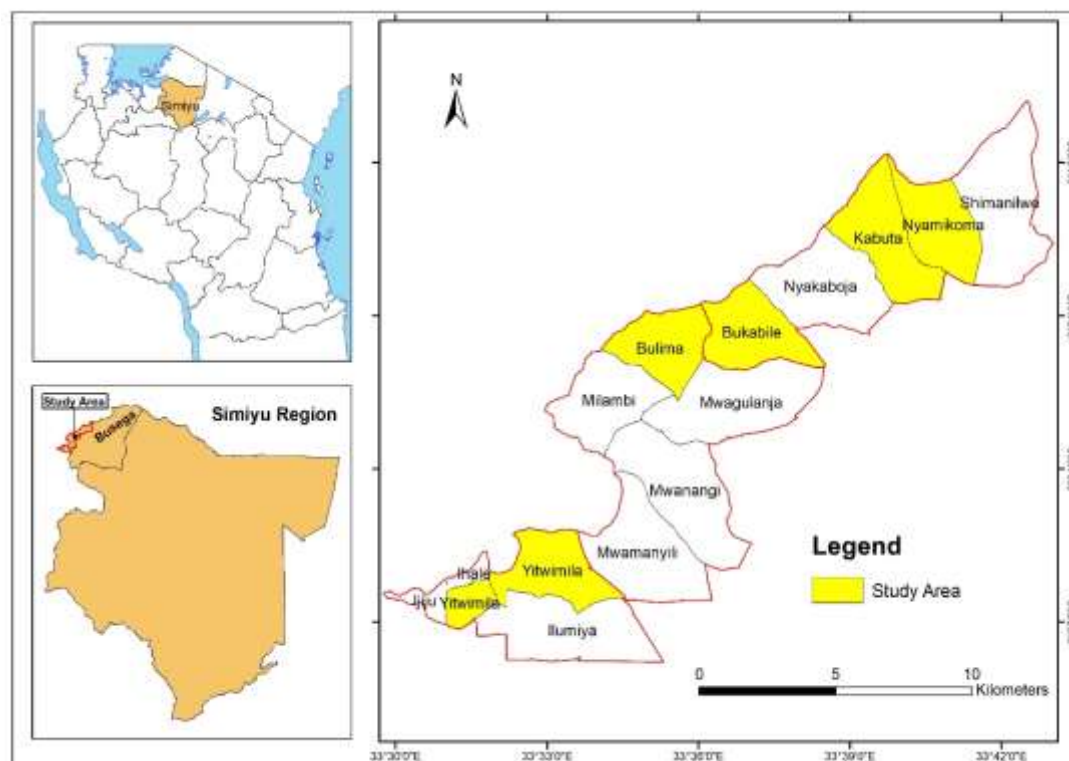
### *Study Area*

The study was conducted in Busega District, Tanzania, one of the five districts in the Simiyu Region. The other districts include Bariadi, Itilima, Maswa, and Meatu. The criterion for selecting this district was that, in this area, "equity and empowerment were the least influential attributes due to the exclusion of women" in the means of production (Nzyoka et al., 2021, 1). Busega District is one of the areas where marital power relations dominate decision-making, and the full inclusion of women in development is highly resisted by their male counterparts. Specifically, the study area was Busega District in six villages that included Yitwimila A and Yitwimila B in Kiloleli Ward; Bulima and Bukabile villages in Nyashimo Ward, and Kabita and Nyamikoma villages in Kabita Ward. These wards and villages were selected because they were comprised of centres that supply domestic work-simplifying facilities as an opportunity for households to procure them.

Busega District falls within the tropical climate zone, characterized by high temperatures throughout the year. Generally warm temperatures prevail, with little seasonal variation. Daytime temperatures can range from 25 to 30 degrees Celsius (77 to 86 degrees Fahrenheit). Busega District typically experiences two main rainy seasons: the long rains (masika) from March to May and the short rains (vuli) from October to December. The months between the rainy seasons are generally drier, with lower precipitation. However, it's worth noting that even during the dry season, some precipitation may occur. The district tends to have high humidity levels, especially during the rainy seasons. The climate supports diverse vegetation types, including grasslands and scattered trees.

Economic activities conducted in the district include subsistence farming and cash crop cultivation that are prevalent in the area. Crops like maize, millet, sorghum, and various vegetables are grown. Livestock keeping include cattle, goats, and poultry for meat, milk, and other products. People conduct small-scale businesses such as retail shops, food stalls, and craft production. The district is close to Lake Victoria that provides a water for fishing as an essential economic activity. Artisans are engaged in the production of traditional crafts, textiles, and other handmade items. Other local people are involved in trading activities involving the exchange of goods and services within the local community. Others are involved in providing transportation services, such as motorcycle taxis, and other service-oriented businesses. Employment opportunities in education and health services provided by primary and secondary schools, health clinics, and related institutions are available.

Figure 1: Busega District Map



### *Research Design*

The study employed a cross-sectional research design to conduct a single household visit. This design was chosen due to its suitability on examining the prevalence of a problem at a specific point in time based on the current situation. The cross-sectional design was chosen to efficiently capture the current state of marital power relations and their impact in decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples in Busega District. The design aligns with the study's objective and provides valuable insights into the dynamics of marital power at a specific point in time.

### *Sampling Frame, Unity of Analysis and Sample Size*

The sampling frame included all couples in the study area aged from 20 years and above. The unit of analysis was a couple including a man and a woman in a pairwise. The first selected partner was a woman through purposive sampling during the household survey and her partner was eligible for the study. To enhance the representativeness of the study sample, women were prioritized as initial participants due to their higher likelihood of being present in their households. This strategic selection also aimed to facilitate the involvement of men, recognizing the potential for women to contribute insights into their availability. However, six men were not found in their households due to migration to different towns and cities in search of income-generation opportunities. These men were interviewed using mobile phones to gather their inputs. The total sample size was 288 respondents, comprising 144 men and 144 women that was calculated through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) formula.

IFAD sample size calculation was deemed appropriate due to its robust methodology, which considers various statistical parameters such as confidence level, margin of error, and population variability. This method ensures that the selected sample size is representative of the broader population, enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the study findings.



*IFAD Sample Calculation Formula:*

$$n = \frac{t^2 \times p(1-p)}{m^2}$$

*Description:*

n = the number of the sample size

t = confidence level calculated at 95% (1.96 standard value)

p = estimated percentage of the problem (25%)

m = margin error estimated at 5% (0.05 standard value)

*Calculations:*

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.25(1-0.25)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.1875}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.7203}{0.0025}$$

$$= 288.12 \sim 288$$

In addition, ten key informants, including the district commissioner, a community development officer, a social worker, an extension officer, two ward and village executive officers, and two shopkeepers, were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with these key informants, tailored to the specific duties and services they provided to the community. The key informants were included in the study because they have the ability to enrich the study by bringing in-depth, context-specific knowledge about the topic. Their involvement enhanced the credibility and relevance of the study's findings and contributed to a more holistic understanding of the research topic.

*Data Collection Methods*

The data collection methods employed in this study encompassed a diverse range of approaches, both for primary and secondary data. These methodologies were selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic, which pertained to marital power relations and decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples in their natural settings within Busega District, Tanzania.

A critical component of this research was the household survey, which involved the administration of a questionnaire to respondents. Two sets of questionnaires were thoughtfully designed and administered to both men and women within selected households. Through this method, respondents were visited in their households, and a series of structured questions were posed to elicit their perspectives and insights. This approach was instrumental in revealing the actual circumstances and realities experienced by the respondents within their household environments.

The research also employed life history interviews, conducted with one man and one woman. These interviews sought to capture personal testimonies regarding how decisions made by married partners impact decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in the context of daily duties. This qualitative approach allowed for the exploration of individual narratives, offering valuable perspectives on the research topic.

In addition, documentary sources were reviewed to obtain secondary data, providing a deeper understanding of the problem and creating a foundation for writing this paper. Secondary data

sources included community development district reports, journal articles, and the Busega District profile of 2019.

### *Data Analysis*

The data analysis encompassed a dual-pronged approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to comprehensively address the research objective.

#### *Qualitative Data*

Qualitative analysis was conducted through content analysis, which involved the systematic sorting and comparison of contexts, facilitating the synthesis of information into thematic categories. This method provided a rich and in-depth understanding of the qualitative data. Content analysis was carried out by defining the research objective, determining the scope and boundaries of the data to be analysed, identifying the unit of analysis, and developing a coding scheme with categories that were systematically classified into contents. Finally, NVivo was used to code data manually and summarize it into meaningful units and themes, which were then grouped and interpreted in the context of the research objective to provide textual descriptions and key findings.

In addition, qualitative data underwent rigorous analysis through the formulation of ideal typical trajectory patterns. These patterns were meticulously examined by constructing sequential transitions for both male and female respondents. These trajectories elucidated the outcomes associated with decisions made concerning procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities, offering valuable insights into the research area.

#### *Quantitative Data*

Quantitative data were subjected to analysis through descriptive statistics, employing IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics involved the computation of frequencies and percentages, facilitated by cross-tabulation techniques. These statistical measures yielded quantitative insights, enhancing the comprehensibility of the data.

Furthermore, the Chi-square test was employed to discern the association between marital power relations and the decisions governing procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities. The test independently calculated the number of opinions contributed by both men and women that were associated with decision-making processes. The statistical benchmark for significance was set at a p-value of 0.05.

The Chi-square formula,  $\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$ , was employed for this purpose, where  $O_i$  represented the observed values or the actual responses represented by marital power relations (independent variable), and  $E_i$  denoted the expected values on procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities (dependent variable).  $O_i$  was represented by options such as Option 1: Decision-making authority in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities held by a man, Option 2: Decision-making authority in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities held by a woman and Option 3: Joint decision-making authority between spouses in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. While  $E_i$  was represented by Yes and No on each observation.

Binary logistic regression was computed to determine how marital power relations influence the likelihood of rural women to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities. Before computing the regression Cronbach's Alpha in SPSS was determined to test the model fitness to the predictor variables. The results presented in Table 1 indicate that Cronbach's Alpha is 0.83, signifying reliability of the binary logistic regression on the study variables. This value surpasses the

recommended threshold of 0.6, confirming the instrument's reliability for measuring the variables under consideration.

Table 1: Reliability Test of the Likert-Scales

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.82	6

Source: Survey Data, 2019

In the binary logistic regression the dependent variable was Y: procure domestic work-simplifying facilities (binary: 0 for "neither accessed nor procured", and 1 for "accessed and procured"). The independent variable was X1: Marital power relations as a categorical variable represented in levels of achievement. The variables for marital power relations were measured by categories such as Low, Medium, and High levels. The continuous categorical variables representing levels of marital power include: X<sub>1</sub>: Marital power relations, whereas other factors controlled in the model include X<sub>2</sub>: decision-making power within the household, X<sub>3</sub>: control over household financial expenditure, X<sub>4</sub>: autonomy for purchasing domestic work-simplifying facilities, X<sub>5</sub>: negotiation skills within the marital context, X<sub>6</sub>: adherence to traditional gender roles.

Binary Logistic Formula:

$$\text{logit}[\pi(x)] = \log\left(\frac{\pi(x)}{1-\pi(x)}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \dots + \beta_p x_p$$

The logistic regression model form:

$$\text{Logit}(p) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{X Marital Power Relations} + \beta_2 \text{X Covariates}_1 + \dots + \beta_n \text{X Covariate}_n$$

Where:

Logit(*p*) is the natural logarithm of the odds of the event happening (procure domestic work-simplifying facilities).

*p* is the probability of the event happening.

$\beta_0$  is the intercept.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_n$  are the coefficients associated with the respective variables.

Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):

There is no relationship between marital power relations and the likelihood to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities.

$$H_0: \beta_1 = 0$$

Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>):

There is a relationship between marital power relations and the likelihood to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities.

$$H_a: \beta_1 \neq 0$$

## 2.1. Theoretical and Empirical Explanation

The article adopts the cultural context of marital power and the theory of resources ownership in households. The primary focus of the article is to discuss the variable of marital power relations by emphasizing on the significance of understanding the power relationship between husbands and wives in terms of decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in households. Marital power and the theory of resources in the cultural context were expounded by Rodman (1972) through data collected across countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Japan, the United States, and Yugoslavia. He concluded that marital power assumes that power dynamics exist within marital relationships, influencing decision-making and control. According to Rudman & Glick (2021), marital power is rooted in the societal norms and cultural expectations that shape power dynamics within marriages. In addition, power extends to the process of communication and negotiation that play a crucial role in determining how power is distributed between couples (Arthur-Holmes & Busia, 2020).

Marital power has strength as it effectively describes and analyses the power structures within marital relationships (Akurugu, 2017; Asadi et al., 2020; Gädeke, 2020). Stutterheim & Ratcliffe (2021) regarded marital power as crucial for analysing societal structures as it provides a framework for understanding and addressing issues related to power imbalances in marital counselling or therapy. The shortfalls of marital power is in its simplification of complexities of power dynamics within marriages by focusing on observable factors (Laszlo et al., 2020). Marital power might lead to power imbalances that result in making disproportionately decisions; influenced by one partner, marginalizing the input and desires of the other. This can result in dissatisfaction and resentment. In addition, marital power ignores individual differences and variations in the ways couples negotiate and experience power.

As individuals vary within marital power relationships their procurement of resources also determines their negotiation processes. The theory of resources assumes that the distribution of resources (e.g., human, financial, educational, emotional) influences power dynamics (Timming & Macneil, 2023). It recognizes that unequal access to resources can contribute to imbalances in decision-making and control within a marriage (Cornish et al., 2021). The theory of resources has strength as it provides a valuable economic perspective on how material resources contribute to power dynamics (Bag et al., 2021). The theory offers practical insights for policymakers and practitioners aiming to address inequality through resource distribution. However, the theory of resources might overlook the significance of non-material resources (e.g., emotional support, communication skills) in power dynamics. It assumes that individuals always make rational decisions based on available resources, neglecting emotional and social factors (Constantino et al., 2021).

The article combines marital power and the theory of resources to blend these assumptions for explaining the variables of the study that are marital power relations and procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities as among of the resources required in households. The intersectionality recognizes that power dynamics are influenced by a complex interplay of social, economic, and cultural factors that shapes ownership of resources among couples (Few-Demo & Allen, 2020). As such power dynamics and resource distribution can evolve over time within a marital relationship (England & Kilbourne, 2019). This combination has strength as it offers a more comprehensive understanding of marital power by integrating social, economic, and cultural factors in the aspect of resources ownership (Chung et al., 2021). This blend of marital power and the theory of resources provides a nuanced framework for interventions that address both material and non-material aspects of power dynamics. However, the combined approach may be challenging to operationalize and measure due to the multifaceted nature of power dynamics and resource allocation.

The findings may not universally apply to all couples, given the diversity of marital relationships and individual experiences. Marital power relations encompass various dimensions, including financial decision-making, role allocation, and influence access, procurement, utilization, and control over resources (Abate, 2019; Nkansah, 2023). Therefore, this article has considered their interconnectedness and the nuanced ways in which they contribute to the understanding of marital dynamics. The study covers this gap by avoiding generalization through examining individual cases in the study area in a rural set up. This article delves into the dynamics of power and control between spouses, examining how factors such as gender roles, cultural norms, and societal expectations influence decision-making for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities among couples. The study focuses on couples as in many societies, they face economic disparities within their communities. This is due to the fact that there is a widespread inequalities between women and men that requires the pivotal moment to offer an opportunity for transformative change, providing them with greater ability to overcome the barriers they face for procuring household potential resources (Flor et al., 2022). Specifically, the article examines marital power relations and decision-making authority within households, their connection with discussions related to the attempt to procure and their association with the status on ownership of domestic work-simplifying faculties in Busega District, Tanzania..

### **3.0. Results and Discussions**

This paper presents the findings and engages in a comprehensive discussion based on the data gathered from the field study conducted in Busega District, Tanzania. The central theme of the study titled "Why are Couples Struggling So Much? An Aggregate Analysis of Procuring Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities in Busega District, Tanzania" revolves around understanding and analysing the challenges faced by couples in the context of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities.

#### **3.1. Respondents' Socio-Economic Characteristics**

##### *Age of Respondents*

The provided data in Table 2 illustrates the age distribution of a population, revealing distinct patterns within different age categories. The majority of the population falls within the 20-39 years range, constituting 54.86% of the total. This suggests a youthful demographic profile with a significant representation of individuals in their prime working and reproductive years. The 40-59 years category, comprising 33.68%, indicates a substantial portion of individuals in middle adulthood, potentially influencing workforce dynamics and family structures. In contrast, the 60 and older category, with a percentage of 11.46%, represents a smaller proportion of elderly individuals.

This distribution suggests a community with a predominantly young and middle-aged population, underscoring the importance of considering age-specific needs in social and economic planning. This age group often encompasses individuals who are actively involved in decision-making processes within households. As these individuals form households, marital power relations may be influenced by the youthful energy, aspirations, and shared responsibilities associated with this life stage. The need for domestic work-simplifying facilities, such as modern conveniences or technologies, may be heightened due to the presence of young families managing career commitments, child-rearing responsibilities, and household tasks. Additionally, the middle-aged population (40-59 years) may play a pivotal role in shaping household dynamics and decision-making, influencing the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities. Therefore, understanding the age distribution is essential for tailoring interventions that consider the unique needs and preferences of different age groups.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age category	Frequency	Percentage
20-39 years	158	54.86
40-59 years	97	33.68
60 and older	33	11.46
Total	288	100.00

Source: Survey data 2019

### *Education Levels of Respondents*

The provided data in Table 3 illustrates the educational profile of the studied population, showcasing a diverse range of educational attainment. A substantial portion of individuals (47.92%) has completed primary education, forming a foundational level of formal education. Furthermore, a noteworthy segment has progressed to secondary education (19.44%), indicating a commitment to higher academic achievement. The presence of individuals with certificates and diplomas (11.81%) reflects engagement in specialized vocational or technical training beyond the secondary level. Additionally, 9.72% of the population has pursued tertiary education, highlighting a smaller yet significant group with advanced academic qualifications. The inclusion of individuals with non-formal education (11.11%) suggests the acknowledgment of alternative learning pathways. This distribution underscores the need for education and skill development programs that cater to diverse levels of educational attainment within the community, promoting inclusivity and addressing the varied needs of the population.

Table 3: Education Levels of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Non-formal	32	11.11
Primary Education	138	47.92
Secondary Education	56	19.44
Certificate and Diploma	34	11.81
Tertiary Education	28	9.72
Total	288	100.00

Source: Survey data 2019

### *Occupations of Respondents*

The provided data in Table 4 offers insights into the occupational distribution within the studied population, highlighting diverse roles and responsibilities. The majority of individuals are engaged in small-scale farming, constituting 75.69% of the population. This underscores the significance of agriculture as a predominant livelihood in the community, with a substantial portion involved in cultivating crops or managing livestock. Petty traders, comprising 7.99%, represent a segment involved in small-scale commerce, contributing to the local economy. Teachers or tutors, constituting 9.38%, play a crucial role in education and skill development within the community. The limited presence of nurses (1.74%) and dorm parents (0.69%) suggests a relatively smaller but essential contribution to healthcare and educational support services, respectively. The category labelled as "Others" at 4.51% encompasses a range of additional occupations that contribute to the overall diversity of livelihoods. This occupational diversity reflects the multifaceted nature of rural life, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing the varied needs and contributions of individuals within the community.

Table 4: Occupations of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Small-Scale Farmer	218	75.69
Petty Trader	23	7.99
Teacher/Tutor	27	9.38
Nurse	5	1.74
Dorm Parent	2	0.69
Others	13	4.51
Total	288	100.00

Source: Survey data 2019

### 3.2 Marital Power Relations and Decision-Making Authority

The study comprehensively examined the dynamics of marital power relations within households, with a specific focus on how decision-making authority is shared and distributed among couples. Respondents were asked about their perceived control over procurement of household resources in a broader sense. Among the entire respondent pool, it was notable that 95.83% of male participants acknowledged having control over procurement of resources and actively influencing the decision-making process related to resource acquisition within their households. However, only 4.17% (6 out of 144 male respondents) expressed the belief that they didn't have decision-making power in their marriages or households. On the other hand, none of the 144 female respondents (0.00%) felt that they had decision-making power within their marital or household settings. All female respondents, 144 out of 144 (100.00%), responded negatively, indicating that they do not perceive themselves as having decision-making authority in their marriages or households (Table 5). In the context of their focus group discussions, these male participants emphatically asserted that their cultural norms accorded them the authority to strategically plan the acquisition of resources within their households. The social worker also reported that in their cultural framework, men assume the role of decision-makers, viewing marriage as a partnership wherein women's directives are received and executed. The extension officer also supported the framework as it sheds light on the nuanced intricacies of marital power dynamics and the prevailing cultural norms that influence decision-making within households. Observations showed that husbands had the right to rule over and administer the wives by giving them instructions.

Table 5: Marital Power Relations in Decision-Making

Response	Frequency		Percentage	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Yes	06	00	4.17	00
No	138	144	95.83	100.00
Total	144	144	100.00	100.00

Source: Survey data 2019

These findings underscore the prevailing gender-based power imbalances within the study population, with men predominantly assuming decision-making roles, while women perceived themselves as having limited or no influence in this regard. These results shed light on the need for a more comprehensive examination of gender dynamics within households, with a particular focus on empowering women to participate actively in decision-making processes. Addressing these imbalances is not only crucial for promoting gender equality but also for fostering more inclusive and equitable family structures. Additionally, exploring the reasons behind the minority

of men who feel disempowered in decision-making roles can provide valuable insights into the complexities of gender roles and expectations within households.

### 3.3 Marital Power Relations on Procuring Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities

The research employed the Chi-square test to examine the association that exists between marital power relations (independent variable) and the decision of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities (dependent variable) among men and women in the study area. This analysis utilized three opinions (Option 1: Decision-making authority in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities held by a man, Option 2: Decision-making authority in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities held by a woman and Option 3: Joint decision-making authority between spouses in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities as indicative metric of marital power relations. The results presented in Table 6 indicate a p-value of 0.024, signifying statistical significance at the 0.05 level. This finding suggests a discernible association that exists between marital power relations and the capacity to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities, thereby reducing the workload on women in terms of household chores.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test on Marital Power Relations

Chi-Square Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.620 <sup>a</sup>	2	0.024***
Likelihood Ratio	1.933	2	0.043***
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.045	1	0.833**
Number of Valid Cases	288		

Note: \*\* not significant at 5% level;\*\*\* significant at 5% level

Source: Survey data 2019

The district commissioner as a key informant explained that, “marital power relations play a pivotal role in determining the decision to acquire or forgo domestic work-simplifying facilities”. This was also testified during the focus group discussions as participants stated that the consent and influence of rural carry substantial weight, sometimes influencing the likelihood of purchasing these devices. The community development officer who is one of the key informants further explained that through discussions with men, it became apparent that allowing women to take the initiative in procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities would result in a reduction of time spent on daily household duties. Men also claimed that providing additional free time to women could be redirected toward socialization activities. They explained dedicating excessive hours to household chores constrained opportunities to their wives for social interaction, as they were often preoccupied with domestic tasks. The Shopkeeper also mentioned that:

*“When we traverse the villages to promote these cooking appliances as one of the domestic work-simplifying facilities, we encounter responses from men asserting that these devices will disrupt the traditions and customs of their families. They argued that if a woman is relieved from her household duties, it might prompt her to visit neighbours or take walks, potentially leading to increased social interactions and the exchange of stories”* (Shopkeeper, Busega District, 12/04/2019).

Hence, a notable observation was provided by the village executive officer as he explained that wherein reason of overworking women, men express the belief that the conversational engagement of their wives diminishes under the weight of substantial domestic responsibilities. This intriguing insight underscores the intricate relationship between marital power relations on procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities to reduce the burden of household chores. The persistence of such circumstances within this socio-economic milieu perpetuates a cycle of



poverty for women, as their substantial allocation of time towards unpaid household chores hampers their ability to engage in income-generating activities. This systemic imbalance, wherein women bear the disproportionate burden of household responsibilities without commensurate recognition or compensation, not only undermines their economic empowerment but also exacerbates gender disparities.

### 3.4 Influence of Marital Power on Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities

In order to examine the influence of marital power relations on procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities, the research applied binary logistic regression as a statistical tool. This method allowed to examine the influence of the predictor variable of marital power relations on the binary outcome of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. The variables run in the binary logistic regression model include decision making power within household, control over household financial expenditure, autonomy for procuring intrahousehold labour-saving mechanisms, negotiation skills within the marital context and adherence to traditional gender roles that were predicted by using 0 for "not procured" and 1 for "procured").

Table 7: Influence of Marital Power Relations on Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities

Variable	Unadjusted analysis		Adjusted analysis	
	OR [95% CI]	P-value	AOR [95% CI]	p-value
Decision making power within household				
Procured	Ref		Ref	
Not procured	1.6[0.49,2.28]	0.02***	1.2[0.36,2.13]	0.01 ***
Control over household financial expenditure				
Procured	Ref		Ref	
Not procured	1.8[1.04,2.45]	0.02***	1.9[0.82,2.68]	0.07**
Autonomy for purchasing intrahousehold labour-saving mechanisms				
Procured	Ref		Ref	
Not procured	3.9[1.13,13.50]	0.03***	5.2[1.22,19.16]	0.02 ***
Adherence to traditional gender roles				
Procured	1.3[0.74,2.33]	0.02***	3.0[1.04,7.37]	0.03 ***
Not procured				
Accessed and utilized				
Procured	0.7[0.24,1.06]	0.03***	0.6[0.301,1.09]	0.080**
Not procured				

Note: \*\* not significant at 5% level;\*\*\* significant at 5% level (Source: Survey data 2019)

The results in Table 7 show the level of significance in each category. Individuals with "not procured" decision-making power have 1.6 times higher odds of procuring domestic work-

simplifying facilities compared to those with "procured" decision-making power. The association is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.02. After adjusting for other variables, the odds ratio decreases to 1.2, and the association remains statistically significant with a p-value of 0.01. Those with "not procured" control over financial expenditure have 1.8 times higher odds of the outcome compared to those with "procured" in unadjusted analysis ( $p = 0.03$ ). After adjustment, the odds ratio increases to 1.9, and the p-value is borderline significant ( $p = 0.07$ ). Those with autonomy ("procured") have 3.9 times higher odds of the outcome in unadjusted analysis ( $p = 0.03$ ). After adjustment, the odds ratio increases to 5.2, and the association remains statistically significant ( $p = 0.02$ ). "not procured" negotiation skills are associated with 1.3 times higher odds of the outcome in unadjusted analysis ( $p = 0.02$ ). After adjustment, the odds ratio increases to 3.0, and the association becomes statistically significant ( $p = 0.03$ ). "not procured" adherence to traditional gender roles is associated with 0.7 times lower odds of the outcome in unadjusted analysis ( $p = 0.03$ ). After adjustment, the odds ratio decreases to 0.6, but the association becomes borderline significant ( $p = 0.08$ ).

These results implies that decision-making power, autonomy, negotiation skills, and adherence to traditional gender roles are all associated with procurement domestic work-simplifying facilities. Autonomy remains a strong predictor even after adjustment for other variables. Control over financial expenditure shows a borderline significant association after adjustment. In addition, the significance of the associations underscores the importance of considering these factors in understanding and influencing the dynamics of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities.

The presented data reveals compelling associations between decision-making power, autonomy, negotiation skills, and adherence to traditional gender roles towards procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. The implication is that individuals with greater decision-making power, autonomy, effective negotiation skills, and those deviating from traditional gender roles are more likely to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities within households. Autonomy stands out as a robust predictor, maintaining its significant association even after adjusting for other variables. This underscores the enduring influence of individual agency on the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities, emphasizing its pivotal role in shaping household dynamics.

Furthermore, the borderline significant association observed after adjustment for control over financial expenditure suggests that this factor continues to play a role, albeit to a slightly lesser extent, in influencing procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities within households. The nuanced nature of this association highlights the need for careful consideration of various factors contributing to financial decision-making dynamics within households.

The overall significance of these associations emphasizes the importance of incorporating decision-making power, autonomy, negotiation skills, and adherence to traditional gender roles into the understanding of and interventions aimed at influencing the dynamics of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of household dynamics, where not only structural factors like decision-making power and autonomy but also interpersonal and sociocultural aspects like negotiation skills and adherence to traditional gender roles play crucial roles. This holistic perspective is vital for developing targeted strategies that promote equitable procurement of technologies, ultimately contributing to more balanced and efficient household practices.

### 3.5 Case Studies on Marital Power Relations and Procurement of Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities in Busega District, Tanzania

In order to gain a more profound insight into the individual circumstances related to the association between marital power relations and decision-making processes regarding procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities within households, life history interviews were conducted with two respondents, comprising one man and one woman. Life history interviews were conducted due to their ability to capture the richness and complexity of individuals' experiences over time.

#### Case No.1: William (M) from Nyamikoma Village in Busega District

The results depicted in Figure 2 elucidate William's gradual decline in income status over time. This decline in his life trajectory can primarily be attributed to escalating household expenditures. Thus, it is important to address escalating household expenditures to explore their association with making possibilities for procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities, which serves as the focus of this study.

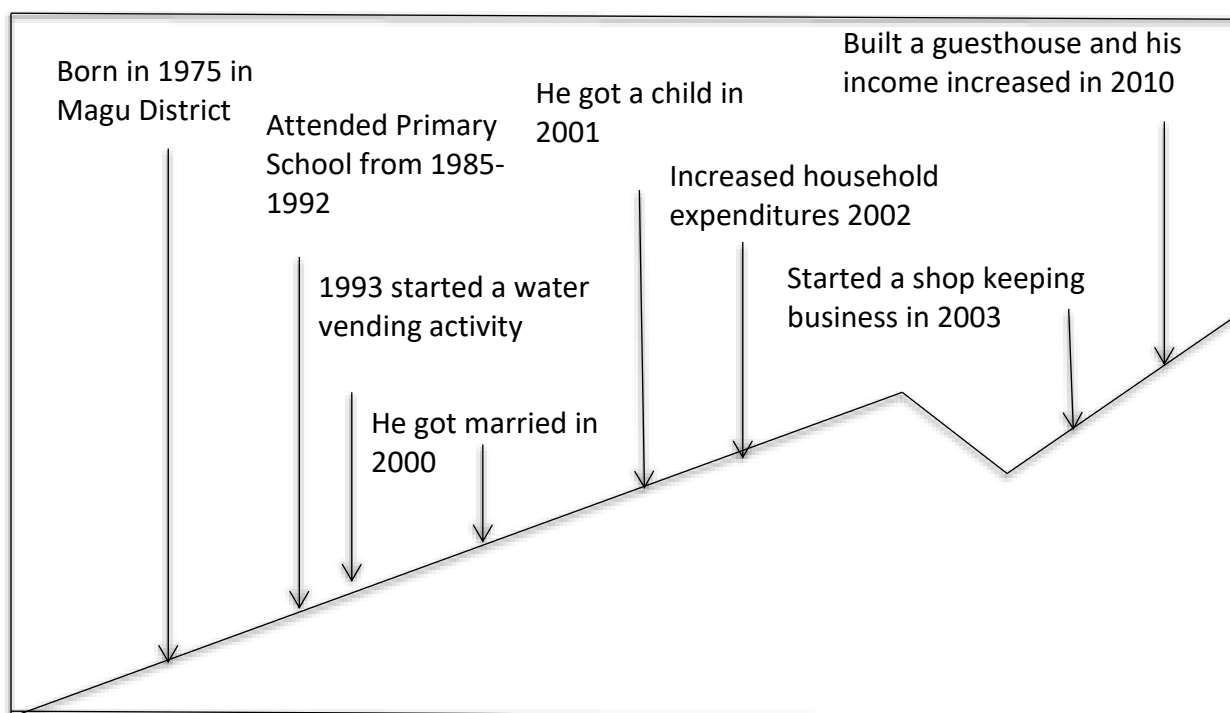


Figure 2: Declining Single-step: William

The situation is delineated by constructing a representation of males based on William's life history, commencing with his background. William was purposefully selected because of his ability to articulate issues, as evidenced during the household survey. A 42-year-old man born in Magu District, William hailed from a Sukuma family deeply rooted in indigenous traditions. His educational journey began in 1985 at Isandula Primary School in Magu District, where he completed his primary education in 1992. Unfortunately, his academic path did not progress further, as he was not selected to attend public secondary schools. Furthermore, his parents were unable to bear the expenses associated with enrolling him in a private secondary school.

In 1993, he embarked on a water vending business, sourcing water from Lake Victoria and supplying it to numerous households in Magu District. This endeavour generated sufficient income for his sustenance, enabling him to rent a house before eventually acquiring his own residence in

Nyamikoma village in Busega District. In 2000, he married Sundi, a resident of the same village, while his water vending business remained his primary source of income. However, by 2002, his household expenditures began to rise as he had to support both his wife and himself. While he had previously managed to save TZS 200,000 per month, his savings dwindled to TZS 120,000 monthly due to increased household expenses.

In 2003, the birth of their child further strained their household finances. In response, William made the decision to transition to a more lucrative venture by opening a shop. This business flourished, and in 2010, he expanded his enterprise by constructing a guesthouse, significantly boosting his income. Meanwhile, his wife engaged in selling beverages at the guesthouse, though this venture proved less profitable as her time was primarily consumed by household duties. By 2017, William's daily earnings had reached approximately TZS 300,000. Despite his increased income, he remained uninterested in purchasing domestic work-simplifying facilities to alleviate his wife's workload.

He explained that he regarded household duties as his wife's responsibility, separate from her unprofitable business endeavours, as he stated.

*"I find myself wondering why my wife is urging me to provide financial support for her to establish a profitable business. She has requested assistance in acquiring certain domestic work-simplifying facilities, but I fail to see the necessity of investing a significant amount of money in what I perceive as unnecessary amenities. The procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities, such as gas cookers, the installation of a water system in our home, and the provision of transportation, would indeed alleviate the burden of household chores entirely. Consequently, my wife could dedicate herself fully to her business endeavours, potentially leading to higher income generation. However, this would also entail relinquishing my control over her daily life. It appears that household responsibilities act as binding commitments, anchoring our wives to domestic duties and limiting their involvement in income-generating activities outside the home."*

He further explained:

*"In reality, my wife engages in the sale of beverages to our guesthouse customers. Regrettably, I have not paid much attention to this endeavour, as it pales in comparison to my investments. She generates a modest income, approximately TZS 5,000 per day, and relies on my financial support for household expenses. This, in my perspective, is an effective strategy for maintaining her presence within our home. From my own experiences, I have observed that empowering women to attain financial independence often leads to marital discord. When married women achieve financial self-sufficiency, they may surpass their husbands in influence, making it challenging to exert control over them."*

A man with negative attitudes toward reducing his wife's household duties restricts her ability to contribute to the household income. Men draw from past experiences of women who were supported in lightening their household workload. Consequently, men employ a strategy of keeping their wives impoverished and overwhelmed by household responsibilities, preventing them from pursuing higher income opportunities. As a result, for some women, their financial poverty binds them to remain in and endure their marriage.

### **Case No. 2: Sundi (F) from Nyamikoma Village in Busega District**

The results presented in Figure 3 provide an explanatory trajectory for the multi-step decline in Sundi's income. Her life trajectory is profoundly shaped and influenced by the growing

responsibilities associated with household duties. In this study, Sundi was selected as a representative case study to elucidate the life history of women. She was chosen based on her responses during the household survey, which indicated a higher level of concern about the status of marital power relations in participating in the decision-making process regarding the acquisition of facilities aimed at reducing the workload of household chores.

Sundi, a 35-year-old woman, was born in 1982 in Nyamikoma Village, situated within the Busega District. Her father, Lukuba, and her mother, Tizila, played pivotal roles in her upbringing. Sundi was raised within a Sukuma family that adhered to the traditions of a patriarchal system.

Sundi embarked on her educational journey at Nyamikoma Primary School in 1989 and successfully completed her studies in 1996. Unfortunately, due to her parents' limited financial means, she did not have the opportunity to pursue secondary education. In 1998, she initiated a small business venture selling fried fish within her village.

In the year 2000, Sundi entered into matrimony with Mr. William, a resident of the same village. Subsequently, in 2001, she welcomed her firstborn child into the world, leading to a substantial increase in her household responsibilities. As a consequence of these heightened domestic duties, Sundi made the difficult decision to cease her small-scale fried fish business.

Sundi gradually became dependent on her husband for all household requirements, including those for the children and her personal needs. She found herself in a situation where she couldn't be financially self-sufficient and had to rely entirely on her husband's income. However, there were instances when her husband couldn't fully cover her expenses, such as immediate medical needs. This income inadequacy became particularly pronounced in 2003 when her husband started withholding financial support for her personal expenses, considering it as a wastage of money.

In 2004, in an attempt to address her financial constraints, Sundi decided to initiate a small-scale business selling beverages, which she operated from her home. The responsibilities associated with household chores significantly increased as the number of children grew to a total of five. While her husband continued to provide for food and other basic needs, he did not extend the same financial support to cover personal expenses for her and the children.

Sundi made a request to her husband, seeking financial assistance to procure a domestic simplifying facilities for household tasks, such as a gas cook-stove, indoor water system, and a bicycle for transportatio. Unfortunately, her husband rejected her request and insisted that she dedicate her time exclusively to household duties, considering them her primary obligations. As a result, she continued to struggle with a similar situation, where the most of her time was consumed by household responsibilities, all while dealing with a limited income. Consequently, Sundi faced challenges in expanding her small-scale business, as she candidly expressed.

*"I failed to expand my small-scale business. In our household, my husband generates a substantial income through two lucrative activities, namely shopkeeping and operating a guesthouse. The earnings from these ventures are allocated towards various purposes, including purchasing food items, supporting his extended family, covering the children's school fees, and purchasing alcohol for his friends."*

She further explained:

*"In addition to my role in the household, I also manage a small business of selling beverages within my husband's guesthouse. I have repeatedly approached my husband with a request to invest in a gas cook-stove, which would significantly reduce*

*the burden of collecting firewood and cooking. My involvement in the beverage business only consumes two hours in the evening, leaving me with ample time available for other endeavours."*

Another option was to get the houseworker as she detailed:

*"I have earnestly sought his support in hiring a household worker to assist with domestic responsibilities, allowing me to allocate more time to my business. Unfortunately, my husband has consistently rejected these proposals, asserting that such expenditures would be a wastage of money. Furthermore, he has expressed the belief that my primary role is within the household and not in pursuing a profitable business, emphasizing that our marriage was founded on this understanding."*

In many instances, within the context of Sukuma traditions, most husbands typically do support the wives to procure domestic work-simplifying facilities. Instead, women are expected to fulfil their primary role of managing household duties throughout the day. These obligations have effectively curtailed the ability of women to achieve independence as they invest their time in unpaid domestic labour. This cultural backdrop places certain women at a disadvantage when it comes to participating in income-generating activities. Consequently, they remain financially dependent on their husbands and struggle to endure within their marriages.

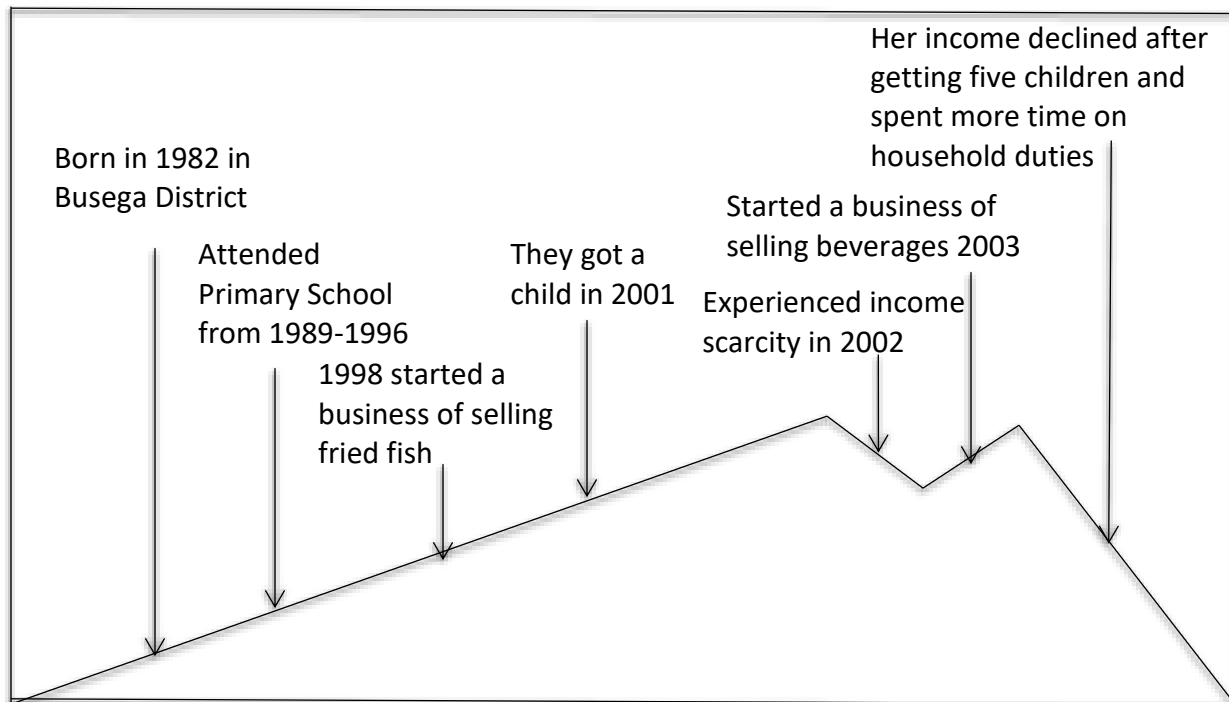


Figure 3: Declining multiple-step: Sundi

## **4.0. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

The study has revealed that the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities is contingent upon men's consent, irrespective of women's preferences. Women find themselves excluded from the decision-making process regarding the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities, which could significantly alleviate the burden of their household duties. In general, a substantial proportion of surveyed men exhibited a lack of inclination towards acquiring devices designed to simplify domestic tasks. This perspective stems from the belief that women's responsibilities should be fulfilled irrespective of the time spent or fatigue incurred. As a consequence, given the predominantly limited income of women, they persist in facing challenges, and the prospect of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities becomes a potential source of struggle among couples. Men tend to perceive household duties as exclusively women's responsibilities and see no need to explore alternatives to simplify these tasks. This perspective persists, even when men possess higher incomes, as they perceive procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities as a squandering of income that could be allocated to other needs. In summary, the aggregate analysis of procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities in Busega District, Tanzania, elucidates the intricate challenges faced by couples. The study underscores the multifaceted nature of these struggles, encompassing gender-based power imbalances, economic constraints, and traditional norms, urging for targeted interventions that empower women, challenge societal norms, and foster equitable decision-making dynamics within households.

### **4.2. Recommendations**

Therefore, the article study provides the following recommendations based on the key findings of this study:

- Given the identified gender-based power imbalances where men predominantly assume decision-making roles, there is a need for targeted interventions aimed at promoting gender equality within the study population. Initiatives such as community awareness programs, gender sensitization workshops, and educational campaigns should be implemented to challenge and reshape traditional gender roles. Empowering women with decision-making capabilities can contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty and fostering a more equitable distribution of responsibilities within households.
- In order to alleviate the cycle of poverty perpetuated by women's substantial allocation of time towards unpaid household chores, it is crucial to implement strategies that enable women to balance their domestic responsibilities with income-generating activities. This may involve the introduction of support programs that provide resources, training, and opportunities for women to engage in entrepreneurship or other income-generating ventures. Additionally, community-based initiatives can be developed to challenge societal norms that contribute to the undervaluation of women's domestic labor.
- The correlation between decision-making power, autonomy, negotiation skills, and adherence to traditional gender roles in the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities suggests the need for multifaceted interventions. Community development initiatives should focus on enhancing the decision-making capacity and autonomy of women through targeted skills-building programs. Educational campaigns can also challenge traditional gender norms and foster an environment that encourages collaborative decision-making within households. Emphasizing the benefits of shared responsibilities and the

adoption of modern domestic technologies can further contribute to reshaping prevailing attitudes and behaviours.

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## Policy Brief

The study title is *Why are Couples Struggling So Much? An Aggregate Analysis of Procuring Domestic Work-Simplifying Facilities in Busega District, Tanzania*. This is due to the fact that couples in Busega District, Tanzania, are facing significant challenges in decision-making concerning the acquisition of domestic work-simplifying facilities. This policy brief aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the underlying factors contributing to this struggle and proposes actionable recommendations for policymakers.

The study underscores the fundamental significance of marital power relations as a pivotal determinant shaping the intricacies of the decision-making process associated with the acquisition of domestic work-simplifying facilities. Imbalances in power, whether stemming from gender disparities, socio-economic factors, or cultural norms, emerge as influential factors exacerbating disparities in both access to and utilization of these crucial resources. The unequal distribution of decision-making authority within couples or households significantly impacts the ability of individuals to participate meaningfully in determining the procurement of domestic work-simplifying facilities.

In this context, power imbalances may manifest in various forms, such as unequal access to education, financial resources, or societal expectations regarding traditional gender roles. Such disparities perpetuate a cycle wherein certain individuals, often marginalized or disenfranchised, face barriers in influencing decisions related to domestic work-simplifying facilities. Consequently, this not only hampers their ability to address their specific needs but also perpetuates systemic inequalities within households.

Moreover, the study illuminates how these imbalances contribute to a cascading effect, amplifying disparities not only in the initial decision-making phase but also in subsequent access to the benefits derived from procuring such facilities. As such, women with limited decision-making power may find their preferences and needs overlooked, leading to a suboptimal utilization of these resources. As a result, the intended benefits of domestic work-simplifying facilities may remain unrealized for certain members of the household, perpetuating a cycle of unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities and hindering the overall well-being of women, individuals and families.

Recognizing and addressing these power imbalances is imperative for designing interventions and policy measures that aim to create a more equitable and inclusive decision-making landscape. By dismantling these barriers, society can foster an environment where all individuals, irrespective of their socio-economic background or gender, have an equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from decisions related to procuring domestic work-simplifying facilities. This, in turn, paves the way for a more just and harmonious distribution of domestic responsibilities, contributing to enhanced overall household satisfaction and well-being.

The paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the pervasive issue of power imbalances within couples and proffers discerning policy recommendations to redress these disparities. It illuminates the nuanced dynamics that underlie the unequal distribution of decision-making authority within domestic partnerships, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of power differentials. These imbalances, whether rooted in gender inequities, socio-economic variations, or cultural norms, contribute significantly to the challenges faced by couples in navigating crucial aspects of their shared lives.

The research underscores the critical need for targeted interventions to rectify power imbalances, acknowledging their detrimental effects on the overall well-being of couples. It contends that such imbalances not only impede effective decision-making processes but also hinder equitable access to resources and opportunities, perpetuating systemic inequalities.

In addressing this complex issue, the paper meticulously formulates policy recommendations designed to foster a more egalitarian environment within relationships. By advocating for initiatives that empower individuals within couples, such as educational programs promoting shared decision-making skills and awareness campaigns challenging traditional gender roles. The recommendations aim to dismantle the structural barriers that sustain power imbalances.

Furthermore, the paper emphasizes the importance of supportive policies at both the institutional and community levels. It calls for advocacy measures that champion gender equality, encourage flexible work arrangements, and create an enabling environment for open communication and shared responsibilities. Community engagement initiatives, including forums for dialogue and awareness-building, are highlighted as essential components in challenging ingrained cultural norms that contribute to power differentials.

By presenting these meticulously crafted policy recommendations, the paper seeks to contribute to a discourse that goes beyond mere identification of the problem. It aspires to be a catalyst for actionable change, urging policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders to collaborate in implementing measures that promote fairness, inclusivity, and mutual respect within couples. Ultimately, the goal is to foster healthier relationships, enhance the quality of decision-making processes, and contribute to a more equitable and thriving societal fabric.