

2-2023

### Cultural Factors Associated with Human Trafficking of Girls and Women in Northern Tanzania: The Case of Arusha Region

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#### Recommended Citation

Magesa, Rehema John (2023) "Cultural Factors Associated with Human Trafficking of Girls and Women in Northern Tanzania: The Case of Arusha Region," *Dignity: A Journal of Analysis of Exploitation and Violence*: Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.23860/dignity.2023.08.01.01>

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# Cultural Factors Associated with Human Trafficking of Girls and Women in Northern Tanzania: The Case of Arusha Region

## Abstract

Human trafficking is persistent in many regions of Tanzania despite different efforts to reduce the practice by the Government and other stakeholders. Girls and young women are more affected by this practice in violation of their human rights than men and boys. This study explored the cultural factors attributing to the trafficking of girls and women in Northern Tanzania. The study involved 400 girls and young women for a quantitative and qualitative study on cultural determinants of human trafficking. The study found the following cultural practices pushed girls and women towards situations in which they could be trafficked: female genital mutilation (82%); son preference (78%); daughters not inheriting land and animals (77%); women not participating in decision making (70%); the workload for women and girls (88%); wife battering (87%); early marriage (82%); under estimating women and girls' decision-making abilities (77%); and polygamy (76%).

## Keywords

Tanzania, Arusha region, women, girls, human trafficking, culture, female genital mutilation, inheritance, decision making, work, battering, early marriage, polygamy

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## CULTURAL FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN NORTHERN TANZANIA: THE CASE OF ARUSHA REGION

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### ABSTRACT

Human trafficking is persistent in many regions of Tanzania despite different efforts to reduce the practice by the Government and other stakeholders. Girls and young women are more affected by this practice in violation of their human rights than men and boys. This study explored the cultural factors attributing to the trafficking of girls and women in Northern Tanzania. The study involved 400 girls and young women for a quantitative and qualitative study on cultural determinants of human trafficking. The study found the following cultural practices pushed girls and women towards situations in which they could be trafficked: female genital mutilation (82%); son preference (78%); daughters not inheriting land and animals (77%); women not participating in decision making (70%); the workload for women and girls (88%); wife battering (87%); early marriage (82%); under estimating women and girls' decision-making abilities (77%); and polygamy (76%).

### KEYWORDS

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GLOBALLY, IT IS ESTIMATED that girls and women are trafficked twice as often as boys and men. A report from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2020), compiled from 148 countries, stated that female victims continue to be the primary targets accounting for 65% of victims, while males only accounted for 35%. This imbalance emphasises that women and girls are more vulnerable to trafficking than men and boys. In recognition of this pervasive problem, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (United Nations, 2016) for 2030 include:

- SDG 16.2; to protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and violence;
- SDG 5.2; to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private sphere, including trafficking and sexual and other forms of exploitation; and
- SDG 8.7; to eradicate forced labour and end modern slavery and human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a form of violence embedded in gender inequalities and sex discrimination. Since women and girls are the main victims of human trafficking, it becomes clear that the trafficking of human beings is highly associated with gender inequalities shaped by the social and cultural factors existing in the communities. Stereotypes that present men as powerful and in control and women as passive play a

major role in the trafficking of women. This has been reported in many studies, but the recent European Parliament (2016) report emphasises that the whole trafficking cycle is gendered from the root causes to make women vulnerable. The report also emphasises that the policy approaches and measures aimed at combating human trafficking are gendered and tend to favour men over women. Moreover, the report explains that the experiences of the men being trafficked, especially as victims of labour exploitation, are attracting growing interest among various stakeholders, even though trafficking in women remains high on the agenda as a complex and still increasing phenomenon.

Culture is a collection of ideas, social behaviour and customs of particular people or society (UNICEF, 2021). Harmful traditional practices embodied in culture are among the causes of human trafficking among women and girls worldwide. Some of the harmful practices encouraged by culture towards women and girls include female genital mutilation; dowry and bride price; female infanticide; early marriage; wife battery; denial of inheritance to a female child; cosmetic mutilation; marriage by abduction or rape; virginity testing; and widowhood rituals (ActionAid, 2012). These practices demean the position of women and girls in different societies and sometimes push them into human trafficking. According to UNICEF (2021), more than 850 million girls and women around the world have suffered as victims of these practices. Specifically, they have suffered from child marriage and female genital mutilation. Apart from these practices, the girls also suffer from abduction for marriage (Ethiopia); *Devadasi* (Nepal and India), where girls are offered to temples; *Trokosi* (Benin, Ghana, and Nigeria), where girls are given to fetish shrines (Ras-Work, 2006; UNICEF, 2021).

In Tanzania, a number of practices have been identified as harmful and are practices against girls and women in the name of culture, including female genital mutilation, child marriage, son preference, inheritance to the male child, and marriage by abduction. These practices degrade the position and rights of women and girls. In 2019, the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, and Children reported that approximately 10 per cent of women in the country had undergone female genital mutilation (UNFPA, 2020). The regions reported having the highest rate of female genital mutilation were Manyara (58%), Dodoma (47%), Arusha (41%), Mara (32%) and Singida (31%). Child marriage is another practice reported to be rampant in Tanzania, with girls as young as seven years of age reportedly married (USAID, 2020). Polygamy, wife battery, and denial of educational and job opportunities have also been reported to be practised towards girls and women in several parts of the country. These practices perpetuate human trafficking among women and girls in different societies in Tanzania. Kamazima (2009), Mteweke (2012) and IOM (2008) have reported that harmful cultural practices have influenced the magnitude and extent of human trafficking in Tanzania.

## ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE ARUSHA REGION

Arusha region is administratively divided into seven district councils which are: Arusha City; Arusha Rural; Karatu; Longido; Meru; Monduli; and Ngorongoro. Different ethnic groups are found in the region, but the Maasai, Waarusha, Meru, and Iraqw are the predominant groups. The Maasai are predominantly found in Monduli, Longido, Arusha Rural, and Ngorongoro district; while the Meru originates from the Meru district and the Iraqw are from the Karatu district. Arusha region also has minority groups of Datoga, Hadzabe, Sonjo, and Gorowa, that originates from Karatu and Ngorongoro district councils.

Arusha region has a vast number of economic activities compared to other areas of Tanzania. Due to its climatic and soil richness, agriculture and livestock rearing are the predominant economic activities employing more than 85% of the rural population (URT, 2008). The region also depends on tourism for its economic growth as it is a gateway to several tourist attractions, including Ngorongoro; Arusha; Lake Manyara; Tarangire; and Serengeti national parks. Mining and hospitality industries are also a part on the economy of the region. Arusha is a powerhouse of many gemstones mining and the hospitality sector the region has many first-class hotels, international conference facilities, and infrastructure. This sector contributes hugely to the region's economy and the nation.

Arusha region is Tanzania's geographical and administrative area. The region is bordered by Kajiado and Narok counties in Kenya to the north, the Kilimanjaro region to the east, the Manyara and Singida regions to the south and Mara and Simiyu regions to the west. The major towns include Monduli, Namanga, Longido and Loliondo to the north, *Mto wa mbu* and Karatu to the west, and Usa River to the east.

Arusha region is a global tourist destination and is the centre of the northern Tanzania safari circuit. This region's national parks and reserves include Ngorongoro conservation area; Arusha national park; the Loliondo game-controlled area; and Lake Manyara national park. Remains of 600-year-old stone structures are found in Engaruka, just off the dirt road between *Mto wa Mbu* and Lake Natron. With human development index of 0.721, Arusha is among the most developed region in Tanzania. The study was conducted in all seven district councils of Arusha, namely, Monduli, Meru, Arusha city, Karatu, Ngorongoro, Arusha rural and Longido district councils.

Much of the region shows good prospects for its people, although the girl child's welfare is the least favoured. A lot of challenges face the girl child from infancy to adulthood. According to TDHS (2010), a girl child in Arusha might encounter different forms of gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation, early marriage and pregnancy, trafficking, denial of education and job opportunities, and physical and sexual violence.

## METHODS

### STUDY AREA

The study's main objective was to explore the cultural factors for human trafficking among girls and women in northern Tanzania.

The current study was conducted in the seven councils of Arusha: Arusha City; Arusha Rural; Karatu; Longido; Meru; Monduli; and Ngorongoro. Arusha region was selected for this study for two reasons. Arusha region has the second highest trafficking activity for labour and sexual exploitation after Dar es Salaam, which has the highest incidence of human trafficking in Tanzania. The presence of human trafficking activities in Arusha has been mentioned in several studies done in Tanzania (Kamazima, 2009; Mteweale, 2012; and IOM, 2008). These studies found that Arusha Region is among the major cities in Tanzania with human trafficking activities. Women and girls are trafficked into Arusha for different intentions, including labour and sexual exploitation. There is a lack of data on human trafficking in this area (Kamazima, 2009, IOM, 2008); particularly, there are no studies on the social and cultural determinants of human trafficking in this area.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The study employed a cross-sectional research design to collect multiple cases at a single point in time (Bailey, 1998). It provides an image of a current situation at a specific time (Ellsberge and Heise, 2005). The sampling unit for this study was an individual woman and girl who have been trafficked from a different place to the current working place. In each district, one ward and two villages were selected based on their proximity to the district centre and the availability of the victims of human trafficking.

The current study involved girls and women in Arusha region. The study included females aged 15 to 24 years, which, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2013), are regarded as youth. Data were collected from all Arusha district councils, including Monduli; Meru; Arusha City; Karatu; Ngorongoro; Longindo; and Arusha district councils. Apart from the girls and women, the study also involved community members and other stakeholders from the government and non-governmental and faith-based organisations. Random sampling was used. The study included female victims of trafficking aged 10 to 18 years and young women below 24 years. Each female who was a victim of human trafficking and between 15 to 24 years of age had an equal opportunity to be selected for the study. A total of 400 respondents were involved in collecting quantitative information. At the same time, the study had four focus group discussions with community members, 14 face-to-face interviews with the victims of human trafficking, and 19 key informant interviews totalling 37 respondents for qualitative data collection tools.

Attitudes of the women and girls about cultural factors known to increase human trafficking were measured by using a Likert scale. The scale is an effective technique for measuring attitudes (Likert, 1932). The study used a 5 points Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree). Responses from all statements were combined to create a measurement of an Attitudinal Scale (AS). AS is a single variable used to represent the cumulative perception of attitude (Likert, 1932).

The overall scores on the Likert scale were categorised into positive, neutral, and negative attitudes towards social and cultural factors known to increase the human trafficking of girls and women. The highest possible score was calculated by multiplying 16 statements by 5 points to get 80 points. In comparison, the middle point was calculated by multiplying 16 statements with 3 points to get 48 points, and the lowest possible score was calculated by multiplying 16 statements by 1 point to get 16 points. Therefore, 48 was the cut-off point and stood for neutral attitudes. Hence, scores from 16 to 48 on the overall scores were considered negative attitudes, while 49 to 80 stood for positive attitudes. Descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage, were then applied to analyse the weight of the statements given by the respondents. Apart from the descriptive statistics, qualitative data were analysed using content analysis, and the results were reported in the findings section.

## PLACE OF ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents in the study originated from 47 district councils of Tanzania. However, a significant number of the respondents originated from Karatu (20%), Mbulu (10.2%), Kondoa (10.2%), Babati (9.8%) and other neighbouring districts. Other districts where the girls and women came from included Arusha City (0.5%), Arusha D.C (0.5%), Bahi (0.8%), Bariadi (0.2%), Chemba (0.2%), Dodoma Rural (0.2%) and Hai (1.5%). Also, Handeni (0.5%), Ikungi (1.5%), Iramba (2.6%), Iringa (0.2%), Kinondoni (0.2%) and Kongwa (0.5%) districts were involved. Apart from

those above, the respondents also originated from; Kyela (0.2%), Lushoto (0.2%), Mafinga (0.8%), Magu (0.2%), Mbinga (0.2%), Monduli (2%), Morogoro Rural (1.2%), Moshi Urban (0.2%), Musoma Rural (2%), Mwanga (0.2%), Nachingwea(0.7%), Nchemba (0.2%), Ngorongoro (1.2%), Njombe (1.0%), Rombo (1%), Same (1.7%), Sengerema (0.2%), Serengeti (0.2%), Siha (1%), Simanjiro (2%), Singida rural (2%), Tarime (0.5%), Tukuyu (0.8%), Ukerewe (0.2%) and Urambo (0.5%).

## RESULTS

### AGE OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents' age in this study ranged from 10 to 24 years. The groups were classified according to WHO (2000 – 2025) standard categorisation. However, three age categories were established. The majority of respondents (71.2%) were 20 - 24 years old. This was followed by the age category 15 - 19 years, which accounted for 28.2%, and the age category 10 - 14 years, which accounted only for 0.5%.

### FAMILY SIZE

The majority of respondents have more than three siblings (72.8%), while only a few of them had two (18.2%) or three (6.8) siblings. It is also clear that only a few families have one sibling (2.2%). In the focus group discussions and interviews conducted, it was found that victims came from big families. Their families included their siblings and extended family members, making their families of more than 10 people. In some cases, the victims mentioned that they came from polygamous families, especially those from a pastoralist nature. A big family made life difficult for the members since the parents had low incomes. Sometimes the family could not afford three meals a day, and hence a motivation for the family to send the girl to work in urban areas. A victim from Namanga in Longido district states an example of this case.

I am from a pastoralist family; my father is married to six women with more than forty children and many grandchildren. Mothers are the ones responsible to feed the children, but sometimes life is very hard to them. They are not able to feed the children, so it becomes our responsibility to help our mothers. In that case we have to accept offers from the traffickers to work in town. As a result, we end up here working as bar maids and commercial sex workers, only to help our families.

### EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

A good number of respondents (74%) had primary education, while 12.5% had secondary education, and 12.5% had never gone to school. Very few respondents (1.5%) had tertiary education. The standard deviation as regards to number of years in schooling was 0.55. That indicates that the level of education among the girls and women was almost the same as the majority had attained primary education. It is important to understand the educational level of the individuals in the community as it might influence their well-being and increase their vulnerability to be trafficked.

### MARITAL STATUS

Forty-four per cent of the respondents revealed that they had been married before, and 56.2% reported never being married before. Many of the respondents reported being married before a good number of them revealed that the marriage did not exist at the time of the study.

## CULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

During data collection, cultural factors, such as gender violence, broken families, and other harmful traditional practices, were mentioned as the main causes of the trafficking of young women and girls. A series of Likert questions were asked to understand respondents' attitudes towards variables considered cultural factors for the trafficking of women and girls.

**Table 1: Cultural Factors Influencing Trafficking**

Push/Pull Factors	Positive (%)	Neutral (%)	Negative (%)
Wife battering	87	11	2
Women not participating in decision making	70	18	12
Daughters not inheriting land, animals, assets	77	12	11
Workload for Women	88	10	2
Son Preference	78	16	6
Polygamy	74	10	16
High bride	55	26	19
Underestimating women	77	8	15
Early marriages (child marriages)	82	11	7
Giving a girl to marriage without her consent	78	16	6
Inheritance	38	40	22
Old, aged men marrying young girls	72	14	14
Gender-based violence	81	15	4
Female genital mutilation	82	11	7

The findings (See Table 1) show that the majority of respondents agreed that the following factors are harmful and demean the positions of girls and women in the community and influence the trafficking of women and girls: female genital mutilation (82%); son preference (78%); daughters not inheriting land and animals (77%); women not participating in decision making (70%); the work load for women and girls (88%); and wife battering (87%) being among the leading harmful practices in their communities. Also, early marriage (82%), under estimating women and girls (77%) and polygamy (76%).

These findings were supported by the discussion and interviews conducted during qualitative data collection. Participants reported that different communities from Arusha Region impose harmful practices on girls and women of Maasai, Meru, Iraqw, and other neighbouring ethnic groups. The women in their communities are undermined, disrespected, and lack the power to make any decisions. They are treated as reproductive objects rather than valuable human beings. In a focus group discussion in Meru, a participant said:

I wish I could have only boys in my family, since having a daughter in our culture is bringing her to the world of torture, she will face a lot of gender discrimination including, lack of land, forced marriage, lack of education.



Another participant of a Maasai origin stated girls' life in our culture faces a lot of inequalities as compared to the boy. She works a lot, but at the end of the day she is given out to marry older man and leave all the inheritance to her brothers, she also faces FGM and lack of education.

## FINDINGS

### FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female genital mutilation (FGM) was mentioned by 82% of all respondents. During the focus group discussion, it was reported as one of the gender violence practices. The practice is applied to girls and women from a number of districts in the Arusha and Manyara regions. The respondents mentioned Longido, Ngorongoro, Karatu, Meru, Mbulu, and a few districts from Singida and Dodoma Region where there are perpetrators of female genital mutilation. Girls in infancy or at the age of 12 and above undergo this practice. The respondents reported that they loathed this act and condemned the traditions for allowing this horrendous act to be done to the girls. They reported that the girls who have undergone this procedure suffer for the rest of their lives. Those who had been circumcised reported having chronic pains, scars which do not heal, deformed sexual organs and even decreased sexual pleasure. Since it is a rite in their communities, they had to perform it. If they had a choice, they said they would never do it. The practice ends up pushing the girls away from the community. The following case from a young Maasai woman exemplifies this:

I was mutilated when I was 13 years old. It was very painful. I felt very sick, I trembled, and I could remember sobbing inside since I was not allowed to cry. That day was the most difficult day of my life. My mother could not help me but rather encouraged me that the pains will pass by.

Those waiting for female genital mutilation escape whenever they get an opportunity. The following girl escaped the rite. She says:

The night I was supposed to go to be mutilated, I could not sleep thinking of the pains I have to endure. I was 14 at that time, we were taught at school the dangers of the practice. My friend and I have planned to run to Monduli town where we could seek refuge and domestic work. We are originally from Emairete village which is about 3 hours walk to Monduli town. So, we escaped the harmful and painful rite and landed into this bar working as bar waiters.

### DAUGHTER'S INHERITANCE FROM PARENTS

Seventy-seven (77%) per cent of the respondents agreed that the daughter from both pastoralist and agro-pastoralist backgrounds does not inherit anything from her parents. She neither inherits lands nor livestock, which are the main asset in these communities. This was a concern in all the districts where the study was conducted. The Maasai and Iraqw, who own livestock, such as cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys, reported that it is not their culture to let the daughters have these animals, only the sons. Most of the ethnic groups found in Northern Tanzania originate from a patrilineal community that believes that:

Lines of inheritance of property (including land and other properties) follow the male bloodline. If there are male heirs, customary law prevents women

from inheriting land for fear that they would transfer the land outside of the family by marriage. The customary law also ensures that widowed women do not have a residual right their family's land. (Center for women's land rights, 2014).

This is further emphasised by a statement from a Maasai pastoralist council (2017) which states:

At marriage, a bride is allocated a herd of cattle, from which all her sons will build up herds of their own, overseen by their father, who also makes gifts of cattle to his sons over the course of his life. When the parents die, the oldest son inherits the residue of his father's herd, and the youngest inherits the residue mother's allocated cattle. Daughters inherit nothing at all.

The respondents felt that since they were entitled to nothing at their homes, they had to start looking for their future elsewhere, and hence they got trapped in the hands of the traffickers, as the following case exemplifies.

In my community, a daughter is worth nothing. A son is everything to the fathers; they treat him with respect regardless of his weaknesses. The daughter is like a misfortune in the family, and thus she is always mistreated. She is the one to work hard, to make sure the brother is fed properly and happy. When it comes to school, the daughter is never taken to further education after completing primary education. She also inherits nothing from her father.

## POLYGAMY

Among the Maasai, polygamy is a common practice undertaken as a symbol of wealth, respect, and a method to help single women. A number of respondents (74%) agreed that polygamy was very common in their home communities. Their mothers and sisters were married in a polygamous setting, and some respondents ran away from this kind of marriage. And a Maasai man from Longido reports in an interview:

What is a man without cow, children, and wives? You need many wives who will bear you many children and look after your cattle. One hundred cows or more needs at least three wives.

From this statement above, it is clear that polygamy is a lifestyle and the custom of marrying more than one wife for a Maasai man. However, women seemed uncomfortable being in such a situation. They complained of being entangled in this situation due to their culture and wanted nothing to do about this situation. In an interview, a Maasai woman in Longido says:

I was married when I was 16 years of age to an old man who had two wives before me. As the youngest I was so mistreated with my fellow wives and my husband. I had four children with him then he passed on. I became a widower at 34 and was forced to marry his brother. I have never been happy in these two marriages.

This was the case with the other respondents who were earlier married in a polygamous setting, as they mentioned to have suffered under the hands of the other wives and their husbands. The following case from a face-to-face interview illustrates:

I am from Singida, was married as a second wife when I was only 17 to an old man. After getting married I had my three kids, two boys and a girl. I went to VETA after my second child. Life was okay up to when my husband had to take in a third wife. He became very abusive to me. It was during this time when I decided to escape after I met a friend's aunty who lived in Arusha.

### SON PREFERENCE

Sex preference studies worldwide have generally found son preference to be much more common than daughter preference. In the World Fertility Survey, for example, only Jamaica and Venezuela had an overall preference for daughters, while fourteen countries had a strong or moderate son preference (Cronk, 2008). In countries where son preference is prevalent, girls are neglected and even sold in the form of sexual trafficking.

For this study, the situation was not that different, as 78% of respondents mentioned that son preference existed in their households. Those from the Maasai and Iraqw origin reported that in their tradition when a boy is born, the father is extremely happy in such a way that a cow or goat is slaughtered to celebrate. But when a girl is born, the dad is just okay, not as happy as when the boy was born. The boy is raised as a favoured child while the girl is taught to respect the brother despite her age. From the discussion, it was generally found that in Maasai, Iraqw, Nyaturu, Nyiramba, and Meru tribes, the son is respected, valued, and given what the parent can afford, including education and inheritance. On the other hand, the daughter is less respected and is always prepared to be a good wife and mother. She inherits nothing, and if she is lucky, she can be sent to school by her parents. The following case from a face-to-face interview illustrates this situation:

When I completed my primary education, I was forced to stay home while my young brothers continued with school. None of my brothers stayed at home after primary education, they continued with their secondary education. This is practiced throughout the village, when girls complete primary education; they wait to get married not to be educated further. I had this dream of becoming a lawyer one day, so I had to run away to find work so I can further my education. Unfortunately, I have not succeeded in this, but one day I will.

Son preference was also mentioned as a push factor for the girls to run away from home, as they felt they needed to empower themselves economically away from their parents by finding a job. Running away from home might lead them into traffickers' hands.

### WORKLOAD FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN

Eighty-eight (88%) per cent of the respondents reported that girls and young women from different cultures, including those from Maasai, Iraqw (Kratu, Mbulu and Babati), Meru, and Gorowa backgrounds, work a lot as compared to their male counterparts. They perform triple roles, which include the reproductive, productive, and community roles while assisting their mothers, whereas the boys only do the productive work. The Maasai boys are responsible for herding small livestock, while the warriors are in charge community's security and spend much of their time on walkabouts throughout Maasai land. The girls are responsible for chores such as cooking and milking. Women are responsible for building and maintaining the houses, fetching water, collecting firewood, raising the children, milking the cattle, and cooking for the family. In the case of the Iraqw tribe, which encompasses the majority of

respondents, the roles for boys and girls are somehow the same as those of the Maa-sai. The only exception is that the Iraqw boys assist in agricultural activities performed by the family. In a focus group discussion in Karatu, when probed about the chores the Iraqw girl performs as their daily routine, they said:

An Iraqw girl is like a donkey, she does the entire complicated job while the boys relax. She goes to shamba, help with all domestic work at home and she always make sure the boys (the brothers are well taken care of). During school days she wakes up around 5.00 a.m. and she does the same during the holidays. No study time for the girl after returning home from school. No wonder the girls have poor performance as compared to boys.

## WIFE BATTERY

Wife beating is a form of physical abuse inflicted upon women. The physical violence might be in the form of slapping, hitting, or kicking. Other forms of violence imposed on a wife during her marriage include acts of psychological abuse such as intimidation, constant belittling, and humiliation. Forced intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion and various controlling behaviours, such as isolating a person from her family and friends, monitoring her movements, and restricting her access to information or assistance (Krug et al., 2002). Economic abuse, such as withholding funds, and controlling survivors' access to healthcare and employment, are practised (WHO, 2005).

In this study, a large number of respondents (87%) reported having seen their mothers and sisters suffering from constant physical abuse at the hands of their husbands. They reported seeing their mothers being beaten by their fathers or sometimes verbally abused. The beatings did not only end with their mother; sometimes the beatings were extended to the children, especially the girls. In a discussion conducted in Arusha city, a participant said:

My dad is a drunkard, he constantly beat my mother and hurt her, and after beating my mother he beats us (the girls only) calling as bad name such as prostitutes and looser. He always swears that he will never take us to school, due to that condition I decided to run away.

Another participant also reports that:

My dad always beat my mother; he always reminds her that she is a disgrace for giving him three daughters instead of sons. He blames her that it's her fault that happened. My mother is no longer happy, always sad and in fear. When I am able to rent a room, I will take my mother and live with her.

The findings of this study are in line with Setembo (2016), who did his research in Babati and reported that 67% of the respondents reported their husbands as the main perpetrator of violence in the household. Further, Kadeghe (2017) found that 70% of respondents from a study conducted in Babati reported experiencing psychological violence from their partners in the form of battery, intimidation, or constant belittling, additionally the women complained of being forced to isolate themselves from relatives and friends by their partners.

These findings go hand in hand with findings from different Tanzanian institutions. Tanzania, like many developing countries, is reported to rank high in the incidence of Intimate partner violence. World Health Organization report of 2005 reports

that Tanzania ranked 4<sup>th</sup> highest in terms of domestic violence prevalence in 2005. Apart from this, it is also reported by NBS and ICF (2011) that half (50%) of ever-married women in Tanzania reported having experienced some form of violence (i.e., physical, sexual, or emotional) by their husband or partner (NBS and ICF Macro 2011). A study by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2001/2002 of 1,820 women in Dar es Salaam and 1,450 women in the Mbeya District found that 41% of ever-partnered women in Dar es Salaam and 87% in the Mbeya District had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner at some point in their lives. In both areas, 29% of those experiencing physical intimate partner violence experienced injuries, with over a third having been injured in the past year (WHO, 2005).

Participants of focus groups conducted as part of this assessment affirmed that it is common for women to experience violence at the hands of their husbands or partners. Wife battery has been associated with a number of factors, including witnessing or experiencing violence in childhood, low levels of education, limited economic opportunities, substance abuse, attitudes that tolerate violence, and limited legislative frameworks for preventing and responding to violence (UNSTATS, 2015).

### EARLY MARRIAGE

According to UNFPA (2014), child marriage, also known as early marriage, is defined as “Any marriage act carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically, physiologically, and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing.”

Early marriage is a practice which bothers the respondents a lot. The practice was reported to exist in all the districts where the girls originated from. Many respondents (82%) reported that this practice occurred in their villages. (See Table. 2). They also reported that not only do they hate child marriage, but they also hate the act of being married without having an interest and decision in that marriage. Almost 44% of the girls and women revealed that they had been married before they were trafficked and forced to be married. Complementing this situation, a large number of girls and women (75%) reported that child marriage was one reason they were trafficked. Some reported that they ran away after marriage, while others reported escaping just after the dowry payment.

**Table 2: Early Marriage and Human Trafficking (n=400)**

Child Marriage Status	Per cent	Per cent
	Yes (%)	No (%)
Have you ever been married	43.8	56.2
Did you agree	34	66
Was it a reason for your departure	75	25

Early marriage was also discussed during focus group discussions and key informant interviews. A lady from the Faraja centre reported receiving many cases and child marriage victims. In a particular case, she reports:

In my years of working at this centre, I have received a lot of cases related to child marriage. But the one I will never forget is one where the victim escaped after getting married. She was 14 and from Loliondo; there she was married

to a man old to be her father or grandfather. The man was above 60 years. After getting married she was sexually and physically abused, since she could not be pregnant. She escaped through the headmaster of a Christian school, and she was brought at my centre. We counselled her, and took her to school, but the husband with the help of the family traced and found out where she was, they attacked the centre, fortunately we saved her and took her to a boarding school far away. She is safe there.

In situations like that, you deduce that if the girl is not smart enough, she could end up in the hands of traffickers and paedophiles since she is very vulnerable. However, girls her age are not always lucky, as many end up in recruiters' hands while escaping from abusive child marriages. Fortunately, she trusted the headmaster, and the headmaster could send her to the authorities. From a key informant interview in *Mto wa Mbu*, the following was reported:

MtowaMbu is a fast-growing area, where tourist rest before and after visiting the northern tourist attractions, due to that we have a lot of cases of young girls of ages between 13 to 18 being trafficked to Mto wa Mbu. Once you talk to the girls you come to realise that they have escaped early marriage among other harmful traditional practices. They are mainly from the neighbouring districts of Karatu, Babati, Mbulu and Hanang.

About 37% of the women aged 20-24 were married or in union before age 18. These findings correlate with UNFPA (2014), which reports that, on average, almost two out of five girls will be married before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Arusha, Manyara, Singida, and Dodoma, districts where majority of respondents originate from, are also among the regions with a high prevalence of early marriage as their prevalence is at 27%, 34%, 42% and 51%, respectively (TDHS, 2012). The factors contributing to early marriage have been reported to be the levels of education and the poverty levels of the girls.

From the discussion above, it is clear that these practices are applied to women and girls in different communities. Female genital mutilation, son preference, daughters not inheriting land and animals, women not participating in decision-making, the workload for women and girls and wife battering are the leading harmful practices in their communities. These practices were also reported to be push factors for human trafficking since the girls and women tend to run away to escape the traditional practices. In running away, they might come across traffickers and paedophiles who take advantage of their vulnerability to lure them for their benefit. These findings are supplemented by findings from a study conducted by Msuya (2017), who reports that African cultural and social norms, including female genital mutilation, male dominance, and the preferential treatment of sons and early marriage, push girls and women to leave their homes to search of a better life.

## **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

A significant number of respondents (81%) agreed that they had been abused before leaving home, and some of them agreed that the abuses were why they ended up with the traffickers. They reported being physically abused by different people from their household and some from the community. The perpetrators of gender-based violence include their male parent and their male siblings. The brothers were physically and verbally abusing their sisters. The reasons mentioned for conducting violence

against the females in the family included traditions (66%), anger (57.5%), and alcohol consumption (56.8%).

This finding was also confirmed during face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The discussions revealed that daughters in their cultures (Maasai and Iraqw) were supposed to marry early and take care of their in-laws. In other words, the girls “adopt” a new family after getting married. The girl is regarded as being only temporarily her biological family. So, they do not see any necessity of caring for her. With that mentality, the girl is frequently mistreated by both her father and brother. The only value the daughter has in the family is the dowry she brings to the family once married. They are frequently beaten, belittled, work harder than their sons, get no inheritance, and are not sent to school after completing primary education. In a discussion, one respondent argues that:

In my culture, a girl has no right to education, no right to control her body, no right to choose whom and when to marry, and no right to express an opinion. They never choose who they marry and never which Boma they marry in. Girls must always accept whatever men say and always bow down their head when conversing with men.

In the case of abuse, the respondents revealed that the girls are physically abused but not as frequently as the young wives are. The elder wives and the husband abuse the young wives in a polygamous household. The husbands physically and sexually abuse the girls regardless of their age. In totality, physical, verbal, and in some instances, sexual abuse was mentioned by 75.8% of the respondents to have led them into the trafficking cycle. They reported that different family members and relatives were among the main perpetrators of the abuse. Due to the abusive environment, the girls and women tend to either run away from the hands of the abuser, even if it is family or accept any offers given by the recruiters. The recruiters might contact the victims directly or sometimes contact the parent of the victim. Either way, the victims accept the offers to escape the abusive environment surrounding them. This is further explained in the following face to face interview with a woman working in an eatery in Mto wa Mbu:

I was constantly beaten by my father, and after completing my primary education he refused to pay for my secondary education. When my neighbour came back to the village from town, she approached my mother and father for me to go back with her. They immediately accepted, and here I am working as a slave, with a very small salary and poor working environment. But this is better off when compared to my home’s abusive environment.

This was further emphasised by Community Development Officer in Monduli district, who reports:

Gender discrimination and violence is also another reason for the girls to run from the villages to urban areas, they are discriminated due to the culture and tradition. So, they have to run to escape these harsh environments. The girls in villages work hard than the boys (triple roles), they are not educated as the boy child, and also, they are forced to get married at a very young age.

## CONCLUSION

From the findings obtained from the study, it is explicit that cultural factors existing in many tribes in Tanzania contribute to the trafficking of girls and young women. The factors become pulling and, in some incidents, push factors for the victims towards human trafficking. To eradicate this problem, it is without a doubt that the Government of Tanzania should initiate and implement policies and laws which emphasise gender equality among all citizens.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the following to the Government and the Local Government Authority.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT

Government should continue sensitising communities to the effects of harmful practices and violence. Also, the government should ensure it has increased awareness and knowledge of human trafficking as a form of violence against humanity in the communities.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WARD, VILLAGE, AND STREET)

The local government in Tanzania refers to the ward and village or street leaders. These are the primary person after the family who can protect and prevent trafficking of girls and women from their localities. Much as they have these responsibilities, the local authorities need to work with other stakeholders and the communities to make sure they prevent and protect trafficking of all vulnerable victims and to make sure they protect all the victims reintegrated back in their communities. The study therefore advises these authorities to do the following things.

#### Creation of Bylaws

Put in place bylaws that will encourage parents to register the movement or transfer of their children. This will involve the identity of the person and place where the children are taken to.

#### Sensitisation of the Importance of Education to Children

Sensitise and harness the importance of sending all children to school regardless of gender. This will encourage the parents to abandon some of the harmful practices such as son preference, early marriage, and biased inheritance.

#### Breaking Silence on Harmful Traditional Practices

Through the ward social welfare and community development officers, the local government should ensure they create awareness to the public of the social problems in their communities. They should ensure they break the silence on harmful traditional practices, human trafficking, gender-based violence and discrimination. They should warn the public to trust people to take their children to urban areas without being sure what activity or job they will be involved in.



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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

Magesa, Rehema John. (2023). Cultural factors associated with human trafficking of girls and women in Northern Tanzania: The case of the Arusha Region. *Dignity: A Journal of Analysis of Exploitation and Violence*. Vol. 8, Issue 1, Article 1.

<https://doi.org/10.23860/dignity.2023.08.01.01>

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