

**The university of Dar es Salaam department of sociology it as a productive force by the
Tanzanian rural society
Theresia K.F Ngalula
Master of Arts in Sociology
University of Dar es Salaam, College Of Social Sciences, 1977**

Although every individual was joined to his fellows by human respect, there was in most parts of Tanzania an acceptance of one human inequality, Although we try to hide the fact that and despite the exaggeration which our critics have frequently indulged in; it is true that the women in Traditional Society were regarded as having a place in the Community which was not only different but was also to some extent inferior. It is impossible to deny that women did and still do, more than their fair share of the work in the fields and in the homes. By virtue of their sex they suffered from inequalities which had nothing to do with their contribution to family welfare. Although it is wrong to suggest that they have always been an oppressed group; it is true that within the traditional society ill-treatment and enforced subservience could be their lot. This is certainly inconsistent with our socialist conception of the equality of all human beings and the right of all to live in such security and freedom as is consistent with equal security and freedom for all others. If we want our country to make full and quick progress now, it is essential that our WOMEN live in terms of full equality with their fellow citizens who are men. The above long quotation from President Nyerere - book, Socialism and Rural Development sort of justifies the need to examine the role of women in the Rural Economy. Since women are part and parcel of the community they could not be studied in isolation. And hence the main focus of the study was to compare and contrast the relative roles of women and men (husband/wife) in the development process in the rural society. In order to understand the role of women in rural economy ninety (90) households were randomly selected and both husband and wife/wives were interviewed. The methods used were the structured questionnaires, documentation, and participant observation. The quantitative evidence provided in this study substantiates the fact that agricultural production of food crops in subsistence farming is predominantly female farming. However, men do take an active role in cash crop production. Besides their participation in farming women maintained the so called "female jobs" such as domestic work and childcare of which men hardly take part with the exception of the example of ten single men in this study. However, when it came to outside jobs, such as charcoal burning, fishing, carpentry, etc about 37 men out of 80 took part in these activities. On the part of women, about 15 out of 85 under study took part in such activities like weaving, embroidery, pottery which are part time activities (see Table 3.5). This is self-explanatory that men have more time than women since they do not participate in housework and childcare activities (as women do). Regarding ownership of the means of production, men are the sole owners of property like livestock, inheritance too favours men and women have always to rely on the mercy of the inheritors who are their brothers or sons. Also, in the distribution of income, though there were no records to show this, there was enough evidence to show that, it was not equally distributed among men and women. This was shown in the things purchased in the household for example cattle, bicycles, etc which were mainly owned by men. The most owned properties by women were clothes and few pots. Therefore, from the above summary of findings we learn that a woman as producer in the rural economy does not own the means of production through ujamaa policy they normally belong to the social unit. Furthermore, they do not enjoy the returns from their labour as men do. This is the type of inequality which is still existing in most rural Tanzania to date. And in order to be in line

with the policies of socialism equality between men and women, should be the goal in all aspects including division of labour and inheritance