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*School of Education and
Communication*

Gender roles in households

A case study on gender roles in households in northern Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

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This case study investigates perspectives and changes in gender roles in household activities from a gender (in)equality context in Tarime, northern Tanzania. The participants in this study part-took in a previous project called the Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem Project (SEMA) which aimed to integrate gender perspectives and sustainable livelihoods in rural parts of Tarime. Women in these areas often bear the primary responsibilities of caring for the household. The area is also controlled by male authority, and women are daily exposed to oppression and physical violence. Statistically, girls in the study area often miss the chance to higher education since boys are prioritized. Instead, girls risk the chances of early marriage and are exposed to female genital mutilation. So far, there has been little research on gender roles in household activities in these areas. Therefore, this case study strived to provide such material for future project operations. The main goal of this study was to investigate gender equality in households, focusing on how women and men describe norms linked to equality and gender roles in households, if norms and roles have changed after the project and if so, which circumstances have led to such a change. Both men and women were interviewed through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and informal interviews. The empirical data was later analyzed through the lens of the social role theory. Research findings showed that women are still living subordinate to men and unequal distribution of household duties still exists. However, education on equal rights and women empowerment from the SEMA project has changed people's perspectives on the matter, inspiring both women and men to fight for a sustainable change. The study explores root causes that hinder the implementation of equal rights. This study can contribute to more understanding of cultural traditions and finding new ways to sustain the implantation of equal rights.

Keywords: Case study, gender roles, Tarime, northern Tanzania, gender inequality, gender perspectives, Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem Project (SEMA), sustainable livelihoods, oppression, physical violence, female genital mutilation, household activities, education, gender equality.

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Könsroller i hushåll

En fallstudie om könsroller i hushåll i norra Tanzania

Denna fallstudie undersöker perspektiv och förändringar i könsroller i hushållsaktiviteter i Tarime, norra Tanzania. Deltagarna i denna studie deltog i ett tidigare projekt kallat Serengati-Mara Ecosystem Project (SEMA) som syftade till att integrera genusperspektiv och hållbar försörjning på landsbygden i Tarime. Kvinnor i dessa områden bär ofta det primära ansvaret att ta hand om hushållet. Studieområdet kontrolleras också av manlig auktoritet och kvinnor utsätts dagligen för förtryck och fysiskt våld. Statistiskt sett saknar många flickor högre utbildning eftersom pojkarna är de främsta prioriterade. I stället ligger fokus på att flickor ska bli bortgifta och undergå kvinnlig könsstympning. Hittills har det gjorts lite forskning om könsroller i hushållsaktiviteter inom dessa områden. Därför strävade denna fallstudie efter att tillhandahålla sådant material för framtida projektverksamhet. Huvudmålet med denna studie var att undersöka jämställdhet i hushållen, med fokus på hur kvinnor och män beskriver normer kopplade till jämställdhet och könsroller i hushållen, om normer och roller har förändrats efter projektet och vilka omständigheter som i så fall har lett till sådan förändring. Både män och kvinnor intervjuades genom semistrukturerade intervjuer och fokusgruppsintervjuer. Den empiriska datan analyserades senare genom teorin om sociala roller. Forskningsresultat visade att kvinnor fortfarande lever under manligt styrande och att det fortfarande finns en ojämn fördelning av hushållsuppgifter. Utbildning om lika rättigheter och kvinnors egenmakt från SEMA-projektet har dock förändrat människors perspektiv på frågan, och inspirerat både kvinnor och män att kämpa för en hållbar förändring. Studien utforskar grundorsaker som hindrar genomförandet av lika rättigheter. Denna studie kan bidra till mer förståelse för kulturella traditioner och hitta nya sätt att upprätthålla införandet av lika rättigheter.

Nyckelord: Fallstudie, könsroller, Tarime, norra Tanzania, ojämlikhet mellan könen, genusperspektiv, Serengeti-Mara Ecosystem Project (SEMA), hållbar försörjning, förtryck, fysiskt våld, kvinnlig könsstympning, hushållsaktiviteter, utbildning, jämställdhet

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1. Introduction

In Tanzania and the rest of the world, gender roles in household activities are essentially influenced by local cultural contexts (Dillip et al., 2018). Some scholars describe parts of rural societies across Tanzania as highly influenced by patriarchal attitudes and customs (Dillip et al., 2018). In these societies, women are expected by cultural customs to perform household activities under male authority (Dillip et al., 2018). Previous research findings have discovered that male dominance behaviors increase stereotyping of gender roles as feminine and masculine, affecting the division of labour and decision-making within households (Feinstein et al., 2010). Despite attempts from the government to educate both men and women on the topic, gender roles at the household level in rural parts of the country remain unchanged (Lusasi & Waseba, 2020). This case study explored present-time gender equality in households linked to norms and attitudes towards women's and men's roles and responsibilities in two rural villages outside the town of Tarime in northern Tanzania. The case study used the lens of social role theory to identify the effects of norms regarding the distribution of households. The social role theory pleads that societal expectations and socially constructed stereotypes influence the distribution of household activities. The traditional gender roles are identified as one of the primary sources of discrimination in society. The participants in the study previously partook in a project by the European Commission called The Serengeti-Mara ecosystem project (SEMA). The project focused on conserving the ecosystem around the Serengeti and Mara region in Tanzania by empowering local communities to adapt to sustainable livelihoods (Vi Agroforestry). This case study also explored whether any changes had occurred after receiving education from the SEMA project that was carried out in the area from 2018-2020, which, among other things, aimed to integrate a gender perspective in its work. However, this study does not only focus on changes from the project. Instead, this study aimed to cover the overall context of gender roles in households. To investigate the present roles and changes, questions were asked to both women and men about their personal opinions and experiences. The case study used the Sustainable development goals as a starting point to elucidate gender equality, norms, and household roles. Previous research has a critical perspective on projects being successful enough to live up to them. By exploring the various roles within the households of Tarime and analyzing the cultural obstacles from a gender inequality context, the study can contribute to new perspectives on understanding variables of unequal gender roles and behaviors, which can benefit future development actions.

2. Purpose & Research Questions

The aim was to investigate gender equality in households in two rural villages outside the city of Tarime in Northern Tanzania based on the residents' perspectives in the present time and whether they have changed concerning changes in the area since 2017.

1. How do women and men describe norms linked to equality and gender roles in households?
2. Have norms and roles changed, and if so, how?
3. Which circumstances in the area have influenced such a change?

3. Background & Previous Research

This chapter provides an overview of previous research on gender roles in household activities and levels of inequality in Tanzania. This chapter also presents background information on the SEMA project and national statistics. The previous research is an essential part of framing the study topics. This chapter aims to better understand the research questions by exemplifying factors linked to the study topic.

3.1 Tanzania's failing attempts on providing political room for gender rights

Tanzania is part of East Africa and is ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world (UNDP, n.d.). It is rated 163 out of 188 countries in terms of human development in the Human Development Index. The country has a 61.137 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and an average life expectancy of 65.5 years (UNDP, n.d.). Most Tanzanians depend on agriculture as their primary or only source of livelihood, providing an estimated 65.3 % employment, 25 % GDP and 65 % inputs to the industrial sector. Subsistence farming is a source of livelihood for more than 80 % of women. However, only 27 % have rights and ownership of their land due to deep-rooted patriarchal systems (UN Women, n.d.). TGNP Mtandao, a transformative feminist umbrella organization, displayed in 2018 that the Tanzanian Government's Vision 2025 did not include a single sentence regarding the agricultural gender productivity gap (Badstue et al., 2020). The feminization of poverty is complex in Tanzania, where more than half of the female population (60%) live in extreme poverty. High poverty levels among women contribute to shrinking productivity in the agriculture sector, where they mainly concentrate and limited opportunities for participation in the mainstream economy (UNDP, n.d., UN Women, n.d.).

The country has over 120 tribes, and a national problem is the different tribes' cultures that allow behaviours of domestic violence and women oppression.

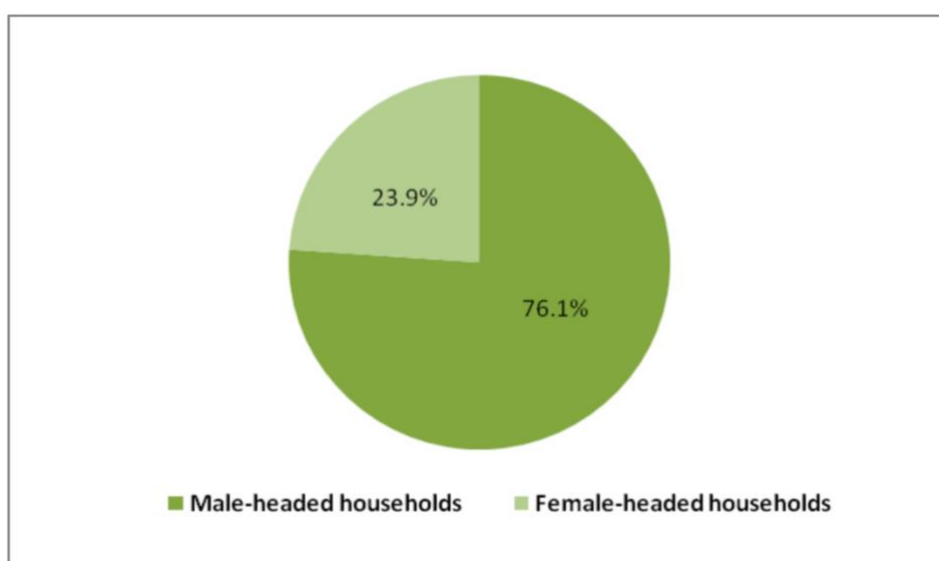
The Tanzania government has signed numerous international and regional gender equality protocols and instruments. They have ratified the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda and the long-term 2063 Agenda (both of which include a commitment to gender equality) and made efforts to align the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with national planning frameworks. However, the current National Development Plan lacks gender equality issues and women's empowerment whereby less than half of the 124 pages discussed gender equality (Badstue et al., 2020). On the 19th of March 2020, President Samia Suluhu Hassan became the United Republic of Tanzania's sixth president and the first woman president, following President John Magufuli on the 17th of March 2021. The new administration adjusted its policies and programs to reflect an evolving social and economic context with a strong focus on gender equality (World bank, 2021). Only the future can determine if these gender equality practices will come to life or if they are only a good topic to mention but later disappear as a political priority. However, some scholars speculate that the recent increased focus on gender equality approaches is only a way to attract more bilateral funds by applying Eurocentricity approaches, favoring western values and policies (Badstue et al., 2020).

3.2 Gender roles in Tanzanian households

There has generally been little research on gender roles within household activities in Tanzania (Feinstein et al., 2010). A study in 1983 conducted by Susan Rogers found that women in the country were aware that they work harder than men. However, women also expressed that they could not change the situation (Rogers, 1983). A Tanzanian organization study in 2006 confirmed these results. One study participant described that girls and boys attend equal farming activities. However, when girls return home after completing the farming activities, they are expected to continue attending to household work such as cooking and collecting water. However, these duties are not expected from boys. Instead, boys are allowed to rest while the girls are obligated to prepare food for the rest of the household. According to social norms, the participant in the study added that boys are taught to perform males' duties while the girls are expected to perform "mothers' duties." (Feinstein et al., 2010). In response to the issue of gender inequity, a local organization in Tanzania noted that the inequality between boys and girls violates human rights. Previous research states that women are expected to work longer hours than men (Mollel & Mtenga, 2000).

This division of labour creates obstacles for women to earn a living since they are not given any free time to attend to business activities. Men, in general, control the families' finances and farm operations. Not including women's voices in decision-making, especially in their homes, is an effect of female oppression (Mollel & Mtenga, 2000). According to a study from 2006, women are less likely to interact with other women who have similar issues. Rogers also noted that many do not realize how their positions as labourers have affected them. Rogers added that women tend to agree to these tasks because of social norms (Feinstein et al., 2010).

Figure 1. Households (%) with Informal Sector Activities by Sex of Head of Household, Tanzania Mainland, 2014



Source: Integrated Labour Force Survey, 2014

Figure 1 presents the percentage of male-and female-headed households in informal sector activities. In Tanzania, only 25 % of households are headed by women, and about half of women household leaders are widows (Osorio et al., 2014). The pie chart provides a clear example of the gender division in households in Tanzania. The statistics from pie chart shows clear linkages to previous research stating that most of the household heads are men (Mollel & Mtenga, 2000).

Research findings from another study conducted in 2010 by Sheryl Feinstein, Rachel Feinstein and Sophia Sabrow on "Gender Inequality in the Division of Household Labour in Tanzania" discovered a significant division in the expectations of household labour amongst men and women in Tanzania. The male participants in the study argued that there was no need to change the distribution of labour since women were already expected to do it. The participant also stated that it is hard to change a culture since the divided roles are already accepted in Tanzanian

society (Feinstein et al., 2010). The female participants in the study argued that they wished that men would engage themselves more in housework and cooking. Another female participant said it is okay for women and men to share the same chores since they should be treated equally. Despite the statements made by the women, the men did not seem to have a problem with the idea of gender equality. The study, therefore, suggested that levels of miscommunication between the genders might prevent egalitarian households. It could be that the men are trying to avoid addressing women's feelings, or it could be that the women are unable to express themselves due to the traditional culture in Tanzania (Feinstein et al., 2010).

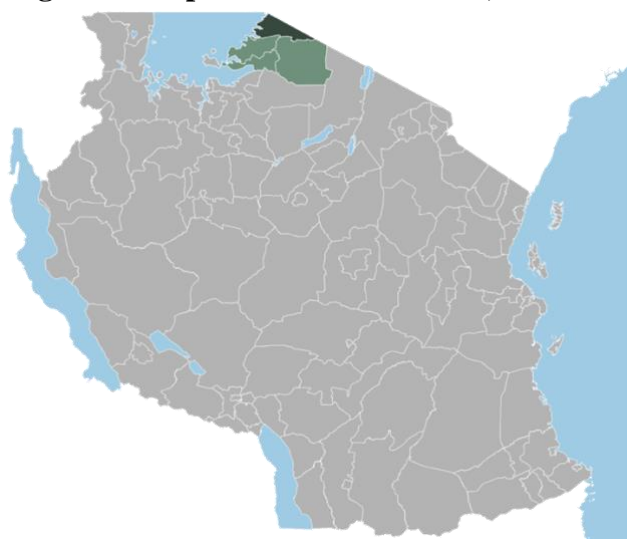
In Tanzania, women are known to desire egalitarian households. One of the women in the study noted that women's traditional roles are still stringent; however, this should not prevent men from helping with housework. Despite the desire of women in Tanzania to have an egalitarian household, the study results revealed that such scenarios were irregular. In addition, the traditional roles of women in Tanzania still force them to perform various domestic duties, such as cooking and cleaning (Feinstein et al., 2010).

3.3 Female Genital Mutilation

Tanzania is one of the 28 African countries where female genital mutilation is still practised. Despite the country's effort to ban the practice through laws and regulations, female genital mutilation continues. Since the practice is still an ongoing phenomenon, some scholars argue that questions regarding the country's legislative and constitutional efforts have not been challenged enough to protect women from this practice (Yusuf & Fessha, 2013). Even if female genital mutilation has been performed for centuries, the procedure is however done using local methods that often lack medical knowledge. The risks of using local methods of circumcisions are crucial. Statistics have shown that girls being circumcised locally can lead to overbreeding and, in worst cases, cause death (Badstue et al., 2020). Girls are traditionally circumcised at 12, mostly at their parents' initiative. Even if the government prohibits female genital mutilation, various non-governmental organizations try to stop the procedures. It still occurs due to cultural traditions and norms (Feinstein et al., 2010). Out of the 120 tribes in the country, at least 20 tribes in Tanzania practice female genital mutilation. Among these tribes, it is most practised among the Chagga, Pare, Ikoma, Kurya, Masaai, and other ethnic groups. In addition, various types of female genital mutilation are also practised in the country. One of them is the partial or total removal of the genitals, which is commonly done in the regions of Iringa, Mtwara, Kilosa, and Tarime (Yusuf & Fessha, 2013).

In Tarime, it is believed that a woman's chances of getting married are minimal if she has not been subjected to female genital mutilation. This is because the cultural belief that a mutilated woman is better than one who has not been treated is prevalent. According to research conducted in the region, women who have undergone female genital mutilation are usually married off within two years following the procedure (Yusuf & Fessha, 2013). If a woman has failed to find a husband after having undergone female genital mutilation, she is considered to have bad luck. On the other hand, if she has managed to get married and is still not affected by the procedure, it is seen as the man only did 'a favour' by deciding to marry her. This type of woman is often regarded as a burden in her communities and may not be accepted by her in-laws. Women who have not undergone female genital mutilation are also prohibited from cooking. This is because community members do not prefer to associate with them if they were involved in other activities related to the procedure. This ensures they do not pass over lousy luck because of their actions (Yusuf & Fessha, 2013).

Figure 2. Map over Tarime district, Tanzania



Source: Google

The participants for this study all originated from the Kurya-tribe around the rural areas of Tarime located in Mara region (See Figure 2).

3.4 The project of SEMA

The SEMA (The Serengeti-Mara ecosystem project) was conducted between 2018- 2020, the European Union funded it, and Vi Agroforestry/Vi-Skogen undertook the role as the project's lead administrator. The geographical area was in Tarime, Bunda and Serengeti districts in

Tanzania, whereby this study focused on areas around Tarime. The SEMA project had a partner organization called Bunda Farmers Development Support Organization (BUFADESO) (European Commission, 2016). This organization helped to collect data for this specific study, which is later highlighted in the methodology chapter of this study.

SEMA sought to contribute to conserving Serengeti-Mara ecosystems by empowering local communities to adopt sustainable livelihoods. The project aimed to improve the farmers' livelihoods and reduce the conflict by rehabilitating the previously blocked wildlife corridors, causing increased human-wildlife conflicts. The project also focused on implementing gender mainstreaming due to the understanding that a "highly patriarchal region" (European Commission, 2016) leaves little room for equity and equality between men and women. Therefore, the project focused on active and equal participation in household activities and empowering women's decision-making. The project strived to contribute awareness of the importance of education and to improve women's access to resources and improve family and social life relations. Lastly, to lift the power and voice of women in the conservation of the Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) ecosystems while boosting their access to resultant benefits. Actions such as changing social norms towards women, improving knowledge, skills, and leadership, and strengthening through networks were practised during the project. The project also focused on establishing linkages with duty bearers, increasing their access to resources and services, and influencing policy and practices with increased capacity of duty bearers (European Commission, 2016).

Since the SEMA project aimed to increase social harmony and equal participation in household activities, this study aimed to explore gender norms in post-project participation focusing on finding out if the implementation had any effect within the community in Tarime or if it remained unchanged. The study participants all participated in the SEMA project, receiving teachings on adopting sustainable livelihoods.

4. Social role theory – a theoretical framework

The chosen theory for this study is called The Social Role Theory. This theory was used to unpack and analyze the empirical data. The theory helped understand the root causes of unequal distribution of household labour from the answers given by the study participants.

The social role theory was first presented in the 1980s by the American psychologist Alice Eagly. She argued that multiple factors such as gender stereotypes and socialization could affect the behavior of women and men (Eagly et al., 2012). Cross-cultural research has shown that in more egalitarian societies, gender socialization practices are less rigid (Franke et al., 1997). Other scholars mean that due to the varying expectations of women and men regarding social roles, both genders often have gender-specific ways of acting. For instance, when it comes to being a caregiver for a child or a parent, women are more likely to exhibit traditional feminine behaviors such as maintaining a calm and collected demeanor. On the other hand, men are more likely to exhibit masculine behaviors such as being able to lead and assertively when working outside the home. According to the social role theory, the various roles men and women perform place different demands upon them (Vogel, 2003). The social role theory often narrows down into four keystones: gender roles, gender stereotypes, social relations, and social relations. These four keystones were used in the analysis of the empirical and is data presented in chapter 6.

4.1 Gender roles

Gender roles are behaviors that people typically expect from women and men. Cultural and societal differences exist between what behaviors are expected from women and men. For instance, it was previously believed that women would be the primary caregivers for their families while men would be the breadwinners. According to Eagly's theory, people's expectations about gender roles are caused by the differences between women and men. These gender stereotypes are also referred to as gender roles (Vogel et al., 2003)

4.2 Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotype is a term used to describe a view or preconception about a person or group of people typically associated with specific characteristics or attributes. These perceptions can harm a person's ability to develop their talents and make informed decisions in their lives. Reinforcement of harmful stereotypes affects social and economic inequalities.

Stereotypes affect various groups of women, such as those from minority groups, women with disabilities, and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

In conclusion, gender stereotyping is defined as labelling individuals or groups of people based on their characteristics or roles only because they are members of the same social group. It is considered unlawful when it violates fundamental freedoms and human rights (Eagly, 2012).

4.3 Social relations

Social behavior refers to the interactions among individuals. Various types of interactions are categorized as cooperative, mutualistic, and aggressive. When individuals interact frequently, they can form social relationships with people from different backgrounds and ages. A set of consistent social relationships can create social organizations or systems that differ from those based on polygamous or monogamous practices. The nature of a social system is determined by various factors such as social circumstances, ecological conditions, and kinship (Eagly, 2012).

4.4 Cultural norms

A *cultural norm* is a set of expectations, rules, or beliefs that describe how people should behave or think in a certain way in a social group or cultural context. While it is often unspoken, these rules or standards can be used to govern what is and is not considered appropriate in social interactions. They can also help prevent violence and its effects. According to researchers, cultural norms can influence how people respond to violence. They believe that learning these rules and beliefs can lead to the tolerance of violence in childhood (Eagly, 2012).

These four keystones were used as a framework during the analysis of the collected data. The study aimed to find linkages between the participants' answers and the four keystones within the social role theory. By applying these concepts, the study developed more understanding of the topic of gender roles and how social norms, and interactions affect people in Tarime.

5. Methods

This chapter narrates the study's research process and the application of qualitative methods to collect data. The case study was conducted through interviews and focus group interviews so that the research questions could be adequately answered. This chapter describes the study's methodological design, along with an overview of the various steps involved in the research process. Some of these include the delimitations of the thesis ethical considerations, the authors' role, and the interviews concerning the validity and reliability of the collected data.

5.1 Study area

This case study's empirical data were collected from semi-structured focus groups and informal interviews. The study was conducted in two villages in Tarime district (Mara region, northern Tanzania), where a previous European Commission and Vi Agroforestry project was conducted between 2018 and 2020.

5.2 Research strategy and design

Case studies are typically in-depth investigations examining a complex phenomenon set within the context of a real-world situation. They should not be limited to the case alone and should also investigate the likely interactions between the case and its surroundings. The case study should also consider the factors that affect the development and maintenance of the case (Yin, 2018). This case study focuses on exploring gender roles in households and raising the voices of the participants' perspectives and experiences after the SEMA project. The study's objective was to provide a case study that can be used to contribute reflections and knowledge of future development actions on gender roles in households. The data was analyzed using the social role theory as a backbone. Using this theory helped to find patterns and analyze the participants' answers and perspectives based on the study topics. These interviews served to fill in the gaps from previous research and evaluation of SEMA, providing more specific information and reflection regarding the division of household activities and cultural norms. The leading target group was male and female smallholder farmers who participated in the SEMA project. The study strived to provide deep-going reflections on the four keystones: gender roles, gender stereotypes, social relations, and cultural norms—the overall questions related to the participants' household responsibilities and views on gender equality. The questions are also linked to the SEMA project's goal to develop equal responsibilities on the household level. Each participant consented to include their real names in the study. However, keeping the study anonymous was essential for this study. Therefore, pseudonyms were made to protect the participant's identity.

5.3 Participant selection

The interviews in this case study had an inductive approach that allowed participants to report issues related to gender roles within household activities while probing for necessary information.

The study participants were purposively chosen with assistance from one of the application organizations for the SEMA project, the Bunda Farmers Development Support Organization (BUFADESO). The interviews were conducted in both Swahili and the Kurya tribe language. Interpreters were, therefore, present throughout all the interviews with staff from BUFADESO.

5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are commonly used in the social sciences to conduct research. The semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to explore the respondents' ideas using follow-up questions, unlike the traditional strict interview (Bryman, 2018). The follow-up questions were essential for this study, leaving more room for analyzing and understanding the root causes of the study topic.

The two first participants of the semi-structured interviews were district officials. The two participants received pseudonyms to remain anonymous. Respondent (R) 14 - Neema worked with the local community in Tarime to maintain a healthy environment. Neema's passion was to help and support women and protect their rights around the rural parts of Tarime. Respondent (R) 18- Joyce worked with local communities, primarily with smallholder farmers, introducing them to sustainable agriculture methods, such as agroforestry. She had comprehensive knowledge about the SEMA project since she contributed help and expertise to the staff during the project period. These respondents brought a wide variety of skills and experience, allowing them to bring different aspects from an overall perspective. They also clearly understand the project and its work in Tarime. The staff from district officials also benefited from political aspects in their answers, providing social role theory aspects on failing/missing gender equality approaches and projects from the government.

After the two interviews with staff from local authorities, eight more semi-structured interviews were conducted with the lead target group from the two villages around Tarime. The interviews were divided into gender and age groups. In the first village, participants were two women aged 25 to 50 and two aged 51-70+. Both age groups were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The second village had the same outline, with male participants only. Two men

aged 25 to 50- and two-men aged 51-70+ were interviewed. Each semi-structured interview took between 40-60 min to conduct.

5.3.2 Focus group interview

Using focus groups in qualitative research is an excellent and time-efficient way to collect data in a short time (Bryman, 2018). According to Alan Bryman (2018), the group size within focus groups is usually between 6–10 members. Therefore, this study had two focus group interviews with 6-8 participants. The focus groups aimed to contribute dialogue and participation linked to the research questions of this study.

The focus group interviews were divided into two groups based on gender, the same as the semi-structured interviews. Each group consisted of one male and one female group (ages 25 to 70+). The purpose of dividing male and female respondents was to explore if knowledge and experience differed between the genders. The focus group interviews provided clarity and more profound knowledge of the research questions and study topic. In each focus group interview, participants received information regarding the study description and a consent form. The focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed with permission from each participant.

5.3.3 Informal interviews

The study also used informal interviews as data to help fill in the gaps in the research. Since the content in these interviews was not recorded, their answers were instead written down after each interview. The interviews were all conducted in English; therefore, no translator was needed, which gave me the advantage of conducting each interview alone with the respondent. Informal interviews are often used in ethnographic research as it allows participants to talk about their experiences without being recorded (Murchison, 2010). It is also beneficial to gather information from sources willing to share their backgrounds, as people may be reluctant to discuss their difficult experiences (Murchison, 2010).

These interviews helped prepare for the other formal interviews, which focused on more informed questions.

5.4 Analysis of data

Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis focusing on the patterns and themes that emerge from a set of texts (Bryman, 2018). Thematic analysis is an excellent way to determine people's thoughts and feelings about a particular topic or issue (Bryman, 2018). This study used thematic analysis to analyze similarities and differences in the participants' responses from the interviews and focus group interviews. The thematic analysis is presented in "Result & Analysis" (see chapter 6). In this episode, the research questions of this study were applied to the empirical. During the semi-structured and focus group interviews, audio recordings were used as a helpful tool to collect accurate data. The recordings were later transcribed using codes categorized into themes linked to research questions and previous research on gender roles to identify the critical issues related to the study's objectives. Example of such themes was: "The participant agrees with cultural structures", "The participant disagrees with cultural structure", and "The participants both agrees and disagrees with cultural structures".

Before the analysis, questions linked to the research questions were narrated. The questions included perspectives on gender roles in the household and the approaches to gender equality based on their previous education. An example of such a question was "When does the man help his wife in household tasks?", "Does the respondent mention perspectives on gender equality? What is the approach?". Thanks to this technique, many aspects emerged, providing further reflections on the study topics. After analysis, data from the two study villages, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were combined because of the similarity of the findings. The data from semi-structured and focus group interviews were analyzed and processed inductively to provide more knowledge and understanding of the study topics. The empirical data shapes the main building blocks of the study. The study aimed to focus primarily on empirical data, using the lens of social role theory as a valuable tool to understand patterns and behaviours. The purpose of this choice is to emphasize the participants' voices since their perspectives shape the foundation of the study.

5.5 Ethical considerations

Inspiration regarding research ethics was sought from the book "Social Research Methods" written by Alan Bryman (2018). The book shares a guide that every qualitative research method should adapt to, in ensuring full ethic consideration. Bryman called this guideline "Ethical

Principles”. These principals include informed consent, avoiding harm to participants, invasion of privacy, and deception. Other principles or ethical considerations are data protection, reciprocity and trust, affiliation, and conflicts of interest. To ensure true ethic consideration, these principals was implemented in the very beginning if this study. As previously mentioned, Bryman states the importance that researchers should anticipate and avoid consequences that could harm the participants. Therefore, the questionnaires used in this study were presented to members of BUFADESO in advance, who confirmed that the questions were not harmful to the participants. Before the focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews took place, Local authorities were informed in advance about the reason for the study. The reason behind this was to show respect and professionalism to government officials but also to avoid misunderstandings or illegal consequences.

The study also applied the Swedish Research Councils' guidance on ethical research practice throughout the entirety of the study using the four “Ethical Principles,”. These principals included the information requirement, the consent requirement, the confidentiality requirement, and the intentional use of the material were also considered during the processing of materials (Swedish Research Council, 2017.). The principles were adopted by respecting the study's participant's integrity, ensuring that all participants were treated equally and without any offence or forcefulness. Before each interview, the participants were provided with the study description and written consent forms. The study description included the purpose of the study, and the participants' rights throughout the study period. Written consent was obtained from all participants. Measures were taken to ensure all participants' privacy, respect, and dignity. Identities of participants in the focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews remained anonymous.

5.6 Validity and reliability

One of the most effective ways to increase validity and reliability is by using multiple sources of data. This method is known as methodological triangulation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Triangulation for this study was essential to overcome the weakness or inherent biases and problems that come from studies with a single method, one observer, and one theory (Yin, 2018). Therefore, multiple sources of material were collected such as previous research, theories, semi-structures interviews, focus group interviews and informal interviews. Using multiple sources is essential when seeking for validity (Cohen et al. 2000). The various sources

help strengthen the conclusions of the study object. By using these tools of triangulation, the study gained a clearer holistic perspective and increased the credibility and validity of the results.

Another essential step that researchers must take to improve the credibility of their studies is to be transparent about their relationship with the organizations and people they studied. For instance, as the author, I did not have profound knowledge about the SEMA project in advance. Nevertheless, staff from both BUFADESO and Vi Agroforestry were known to me. This study did not include any bias based on previous encounters with the two organizations. Instead, the study only represents the voice of the participants, using several quotations to ensure that it was their voice that shaped the study and not my own personal views. The study aimed to comprehensively summarize the data collected to analyze the finding by compiling data relevant to answering the research questions. Although my interpretations were often subjective, I tried to present the data consistently by presenting how specific sources complement one another.

Seeking assistance from BUFADESO in finding participants willing to join the study was an effective way to save time for the research. However, it also included risks for my study. Until today, I cannot be entirely sure that the questionnaires were leaked, and answers shaped in advance to reduce the risk of the project getting bad reviews. At the same time, it would have been difficult to contact the farmers myself since I had never visited the research before. Therefore, I decided to trust BUFADESO to contact participants on my behalf. This could also cause false data; however, I chose to bring with me a friend not related to the organization to verify the translation so that I could ensure full validity in the data.

5.7 Critical discussion regarding collection of data

During the analysis of the collected data, I came across some challenges. These challenges represent speculation regarding some semi-structured interviews with smallholder farmers and their validity. Throughout the semi-structured interviews, participants tended to share similar answers. The participants seemed to focus on satisfying me with answers regarding equality within the households. However, after coding, I noticed that the participants shared two sides of the story, which led to confusion in the data. A reason behind this might be that I, as a white young foreign woman came to these areas starting by asking them questions in their different roles in household, through a gender equality approach. It might have confused them in knowing what to answer and how. Alan Bryman (2018) writes in his book "Social Research

Methods" about the common obstacle in qualitative research, the so-called "reactive effect". The effect refers to changes in respondents' behavior due to their perception of being observed. Bryman explains that if the respondent changes their behavior, aiming to be viewed from a positive by the researcher, they must be viewed as atypical. Bryman explains that if a deeper relationship between the researcher and respondents is developed, it often results in the participants being used to the researcher's observations and therefore do not find the situation of being interviewed foreign. However, Bryman argues that the data can still represent empirical results since they have been observed through structural observations from their home, reflecting the reality of their everyday lives. From structural observation, I found a power dynamic between the participants from the project and the staff from the applicant organization. Using the lens of the social role theory, I noticed that these dynamics could have been based on the participants' fear of viewing the SEMA project wrongly or critically. Since this is just a speculative reflection, I cannot state that this was the actual reality. However, informal interviews with Tanzanians confirmed my hypothesis, meaning that organizations from this country, first and foremost, only want to be framed through a positive perspective, which is entirely legible. However, it puts pressure on the participants to not mention something that could reflect the project in a less positive aspect.

6. Result & Analysis

The data was analyzed with thematic analyses. The theoretical framework of the study, the social role theory, was used as a lens to draw parallels between the results from the empirical data using the four concepts of gender roles, gender stereotypes, social behaviors and cultural norms presented earlier. This section combines the empirical data results and analysis of the collected material. From analysis of data, I found three themes that clearly stood out, roles in households, divided attitudes regarding gender roles and perspectives on gender roles linked to previous teachings from the SEMA project. In this study, all participants received pseudonyms to secure their anonymity and numbers to easier trace each respondent (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Study participants

Respondent number	Pseudonyms	Gender	Age group
1	Mariam	F	25-50
2	Amina	F	51-70+
3	Alex	M	25-50

4	Sophia	F	51-70+
5	Grace	F	51-70+
6	Elsa	F	25-50
7	Joseph	M	25-50
8	Christopher	M	25-50
9	Ben	M	51-70+
10	Beatrice	F	51-70+
11	Lucie	F	25-50
12	Oliver	M	25-50
13	Flora	F	51-70+
14	Neema	F	25-50
15	Steven	M	25-50
16	Peter	M	25-50
17	Philip	M	51-70+
18	Joyce	F	25-50

6.1 The division of labour

This chapter focus on the first research question regarding how women and men describe norms linked to equality and gender roles in households

6.1.1 The division in household activities

During the semi-structured interviews with study participants, they were asked to describe their daily routines, from the time they wake up to the time they go to bed. In addition to the previous question, a follow-up question was asked regarding which household chores were done daily, by whom and if they had noticed changes in roles over the years. Most of the participants, both men and women, answered that their day starts between 5-7 am. The women participants tend to have similar patterns of daily routines. Most of them looked after the children and did most of the household chores such as cooking and cleaning. In their answers from the younger age group of women, they never mentioned taking time to rest. Mariam (R:1) is representative of these voices. Mariam (R:1) explains this situation in detail:

My day starts by me waking up at six o'clock and going to the farm. Not long after that, I come back home to start preparing porridge for my children. After that, I go and look after my animals. At noon I return home to prepare food for my children so that they can leave for school, and then I continue to look after my animals. When the children come back from school in the evening, they come to help me look after the animals and attend to small tasks. I am also a tailor, so I tend to sew clothes in the evenings. After completing my work, I finish my day by preparing

dinner for the family. After eating, everybody goes to bed. However, work tasks differ from day today. There are days when I wake up, and there is much work to do and other days when work is less. (R:1)

Mariam (R:1) gives us a good example of which typical household activities that women in Tarime performed daily. Her answer had similar connection to most of the women in the semi-structured interviews. In relation to her answer, we can draw parallels to the social role theory and the perspective on gender roles. From the collected data it shows clear division in the roles inside the household, whereby daily chores are one of them.

Women and men were asked about the different chores that were done in the house and by which family members. Most of the women described that they do most of the work at home. Amina (R:2), an older woman still performed daily household activities, even if she had passed the age of 70.

I usually attend farm work alone, except for weekends when my grandchildren join me. During the rainy season, I attend agriculture activities. During the dry season, I am busy with harvesting while much work is at home, and there is much time to rest during that season. When my husband was alive, there were some activities that he helped me [with], like cleaning the compound and fetching water, but there were some activities that he did not help me with, such as washing utensils, cooking, and milking cows. He was only doing it when I was sick or when I was not around. (R:2)

In response to Amina's (R:2) answer, both the men and women from semi-structured interviews confirmed that the division in household activities is that cultural norms are the primary source in creating gender roles which leads us to two of the concepts in social role theory. As described, women in Tarime District are primarily taking care of the home's household chores, including collecting firewood, cleaning, and cooking. The men, however, primarily focus on caring for the animals. The male participants argued that men in these areas could not even go to fetch vegetables from the kitchen since it is seen as a "feminine" task to do. Men reported that if men are seen doing the same activities that generally only women do, society sees it as shameful. As it seems from the data, cultural norms in Tarime hinder equal engagement in household activities. The answers from the respondents make us reflect on the valid reason behind gender roles and why they still exist. Analysis from self-reflection on the topic made me understand that one of the sources of why there still exists unequal engagement in household activities is that men and women do not [want] to help each other due to cultural norms. If one partner wants

to help the other with his or her tasks, it would probably be done secretly or not, due to "shameful" acts that society may judge. Judgment from society seems to have a stronghold in people's lives, whereby people act according to what "society" might see as acceptable. To understand this perspective deeper, I took help from an informal interview whereby Alex (R:3) confirmed that:

...Having a bad reputation in the Tarime area, or Tanzanian societies, often comes with many challenges. In most cases, people with a lousy reputation lack support and acceptance from other people, and it can even affect their chances of finding employment. Other members of society distance themselves from those with a bad reputation, often leaving them very lonely. (R:3)

To return to the topic of household chores. Sophia (R:4), a participant from the semi-structured interview, confirms my reflection on the fear of not engaging in "male" duties due to gender norms. "Sophia is a representative of living according to gender roles. She argues that there are tasks that women are prohibited from doing. However, the real question is "who" prohibits these tasks? Is it men, or is it cultural norms?

My husband has a polygamous marriage, so he does not help me in my daily activities. There are some activities that women are prohibited to do. For instance, in roofing of the houses, if there is no man or boy around, the tradition is to seek assistance from neighbors or hire a man to perform such activity. Ever since my husband married a second wife, he left me, so I had to use the money to hire people to help me with activities like roofing my house. (R:4)

Unfortunately, I never got the chance to ask Sophia (R:4) who sets these rules of gender roles. However, one can speculate and draw a hypothetical conclusion that old cultural norms make the rules from ancestors that have shaped the society, normalizing women and men being prohibited from performing specific tasks based on their gender.

Sophia's (R:4) answer on gender roles links to the participants' responses from the female focus group interviews. They argued that around the Tarime district, household labour is divided between men and women. Women are considered to care for household chores, such as cooking, cleaning, and washing clothes. Men are mainly responsible for caring for the livestock. The respondents confirmed my hypothesis regarding traditional norms. They expressed that these

responsibilities were linked to the tribe cultures in the area. One of the women, Grace (R:5), confirms this by saying that it is not acceptable for men to do such household work.

In our tribe, some tasks are only supposed to be done by men and other by women. The boys and men in the families are free. In their case, they can leave the house without anybody's permission. Unlike women and girls, it is considered misbehavior for a woman or girl to go out without a particular task to attend to. Many activities in the families are supposed to be attended by women and girls; activities include fetching water, cooking, and several other house tasks. (R:5)

Another woman called Elsa (R:6) explained that even as an adult she mostly stayed at home. "In two weeks, I only get one chance to leave the house".

According to Grace's (R:5) answer, gender roles are inherited from tribal traditions and costumes. The norms and traditions hinder women's freedom of unwritten rules shaped by their ancestors. Women, therefore, live under the control of these norms. If they would not live by the norms, they are seen as women who "misbehave", which could create tension for them within society and especially create a chance of being abused at the household level. The study will touch on the topic of domestic abuse later in a more profound matter.

Regarding the topic of household duties, most of the male respondents also responded similar to the female participants. One man named Joseph (R:7) stated that his day starts by looking after the livestock or engage in farm work, depending on the season. After these tasks, Joseph goes back to his home around noon to rest from the work while their wife prepares lunch for him and the remaining family.

I wake up at 6 am and start my day by going to the farm with my two wives. We return home between 9-10 am, whereby my wives go to the kitchen to prepare breakfast. While waiting for breakfast to be ready, I normally check the livestock. After breakfast, the women go to fetch firewood/water or go to the market while I continue to look after the animals, waiting for the children to take over my work after school. After lunch, I usually take a break to rest. If a woman is not present, I also stay with children. (R:7)

The gender roles in the households are yet again confirmed in divided household tasks.

Another man named Christopher (R:8) adds: "...After breakfast, I go to look after the livestock while my wife stays at home attending to household activities. I feed the livestock till evening;

I return home and rest while my wife prepares dinner." The answers from both Josef (R:7) and Christopher (R:8) confirm similar lifestyles, whereby the men care for the animals while the women focus on household activities. During the interviews, I was curious if switching gender roles in household activities was possible. Therefore, an additional question was asked, considering if the man could switch roles with his wife, leaving her time to rest and letting him attend to her activities such as cooking and cleaning. Joseph (R:7) answered the second question stating: "My wife has never asked me that question, and honestly, I do not think she dares to ask about it. However, if she is sick or not present, I will take care of such activities". However, again, cultural norms linked to society's perception of people confirms in Joseph's (R:7) answer, whereby he states that his wife does not dare to switch roles with him. An additional aspect could also be the fear of women sharing their opinions in front of men, especially their husbands. Even this topic is further analyzed later in the study. A man named Ben (R:9) from the focus group interview confirmed yet again the unwritten laws in the society of Tarime regarding gender roles in household activities.

Our tribe's culture does not allow men to cook, fetch vegetables or any other activities done by women. Men are not allowed to be near the kitchen if a woman is around. If someone sees a man attending female chores, society will see him as overruled by his wife. (R:9)

An exciting discovery was that every time these questions were asked to the male participants, before answering, they tended to laugh a little and were taken back by the way the question was framed. When asked the same question, female respondents asked if they could tell their husbands to cook for them and rest instead. They responded that they would be afraid to ask such a question and, frankly, that they had not considered doing so. This statement links to the response from Joseph (R:7). Both argue that women are afraid of expressing themselves freely. This confirms once again the role of some women in Tarime living by cultural norms whereby women remain at home, repeating their household duties day in and day out, without mentioning any complaints. However, if she wished to express any complaints, she might not do so in the end, worried about the outcomes.

6.1.2 Gender aspects of education

Amongst the many things that the SEMA project wanted to achieve was contributing awareness of the importance of education. When interviewing the participants, the majority agreed that girls in the past often missed the chance to go to school due to cultural norms. These norms

often wanted girls to remain at home working and preparing themselves to get married (in this tribe, young marriages are a common phenomenon and practice. Girls are usually off to be married a few years after being circumcised at the age of 12). One woman named Beatrice (R:10) represented these girls' voices, sharing why she never got the opportunity to go to school as a young girl.

When I was a young girl, other girls and I were not allowed to go to school. If someone got the chance to study, they did not reach beyond grade seven. But others like myself never got the opportunity to go to school. Instead, my parent's intention was for me to get married young so that they could get the dowry money. (R:10)

A fascinating aspect of this response is that the parents did not take Beatrice (R:10) to school for economic reasons. Instead of providing their daughter with proper education (including school fees), they showed more interest in receiving money by making sure their daughter got married as soon as possible. The participants previously blamed the cause of girls not going to school on cultural norms. That could be one reason. However, economic status does also play a significant role in this. Families that lack enough economic stability might find this an excellent option to increase their financial status. Families that already had a good income might have sent their daughters off to school. However, this is my speculations, but to blame cultural norms for preventing girls from receiving education might be an "easier" excuse than to admit one's financial status.

One of the women called Lucie (R:11) spoke widely about how her family members shared equal responsibilities in household activities, stating that her family did not go under any gender roles. Instead, everybody helped one another. However, when asked how many of her children had gone to secondary school or higher education, she pointed out that only her sons had. This led to an additional question, aiming to understand why the girls were not given the same opportunities as the family boys. "What was the reason you only sent your sons to secondary school and not your daughters?"

My sons are studying in secondary school because they will take care of my husband and me when they grow up, supporting us financially. However, the girls remain at home because they are needed to take care of household activities and farming. (R:11)

The answer from Lucie (R:11) made me go back to her previous answers regarding the shared activities in her household, meaning that all shared equal work duties. I, therefore, asked the woman again, clarifying what she previously mentioned regarding equal responsibilities:

You previously mentioned that everyone in your household shares equals duties and responsibilities. However, you told me that you only prioritized giving your sons a higher education than your daughters because of needed household labour. How does this add up to your previous argument on non-gender roles?

Knowing that the question was a bit too forward, fearing that it would cause the women to feel bad, I still could not help but ask since I desperately wanted to find out why.

When asking the question, I noticed that the woman was shocked and took time to process the question. The woman later responded with a hint of tears in her eyes: "I did not even reflect about that at the time...". Lucie (R:11) answers also show that financial reasons shape the decision of only providing boys to go to school. Here Lucie (R:11) gives us an example that she instead sends her sons to school because she already knows they will provide the family money. To understand this scenario deeper, I again took help from informal interviews with other Tanzanians. A man named Oliver (R:12) explained that:

One of the common traditions across Tanzania is that when a girl gets married, she "leaves" her family to start a new one with her husband and his side of the family. Some tribes, such as in Tarime, take the bride price very seriously. When the husband-to-be and his family have paid the bride price, the woman is seen as their "property" since they "bought her". This often puts women in very tough situations where they are limited to visiting their parents. Instead, the husband's family often take advantage of these women, leaving them with tons of duties to perform. In short, the daughter rarely provides money to her parents since she "left" them during the marriage. (R:12)

Thanks to this information, we can conclude that the reason behind unequal patterns in education might not entirely be based on cultural norms. Although it is one of the factors, however, economic factors might be a more significant reason for the problem. Boy, are by tradition, seen as family providers thought their lives, while girls provide the family with money by getting married.

6.2 Different attitudes amongst men and women on gender roles

This section presents the results linked to the second research question exploring if and how the norms and roles have changed during the years after the SEMA project. This episode will also analyze different attitudes between men and women on gender roles.

6.2.1 Challenges that women face in Tarime

One of the questions during focus group interviews led: "Which challenges do women face that men do not? Why is that so?". When asked this question, most women in the group all raised their hands, wanting to get a chance to speak on the matter. One woman named Flora (R:13) their answers argued that women experience high rates of discrimination, primarily due to frequent domestic violence, especially those in marriages. "Challenges that women face, unlike men, are women's discrimination. Further, she explained that women are beaten frequently in this tribe's society, especially those in marriages. "Women are discriminated to the extent that their hair is cut off with a machete by their husbands due to jealousy." She added sharing that: "Women in our society are treated as objects, not as human beings. Men beat us the same way as they beat the cows in their livestock". Neema (R:14), the district officer, confirms this argument saying that "Women in these areas are treated worse than animals". Neema pointed out that domestic violence is a widespread problem within the Tarime district, affecting women daily. According to Neema (R:14):

Domestic violence is normalized in these areas. Society has shaped men and women into stereotypical characteristics whereby women are seen as subordinate and men as superior. This gives men the freedom to do whatever they want with women since it is their "property". (R:14)

Neema's (R:14) answers link back to Oliver's (R:12) argument about the bride price and its power over women's lives.

Neema, (R:14) was asked the same question about challenges women face. She explained that even if men receive education on gender inequality, they still act like they are uneducated by exposing their wives to daily harassment in the form of physical violence:

Unfortunately, the majority of women that I meet in my work being abused by their husband do not report it to the police. Some of them are afraid to damage their marriage by reporting to the police since women believe that men cannot be blamed or charged for their actions since such

behaviour is normalized in society. Even if women report to local authorities as a victim of physical violence, they still will not receive the support needed. Since most of the decision-makers in the district are men, they also tend to agree with the rights of wife-beating. (R:14)

Drawing parallels between the social role theory and Neema's (R:14) answer, we can see that social behaviour create room for men in these areas to freely perform actions that might harm women without having to fear any consequences. Nevertheless, this is not the case for all men and women since every household is different. However, these arguments are based upon the empirical data provided by the respondents, providing us with an insight of how some household in the area is shaped. She also added that many women file for divorce as adults after self-awareness of how they have been treated their whole lives. However, life as a divorced adult woman in these areas is very challenging. "After filing for divorce, women are often left with nothing. The husband takes even their children". This answer shows that women still face the consequences, no matter which path they choose.

Neema (R:14) continued to share challenges that women face by stating:

...Another thing that women face culturally is that they are not allowed to eat at the same table as men. Cultural norms view women as working objects. A woman's job is to go to the farm, prepare meals, and clean. At the age of 12, girls are being circumcised and are married around the age of 15. In most cases, girls get married without any education.

She mentions cultural norms as an indicator, creating challenges for women. (R:14)

Her answers link back to previous answers in the study, confirming the structures that some of the women in Tarime live by. Female circumcision is indeed a problematic phenomenon, affecting girls globally every day. Neema (R:14) blamed the procedure on cultural norms. However, when asking men from the focus group interviews, they shared a different perspective.

One man called Steven (R:15) argued that female genital mutilation is still a popular tradition performed in these areas. "Female genital mutilation is still supported in Tarime, especially by men, because men feel more comfortable knowing that their wife is circumcised so that the husband does not fear his wife cheating on him."

Steven's (R:15) answer gives us another argument to reflect upon. According to him, female genital mutilation is still performed to minimize the chances of infidelity. This put men in a power position over women, where women are exposed to deadly procedures to please the men.

Neema (R:14) blamed cultural norms. However, after receiving the answer from Steven (R:15), female genital mutilation might be caused by social behaviors, whereby men once again aim to show themselves as "superior".

Other men from the focus group interviews argued that female genital mutilation would not change over a day. Instead, it will take years and years to be totally out of their cultural practices. However, even if the men did not express their personal opinions on female genital mutilation, they seemed optimistic that knowledge and empowerment could be a changing factor in putting an end to this. According to their answers, the men in the group argued that they were against female genital mutilation. One man named Peter (R:16) shared: "Female genital mutilation is harmful to women since it is a deadly procedure, sometimes causing girls to over bleed." The men's negative approach towards female genital mutilation could be because of their participants in the SEMA project. The project spoke about gender mainstreaming and women empowerment, whereby education was distributed to both men and women. The education may have increased awareness of the topic of female genital mutilation, which can be reflected in the male responses.

6.2.2 Decision-making on the household level

When asking the female focus group if a woman could be the head of the household, they responded that men are considered household heads because they take care of the families and supply every need. They also added that household heads have the power to make decisions in family matters. According to the respondents, they argued that men are the ones who are respected by society in decision-making, not women.

The men in the focus group interviews responded similarly to the women stating: "There is a male dominance in decision-making across Tarime". A man called Philip (R:17) argued: "The norms and attitudes here in Tarime do not see women [as] wise enough to decide on family- and community issues. Men are seen as the only ones capable of such actions."

The responses from both women and men reflect gender stereotypes towards women. According to the data, women are seen as less able to make decisions only based on their gender. This links us back to the argument previously stated by Neema (R:14) that the hierarchy of society sees women as subordinated and men as superior.

The participants were asked whether a woman could take place as the head of the house.

The men from the focus group interview stated that a woman could be the head of the household only if they were the one's supply needs for the family. The women participants explained that

there are some families where a woman leads the household. For instance, men that consume heavy amounts of alcohol are, in many cases, "incompetent" to lead the house, leaving space for the woman to "inherit" that role. Even from a community perspective, such men are not seen as capable household heads. The respondents also added that "Women in polygamous marriages or widows are often household heads since many widows do not get additional chances to get remarried, so they remain alone with their children as household heads".

From the respondents' answers, it seems as if the role of "household head" is not always perfectly gendered. Reflection on the matter makes one understand that if there is no man around the house, a woman is free to take the head of the house. There are only a few cases where a woman can be head of the household when a man is present. Either she has a stable economy, or her husband cannot lead the house due to drinking problems. However, no one of the respondents clearly stated that a woman could lead the house without these reasons.

Joyce (R:18), the district officer, argued that women rarely have any voice to speak their mind, leaving them no choice but to obey their husbands and therefore accept them as the head of the house. She further explained that even an educated woman still faces difficulties receiving chances to be heard. "Women in Tarime area are not allowed to express their opinions to cultural norms, especially in front of men. Therefore, women remain quiet instead of speaking their minds, fearing being affected by physical abuse."

When women were household heads were asked the men in the focus group interviews, they responded: "Men are made to be the head of the house; a man should guide the family in all aspects". The men argued that men are the ones who are responsible for supplying the families with basic needs, and therefore they oversee the family.

They also added that the only time a woman can be considered the head of the house is if her husband passes away and remains with the family property and lands. The men also added that women living in a polygamous marriage could also be considered the head of the house. Only because each wife usually has their own house that their husband visits. "If a woman is the one having wealth and supplies the family's needs more than the husband, she is supposed to be the household head."

However, the men explained that women are rarely are not seen as household heads because they lack financial capital. Linked to this statement, one woman from the focus group interviews argued that according to tribal norms, women could not own more than 100,000 Tanzanian Shillings (approximately 40 USD). This statement clarifies that women rarely have a chance to be seen as the head of the household.

6.3 Gender roles perspectives after the SEMA project

This chapter answers third and final research question, focusing on which circumstances changed perspectives on norms and roles in the two villages around Tarime. This episode also highlights future project improvements shared by the participants.

6.3.1 The women's responses

Most of the respondents from the semi-structured interview agreed that the impacts of the SEMA project in the two communities contributed to increased food security from technical agricultural skills using different methods of farming combined with agriculture. However, when asked about the impacts of gender equality and gender roles, they did not add many answers to it. The women from both semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews mentioned changes in their lives and within the communities regarding gender equality and gender roles. Grace (R:5) shared:

I thank SEMA project because it has empowered us and given us the knowledge to formulate Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups. After putting money, I receive shares with the profit I spent to buy goats and finish my house. This has led me to control and own resources without depending on my husband's support. (R:5)

Beatrice (R:10) added:

I thank the SEMA project for their work because many positive changes are witnessed, incredibly empowering women on leadership skills. We have women leaders at the village level with whom we can share our challenges more freely than male leaders. Before, when women had complaints regarding their husbands, the accusations were ignored because women were inferior; hence stigma continued in the community. (R:10)

...In my understanding, women's leadership is better than male leaders because even if you incurred gender stereotyping, you could explain freely even for shameful acts because it is a woman leader, unlike when you are reporting to a male leader. We are grateful that the SEMA project came to facilitate both men and women so that even women can be leaders. Luckily, we have female village leaders in our community. (R:10)

From the responses of the female participants, it is noticeable that the SEMA project contributed to more women's empowerment, especially in leadership positions, and the women's power over their own money. However, previous responses show that there is still a clear division in household labour, with women responsible for caring for the children, cooking, and cleaning, whereby men are considered to look after animals.

6.3.2 The men's responses

Most of the men from both semi-structured interview and focus group interviews stated that they are optimistic about the changes brought by SEMA, mainly regarding agriculture matters. However, they also recognize the impact of female leadership. They were also favorable of the government's law against female genital mutilation. However, during one semi-structured interview with participant called Tom (R:19) responded differently when a question on government interference in cultural practices was asked, whereby he answered:

I disagree with the government's interference with our tribe's traditions and norms, banning us from performing female genital mutilation! It is not good because the traditions were brought here by our ancestors; they should therefore be respected and practised. I am going to circumcise my daughters because it is our tradition. Even my wife thinks it is okay to circumcise women.
(R:19)

After his answer, Tom (R:19) could notice that his answer shocked me from my facial expression. As the interview proceeded, another subject was raised on women empowerment. This time, his answer was completely different from his previous ones. "...I am supporting women's empowerment in all aspects!"

This time, he wanted to show that he supported women in all aspects. Maybe it was his way of trying to "fix" the tension he earlier created. He answered that way to please me and the study. However, what he previously stated regarding female genital mutilation was his own opinion, which he stood by. Even if Tom (R:19) tried to change the interview course, it was clear that he strongly agreed with traditional practices linked to cultural norms and social behaviors. He clearly states that previous practices by ancestors should be followed and respected. In his opinion, he does not want to see a changing society, even though he previously received teachings on gender mainstreaming and gender education from the SEMA project. This clearly

states that cultural norms still have a firm hold on the society in Tarime. Even if projects tried to implement new approaches to equality, some participants still disagreed with these teachings.

6.3.3 Future implementations

Even if the SEMA project succeeded in implementing many strategies that benefited the communities around Tarime, the fight for women's rights and equality was still far from reality, according to my respondents.

Neema (R:14) argued that a significant issue in the area is the high poverty rates. She also explains that from her work experience, she witnesses a significant lack of uneducated people resulting in a society that stands still in social development practices. She argues that the main problem is the issue of gender-based violence.

Women and children are still being subjected to poverty and lack of education due to cultural norms and practices. Education is the key to dissolving these inequalities and developing power dynamics. Another woman from the focus group interviews argues that law enforcement is vital since the laws they have in present times do not protect or help women enough. (R:14)

The interviews and focus group interviews respondents agree that the SEMA project should have stretched over time. They should have focused more on these aspects of protecting women and educating the community on gender equality.

Joyce (R:18), the district official, agrees with this, saying that she experienced the project being too short. In her opinion, the project should have reached over five years, instead of only three. She argues that the timeframe is that if a project continues for a more extended period, it increases the possibility that society has a chance to change and develop from its old customs of oppressing women and blocking the way for gender equality.

“Flora” from the semi-structured interviews stated that for her society to have a chance to change, there must be more teachings on the disadvantages of harmful cultural practices. Future projects should also focus more on the older generation, providing them with teachings and perspectives on gender equality and women empowerment. She argued that the SEMA project did not have any significant changes on the older generation regarding this topic.

One positive outcome that the SEMA project implemented was for participants to visit another region. Respondents shared that it had a positive impact on many people since it allowed women and men to experience other tribe cultures in the country, which brought more self-reflection

amongst the participants from the project of their lifestyles, which inspired them to fight for a change. Most women had previously never gotten the opportunity to leave Tarime, therefore, they were unaware of other lifestyles.

7. Discussion & Conclusion

From the analysis of data, this study presented three main findings, all linked to the study's research questions.

The first finding, linked to research question one, stated that both women and men shared similar and opposite views on gender roles in household activities. While the women agreed on certain cultural norms regarding gender roles, they also argued about the unequal structures that exist within the household. The women argued that girls and women are more strained to leave the house without apparent reason. However, they stated that men have the freedom to do whatever they want. The voice of women is also strained within households. Women are afraid to express personal opinions since it can make their husbands violent. Some women were unaware or not bothered by the division of labour and the time they spent working while their husbands rested. Linked to the previous research (Feinstein et al., 2010), women in this study expressed that they were aware of the division but could not do anything to change it due to cultural norms and societal expectations. From the men's perspective, they agreed with the cultural norms shaping household activities. The men express that they do not involve themselves in "feminine" tasks since they fear that members of society will judge them as "weak". Similar linkages were found in previous research from 40 years back (Rodgers, 1983). These findings prove that even if the implementation of a gender equality perspective was provided during the SEMA project in Tarime, the social and cultural structures still had a firm grip on women and men in the area and remained unchanged. The empirical data findings link to the previous research (Mollel & Mtenga, 2000; Badstue et al., 2020; Feinstein et al., 2010). The previous research and the present data demonstrate that even if efforts by Tanzania's government and organizations to implement equality perspectives, norms and gender roles still have a tight grip on the rural areas of Tanzania. This leads to further reflections; Should future attempts spread awareness regarding equal rights in households stop? Do people in rural areas of Tanzania want to see a change? Are the government and organizations using the wrong methods or teachings that hinder a profound understanding of the meaning of gender equality and gender roles?

The second finding links to norms and gender roles and research question two. According to the first finding, gender roles are still active within Tanzania. Even though the participants of the SEMA project received teachings on equal responsibilities in the household, they still lived by the cultural norms that "prohibited" them from engaging in each other's activities. The main discovery was the connection between female genital mutilation and girls' education rights. These two were presented as cultural norms and practices. However, research findings showed that they were based on men's desire to eliminate chances of infidelity and the economic aspects of not sending girls to school. From this finding, we can understand that the reason for the division in education between boys and girls is not entirely based on cultural norms. Instead, poverty played a significant role whereby most parents chose to put money into something they knew would be returned to them later. Therefore, poverty and economics played an essential part in sustaining these patterns.

Regarding female genital mutilation, jealousy and personal preferences played a significant role. However, education has played an essential role in minimizing the number of girls exposed to female genital mutilation in the area. Parallels drawn from previous research and the present findings show that most of the study participants were optimistic about ending future female genital mutilation after receiving more education about it. The participants did not seem bothered by the cultural attachments to the procedure, which previous research from Yusuf and Fessha (2013) presented as such. Instead, the participants saw it as a discriminatory act towards women.

Lastly, the third finding, linked to the third research question, highlights the positive effects from the SEMA project which benefited the two villages around Tarime in empowering women to take control of their finances and conducting cross-culture meetings in other regions in the country, providing new understandings and perspectives on other types of lifestyles. Changes after the SEMA project resulted in that the women in the villages were no longer afraid to speak in front of men. SEMA also supported and helped women to create their own groups, supporting each other with minor loans. However, the goal for the SEMA project to reach equal societies and social harmony is far from reach but not impossible to archived. Both men and women respondents from semi-structured interviews and district officers clearly state that more education on women's rights is needed to prevent future practices of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and gender roles in household activities.

The European Commission was aware of the social structures in the project before starting SEMA. However, as they mentioned, the project did not try hard enough to reach gender mainstreaming. Most of the participants in the study clearly stated that further education on these behaviours and norms is vital for developing equal rights in the villages. The study participants argued that a two-year project is too short of implementing all the project can reach. Therefore, future projects such as SEMA are needed if all the goals wish to be reached.

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Appendix I – Interview guide 1, Women semi-structured interview (aged 25-50)¹

Q1: How many are you in your household?

Q2: How does your day look like; from the time you go up to the time you go to bed?

Q3: Which household chores are done during the day – by whom? Has it changed over years?

Q4: What are your views on governmental invasion, how has it affected your cultural traditions for the better/worse?

Q5: Which differences have you seen/experienced after the SEMA project. How was it previously? (Has it improved any of the following: food security, education, family, and social harmony)

Q6: The SEMA project wanted to promote gender equality with a focus on women empowerment will reduce cultural stigma and increase recognition of them in family and society. What is your opinion on this matter? Do you find it an important thing to bring awareness towards?

Q7: What is your experience about female leader and landownership?

Q8: Are there chores within the household that only women can/should do those men can/should not do, and vice versa. Why is that so, should/can it change? How does it look in your household?

Q9: What do you want to change within your community for the next generation?

Appendix II – Interview guide 2, Women semi-structured interview (aged 51-70+)

Q1: How many are you in your household?

Q2: How does your day look like; from the time you go up to the time you go to bed?

Q3: Which household chores are done during the day – by whom? Has it changed over years?

Q4: What are your views on governmental invasion, how has it affected your cultural traditions for the better/worse?

¹ All questionnaires were translated in Swahili

Q5: Which differences have you seen/experienced after the SEMA project. How was it previously? (Has it improved any of the following: food security, education, family, and social harmony)

Q6: The SEMA project wanted to promote gender equality with a focus on women empowerment will reduce cultural stigma and increase recognition of them in family and society. What is your opinion on this matter? Do you find it an important thing to bring awareness towards?

Q7: What is your experience about female leader and landownership?

Q8: Are there chores within the household that only women can/should do those men can/should not do, and vice versa. Why is that so, should/can it change? How does it look in your household?

Q9: From the time you were a child until today, how has women's role in the society developed? Is it something that you want to change within your community for the next generation?

Appendix III – Interview guide 3, Women focus group interview

Q1: Is there certain tasks within the household that are feminine/masculine, if so, which ones, and why?

Q2: Men is often referred as the head of the household, what does that mean to you? Can women be the head of the household, why/why not?

Q3: What has the SEMA project taught you?

Q4: What is your experience of foreign aid and development?

Q5: Is it something you missed from the SEMA project? If so, what should be added into the new planning of the project?

Q6: Which challenges do women today face those men does not face, why is that so and how can they be dissolved?

Appendix IIII – Interview guide 4, Men semi-structured interview (aged 25-50)

Q1: How many are you in your household?

Q2: How does your day look like; from the time you go up to the time you go to bed?

Q3: Which household chores are done during the day – by whom? Has it changed over years?

Q4: What are your views on governmental invasion, how has it affected your cultural traditions for the better/worse?

Q5: Which differences have you seen/experienced after the SEMA project. How was it previously? (Has it improved any of the following: food security, education, family, and social harmony?)

Q6: The SEMA project wanted to promote gender equality with a focus on women empowerment will reduce cultural stigma and increase recognition of them in family and society. What is your opinion on this matter? Do you find it an important thing to bring awareness towards?

Q7: Are there chores within the household that only women can/should do those men can/should not do, and vice versa. Why is that so, should/can it change? How does it look in your household?

Q8: What are your perspectives on female leader and landownership?

Q9: From the time you were a child until today, how has the equal right developed in your society? Is it something that you want to change for the next generation?

Appendix III – Interview guide 5, Men (aged 51-70+)

Q1: How many are you in your household?

Q2: How does your day look like; from the time you go up to the time you go to bed?

Q3: Which household chores are done during the day – by whom? Has it changed over years?

Q4: What are your views on governmental invasion, how has it affected your cultural traditions for the better/worse?

Q5: Which differences have you seen/experienced after the SEMA project. How was it previously? (Has it improved any of the following: food security, education, family, and social harmony?)

Q6: The SEMA project wanted to promote gender equality with a focus on women empowerment will reduce cultural stigma and increase recognition of them in family and society. What is your opinion on this matter? Do you find it an important thing to bring awareness towards?

Q7: Are there chores within the household that only women can/should do those men can/should not do, and vice versa. Why is that so, should/can it change? How does it look in your household?

Q8: What are your perspectives on female leader and landownership?

Appendix X – Interview guide 6, Men focus group interview

Q1: Is there certain tasks within the household that are feminine/masculine, if so, which ones, and why?

Q2: Men is often referred as the head of the household, what does that mean to you? Can women be the head of the household, why/why not?

Q3: What has the SEMA project taught you?

Q4: What is your experience of foreign aid and development?

Q5: Which challenges does your community face regarding equal rights, and how can they be fixed?

Appendix XI – Interview guide 5, District Officer semi-structured interview

Q1: Which factors must be before having a chance to beat poverty?

Q2: Which challenges do women today face those men don't, why is that so and how can they be dissolved?

Q3: According to the SEMA project, the aim was for women and youth to get employment from tourist business. How has it developed since the program?

Q4: Which challenges does your community face regarding equal rights, and how can they be fixed?

Q5: What are your perspectives on female leader and landownership, and how are local authorities working to embrace it?

Q6: The Tanzanian government have tried to implement gender equality in the rural areas across the country, how has that developed in Tarime?

Q7: The SEMA project aimed to provide a long-term improvement of food security, increased income, education, family and social harmony. Which impacts have you seen so far?

Q8: What are your thoughts on foreign aid in Mara-region? Any experienced that has led to positive/negative outcomes?

Q9: Should the EU continue to fund a new SEMA project? Should they focus on other needed areas within the society?