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## Intra-Household Gender-Labour Paradoxes amongst Tobacco Farmers in Kuria Region of Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*This study undertook to affirm that tobacco production significantly influenced intra-household gender-labour relations, especially considering the socio-cultural and socio-economic factors which in due course played an important role in the utilization of tobacco income at the household level. It emerged from the results that, the more the cultural reverence the more the gender division of labour and the more its functional ability, the more were the significant effects on households' economic welfare aspects. In addition, the division of labour in the farms became more gender arrogant as women took on tasks traditionally reserved for men in response to declining household gender relations and sensitivity. Majority of women thought of themselves to be in a worse position relative to men. They felt that gender differentials in access to resources increased their household difficulties. Kuria men increased pressure on woman to work even harder, especially in tobacco production without associated welfare benefits. The specific objective of this study was anchored in a question that sought to discern if tobacco production had significant effects on intra-household gender-labour relations in Kuria Sub-Counties. The objective informed a search for empirical data. The results therein proved that tobacco production had significant effects on intra-household gender-labour in Kuria Sub-Counties. This study was informed by the Structuration theory. Both cross-sectional survey and ex-post facto designs were adopted in this study. The target population consisted of tobacco farmers in the two Sub-Counties. Data were obtained through interview schedules and focus group discussions respectively. Sample size was 212 household heads. Multi-stage sampling procedures were applied. The unit of analysis was the household, the main respondent being the household head. SPSS was employed for data analysis. Both inferential and descriptive statistics were employed. Results indicated that the distribution of household work had bias on women, of which 91 percent of the respondents agreed, as opposed to men's household labour input at 8 percent. Specifically, tobacco labour input of men was meagre; standing only at 28 percent compared to women at 72 percent. Moreover, majority of the respondents at 97Percent confirmed that this gender rationale affected welfare at household level in Kuria Sub-Counties significantly.*

**Keywords:** Intra-household, gender-labour paradoxes, tobacco farmers and Kuria region

### **1. Introduction**

This study investigates gender dimensions in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties. Men and women farmers have different responsibilities in agricultural production systems, including tobacco farming (Lipton, 2005 and World Bank, 2007). These differences in gender roles are not always obvious, but depend on these gender roles being fully understood in cultural dimensions. Further, the authors note that agricultural production is the only realistic driver for mass poverty reduction and rural development in most of the developing world, and perhaps particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. This element is now accepted by many academics, international development organizations and national governments. Thus, gender dimensions witnessed amongst tobacco farmers bear the features articulated above, thereby subjecting this feature to academic inquiry. Studies by Wright (1983) and Guyer (1984) show that women have less access than men to critical productive agricultural resources and services such as credit and farm inputs. Even when national laws give men and women equal rights to own and control land, existing customary laws often prevent women from ever fully owning land. Consequently, an important advance in the understanding of agrarian change in Africa has been the growing realization that the transformation of regions through their incorporation into the international economy has rested on changes in key

domestic relationships. Gender relations in particular, households divisions of labour and rights over resources are critically important arenas in which economic change has been registered, acted out and often, struggled over. Cash cropping has precipitated and often, rested on changes in gendered divisions of rights over land, labour and products and in the nature of the domestic unit (Wright, 1983; Guyer, 1984).

A number of recent studies in Kenya have examined the impact of agrarian change on gender relations (Thomas, 1988; Mackenzie, 1990; Von Bullow, 1992; Sorensen, 1992). The work of these authors has shown the detrimental effects of commercial farming on women's power and authority. For instance, Von Bullow (1992) argues that the growth of commercial maize and tea production in Kipsigis society (in Kericho Sub-County), bringing in its wake commoditization and the introduction of private rights in land and labour, has adversely affected women's access to and rights in the means of production (Shipton, 1988; Mackenzie, 1990). In addition, Chacha (1999) argues that tobacco indirectly brought stratification in Kuria hierarchy so that women were to be further suppressed with it, despite the fact that they mediated through several social gaps to access tobacco resources in return for the labour they provided in tobacco production.

On the other hand, Heald (1999) takes up the issue of the decline of pastoralism in Kuria and argues that this process should not be taken as self-evident, that a decline in stockholding should be seen as a consequence of relative rewards of agriculture, population increase and environmental depletion. On the contrary, she argues that such a view ignores the fact that cattle were the first sector of the traditional agro-pastoralist societies of Kenya to become commercialized and, in the process, criminalized. Heald bases her argument upon a longitudinal study with survey data collected from the same homesteads between 1985 and 1995. Both surveys were designed to assess the effects of tobacco growing on emerging patterns of socio-economic stratification where she postulates that over the ten years there had been a 50 per cent decrease in cattle ownership. Further, Prazak (1992) indicates that within the homestead of the Kuria, social relations based on age, gender and kinship status ensure unequal access to productive resources, prestige, power, opportunities and control of the products of labour. The homestead is the basic social and economic unit in Kuria society and ongoing changes in the structure of domestic groups, pre-mature fissioning, increased polygyny, high birth rate and arrested domestic development are affecting the basic relationships that determine its productivity. This background has offered a good glimpse into the gender dimensions of the Kuria people, thereby understanding the various socio cultural and economic practices they embraced in the past and how contemporary agricultural changes have come into the community, in particular the new developments and investments found in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties have been highlighted and have formed the basis for launching this study.

## 2. Methodology

This study was conducted in Kuria (East and West) Sub-Counties. The site is located in south western Kenya bordering Tanzania. Kuria society remains one of the poorest Sub-Counties in Kenya despite being agriculturally lush (KNBS, 2009). The Sub County has an area of approximately 300 square miles and a population of slightly more than 230,000. The Sub-Counties have four administrative areas, namely: Bukira, Bugumbe, Nyabasi and Bwirege. The area is moderately hilly with numerous perennial rivers like Tebesi, Hibwa, Nyangoto, etc. The climate is tropical with reliable weather patterns. The area is re-known for its prominent agricultural activities producing both cash-crops like tobacco and coffee. Also, food crops like maize, beans and other cereals are produced in this area (KDDP, 1997-2001). This study adopted both the Cross-Sectional Survey and Ex-Post Facto designs. Firstly, the survey design entails the collection of data at a particular moment in time, which is reflective of the relationships and interactions between variables in a social study. It enables a cross sectional analysis. Thus, Cross-Sectional Survey design is utilized in examining the empirical evidence (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). Secondly, and by extension, this study utilized the Ex-Post Facto design. This is a design that avoids manipulation of data by the researcher. It functions through the collection of contemporary primary data in the area of study, based on information of previous occurrences (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The choice of this design was based on the assumption that gender-labour relations in tobacco production could be studied retrospectively. Thus, the two study designs were appropriate and exhaustive in their applications in this study. The target population in the two Sub-Counties was 230,000 people. The number of households was 42,681 (KNBS, 2009). The Sub-Counties have four administrative areas namely: i). Bukira 12,080 Households, ii). Bugumbe 14,093 Households, iii). Nyabasi 10,468 Households, iv). Bwirege 6,040 Households (KNBS, 2009). This study obtained a list of household heads from the chiefs and assistant chiefs guided by local informants. Particularly, the total population, which, according to Nachmias and Nachmas (2006) is the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specifications. Thus, such populations were stratified into four administrative units, named earlier. Both male and female headed households were considered as respondents of the study. Thus, households were selected methodically by the use of proportionate stratified random sampling, which was based on the households' population per administrative area. This technique gave each household an equal chance of being selected in the exercise. The absentees in the study were usually revisited or replaced by the neighboring households. Thus, this method was fairly representative. In particular, the study team visited every 201<sup>st</sup> household in each one of the administrative units in Kuria Sub-Counties. In fact, each stratum had its own 1<sup>st</sup> starting point. The order of the exercise was sequenced as follows: i). Bukira, ii). Bugumbe, iii). Nyabasi and, iv). Bwirege. Further, according to Best (1981) the samples served as adequate representation of the population about which the study wished to survey and generalise. The study used 0.01497 percent to arrive at the sample size. The sample size for this study was 212 households distributed as follows: i). Bukira, 60 Households, ii). Bugumbe, 70 Households, iii). Nyabasi, 52

Households, iv). Bwirege, 30 Households. In all, 126 respondents were male and 86 were female heads of those households, a total of 212 respondents. The sample size was used according to the tenets for sample threshold which states that 100 is the minimum sample size in an academic study (Kathuri and Pals, 1993). The unit of analysis adopted by this study is the household head. The respondents in this approach were households' heads or any household adult member appointed by the household head to respond on his/her behalf. This choice of the unit was supported by both objective and theoretical framework of this study. Pilot survey was conducted as a pre-test exercise in Suba region, an area that borders the Kuria people. This area was selected because it has many similarities with mainstream Kuria in terms of both population demographics and environmental dispositions. The major reason for this was to test the instruments of the research before the start of data collection exercise. The key factor considered in doing this was to detect errors in both Interview Schedules and FGDs especially in the sphere of sequencing and range of probing. In this effort, the articulations of Baker (1994) were considered, which state that between 5 to 10 percent of the sample size is a reasonable number for pre-testing research participants. Thus, 21 respondents participated in the pilot survey that mounted a maximum of 10 percent of the sample in this exercise. Consequently, this exercise led to the polishing of the instruments for accuracy and consistency.

At the completion of data collection the concept of Fulcher and Scott (2011) was invoked, which indicates that once data has been collected, it must be organized and presented in ways that highlight their relevance for theoretical interests that inform the research. Thus, at the end of data collection which involved 212 respondents, coding and entry techniques were utilized. This was a crucial step towards analysis, especially coding, which involved the conversion of qualitative data into numerical values that could be entered into a computer program. Hence, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to analyze the research data. The analysis involved both inferential and descriptive statistics. Further, this analysis utilized the inferential statistical techniques in which relations were explored between various socio-economic and welfare variables. In another case, descriptive statistics were applied, thereby using pie charts, percentages, frequency tables, histograms and bar graphs to illustrate the quantitative aspects of the results. Also, 5 percent significance level was adopted as required in social sciences, especially in taking care of marginal errors and mistakes in the process of data analysis. Besides, FGD data was analyzed by utilizing the tenets of Hollway and Jefferson (2004), an approach which analyzes data using "tell it like it is" common sense approach and evidence. This was done to pointedly verify and compliment interview schedules in 16 key question guides for FGD in the study. On the other hand, in order to observe and identify significant patterns of the study and to sequentially begin constructing the framework of thematic analysis, the articulation of Babbie (2009) was utilized to guide this aspect of organization respectively. Therefore, thematic analysis played a considerable role in analyzing FGD discussions. To this end, the supposition of Gomm (2008) which point out that thematic analysis is required for qualitative data was utilized. Consequently, these analytic approaches went a long way in anchoring and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, thereby producing valid results in this study.

### 3. Intra-Household Gender-Labour Relations in Tobacco Production

There are gender differences in the access to and ownership of property and agricultural implements in the developing world. This can be linked to the commercialization and capitalization of rural agriculture. The introduction of cash crops such as tobacco, tea and coffee in the developing countries has long term implications in society, specifically on socio-economic welfare disparity. This is the domain of men in Africa, thereby bringing about conflict of interest between the genders in the productivity of the capitalist economy. Hence, there is widespread socio-economic welfare disparity across the continent. This is a widely acknowledged view (Bulow, 1986). Therefore, this study shows that tobacco production particularly informed household labour allocations and welfare parameters in Kuria Sub-Counties.

Further, other studies indicate interesting developments, for instance, the American farming practices in modern times indicate that tobacco fields are managed through all the stages, from seedlings to harvesting mechanically. Although topping the flower and in some cases the plucking of immature leaves is still done by hand. Most tobacco in the U.S. is grown in North Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia (WHO, 2008). Many Native American tribes have traditionally grown and used tobacco. For instance, Eastern North American tribes have historically carried tobacco in pouches as a readily accepted trade item, as well as smoking it, both socially and ceremonially, such as to seal a peace treaty or trade agreement. Traditionally, tobacco was seen as a gift from the Creator, with the ceremonial tobacco smoke carrying one's thoughts and prayers to the Creator. In fact, tobacco has long been used in the Americas, with some cultivation sites in Mexico dating back to 1400–1000 BC (Goodman, 2005). Thus, this study did confirm that there was intensive labour in tobacco production amongst farmers in Kuria Sub-Counties, where all the stages of tobacco husbandry are done manually. The study also found out that there were no ritual values connected with tobacco farming in the household and society at large, except the gender-labour dimension and the income value that they accorded to the cash crop.

The purpose of affirming gender distinction in society argues that the actual physical or mental effects of biological difference had been exaggerated to maintain a patriarchal system of power and to create a consciousness among women that they were naturally better suited to perform domestic roles (Pilcher and Imelda, 2004). On the other hand, providing women with educational and employment alternatives to tobacco production will free them from harmful traditional labour conditions. It will also transform gender relations by empowering women to negotiate on their own behalf and increase economic influence in the household consequently giving working women more power (Kantor, 2003). There is a behavior tradition that focuses on how individual sex differences originated, whether biological or social in origin (Udry and Hoddinott,

1995). This study established that cultural notions were connected with tobacco production, especially in regard to gender-labour relations that influenced farmers' household income generating and power relations dynamics in Kuria Sub-Counties. This study also further found that women in Kuria Sub-Counties were not empowered educationally and socially, especially in matters of tobacco labour and income that was usually appropriated by men.

Gender is done in every social interactions, it seems naive to ignore the gendered selves and cognitive schemas that children develop as they become cultural natives in the patriarchal world. Gender is an institution that is embedded in all the social processes of everyday life and social organizations (Lorber, 1994). Another tradition emerged as a reaction to the first tradition and focuses on how social structures (as opposed to biology or individual learning) create gendered behavior (Epstein, 1988). Retrospectively, females have had less access to formal information and communication systems associated with agricultural study and extension. Thus, complimentary, conflicting and collaborative gender relations and roles may characterize developing countries' agriculture and rural development (Poats and Spring, 1988). Based on the above contentions, this study ascertained how gender was inculcated amongst the natives of Kuria Sub-Counties; this was especially in tobacco production activities. Therefore, this study emphasizes on social interaction and accountability to others' expectations and affirmed how doing gender has created and reproduced inequality amongst farmers in Kuria Sub-Counties.

The scenario in the developing world is indicative of gender-bias in agricultural activities. For example, in old China most of the countryside was backward and poor for many decades, since the farmers were exploited and oppressed by feudal lords, they lived in utter poverty. The women's position as compared to men was even worse (Quan, 1985). After 1949, at the foundation of new China, the government adopted a series of measures to protect equal rights of men and women. Women now, like men, are the masters in China. They have been active in participating in all sorts of agricultural activities and have shown their special ability in rice production. Women, like men have accepted responsibility for the fields and other intra-household activities. Women have become a very important workforce in the countryside, using modern technological appendages and disseminating agricultural education to all at the same footing with men. Now women account for 60% as compared to 40% of men in the total labour force in China (Quan, 1985). This study established that tobacco production relations in Kuria Sub-Counties, especially in gender household realities and handling social structures in general household organization were significantly affected by tobacco production. They had significant gender asymmetrical trends. The relations could therefore not be compared with other agricultural parts of the world like the case of china above.

Further, Lyda (1985) asserted that a decrease in female labour use in the Philippines over the period 1970 to 1980 occurred as a consequence of decreasing labour use requirements of operations in which women participate, for example, transplanting, wedding, harvesting and threshing. During this period, women's contribution to rice production declined absolutely and relatively. Men increased their labour use due to double cropping, because the typically male activities of land preparation and fertilizing increased with the crop area. These increases largely made up for the decrease in male labour use in other operations. However, women only saw that their labour was reduced. Furthermore, the spreading of harvesting labour over a longer time span meant that women's labour was no longer needed to meet high seasonal labour demand. Therefore, available male labour could be used throughout the harvesting season and partly be substituted for female labour. This study affirmed that female and male roles in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties were unequal; in fact, they had bias on women as it was typically seen the household division of labour, whereby certain farming activities were considered feminine while others masculine. The feminine tasks were considered lighter but numerous and done throughout tobacco production cycle, while masculine ones were considered heavier but fewer and done mostly at the initial stages of farm preparations. This was explicit in patriarchal gender spirit and practice at the household level and society at large in Kuria Sub-Counties.

On the other hand, Halim and Hussain (1981) have indicated that both rural women and men are active in productive work in and outside the household. Rural women are responsible for agricultural and non-agricultural activities just like their male counterparts. They do all activities as members of the same household or as workers/labourers elsewhere in addition to their usual obligations. Study results show that housewife's average productive hours vary from 10 to 14, whereas that of men varies from 9 to 11 hours per day. Gender cooperation is of essence in assisting both genders realize maximum potential and equal participation in all socio-economic activities. Similarly, they indicated that it can be realized that the moderate gender relations had minimized any apparent restraint on women by men in most aspects of life in Bangladesh. The Philippine experience is similar and sought to investigate the question of female participation in the production of food crops and other marketable goods in the Philippine villages. Although men are generally considered as the family's breadwinners, wives are often compelled to supplement male earnings to ensure the survival of the family (Mincer and Polachek, 1962). This study established that household responsibility was not fairly shared between men and women in Kuria society. For instance, gender-labour aspects in tobacco production hindered the weaker gender from realizing their full potentials in the process of tobacco production and the accrued benefits. These facts are exemplified in chapter four of this thesis.

Children in African households contribute to the labour supply and many households have large numbers of children. Driven by poverty, adults push their children to work on tobacco farms. They work long hours, stooped and for very little pay as labourers, sometimes being paid only each six-months or yearly, going without education and suffering from the adverse health consequences of farming tobacco (ILO, 2001). It has been reported that there is overall progress in gender-labour relations in various fields, but other areas for example agriculture is disturbingly slow. Although female entry like men, into some of the occupations such as professions has been quite rapid, the overall occupational distribution has only been

marginally affected by these changes. Most women work in occupations that have been traditionally female dominated and relatively few men have entered these occupations. Sex differentials in occupational distribution to date still remain substantial, but there is a need to investigate further into these aspects of labour divisions, most especially in rural agriculture (Mallier, 1987). Therefore, this study proved that division of labour in the household was actively biased on women, who basically acted as the major source of tobacco labour, especially in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties. Further the study confirmed that children were also made to work hard in tobacco production, and just like women, their labour was appropriated by their fathers in the household. All these happened under patriarchal hegemony that is well established in Kuria Sub-Counties.

In addition, Bababola (1987) has discussed the evil of polygamy and concubinage during tobacco harvesting seasons in Nigeria. There was a marked increase in income, thus enabling men to marry more wives so as to move up the social ladder. This ensures optimum supply of labourers for their farms. Furthermore, the monopoly of tobacco buying multinational companies is highlighted here. They pump more and more capital on tobacco farming to the farmers i.e. Loans for seeds, chemical sprays, and fertilizers who eventually repay the loan at high interest rates during the selling of the tobacco crop. It is the multi-national companies which pre-determine the tobacco grading system and selling prices. Most of the farmers due to illiteracy are highly exploited in due course, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Therefore, the commercial tobacco production has a double edged stance on the peasants, thereby destroying their rural gender-labour structures and exacerbating rural poverty. This study established that the practice of polygamy was also common in Kuria Sub-Counties and implied as a source of cheap labour in tobacco production.

Clear division of labour tasks exists in society; the sexual division of labour here seems not to be very rigid. Women can handle the plow if necessary and do other household chores as usual. Both the wife and husband spend about the same time on other economic activities (Tilly, 1978). On the other hand, Bernstein (1976) finds that the relations of production in the African rural context are highly gendered. The domestic modes are destroyed through gender differentials at work, hence leaving its individual cells, the peasant household to confront capital in a 'direction relation'. The tendency of the search for cash incomes in order to meet the needs of simple production is precisely to individualize the basis of simple production to substitute the household for community. This study has confirmed that division of labour is constructed at the household level in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties. The extent of gender divisions in the household leads to unprecedented welfare differentials. Hence the divisions in gender-labour obligations in the capitalist perspective were a constraint particularly on women.

In a similar contribution, Mitchell (1975) has propositions on gender development and sex typed behavior, which is a result of differential acculturation and reinforcement of boys and girls. And so, unambiguous gender role behaviors are acquired, just like any other human behaviors. Boserup (1970) commented in regard to rural agriculture. She pointed out that, where there is low female participation in farm work, extensive plough cultivation is proficient. In such a situation, there was little need for female labour except during harvesting seasons. Hence, the advent of the plough agriculture usually entails a redial shift in sex roles where men take over the ploughing even in regions where hoeing had formerly been a woman's work. At the same time, the amount of weeding to be done by the women may decline on land ploughed before sowing as the land will develop fewer weeds. Therefore, the plough lessens female agricultural burdens. This study determined how tobacco production activities informed the socialization process among the natives of Kuria Sub-Counties. Therefore, the study confirms that gender differences were an important feature in the household division of labour and was a hierarchically organized and practiced.

Moreover, Murdock (1949) maintained that, man with his superior physical strength can better undertake the more strenuous tasks in rural agriculture. This include, clearing land for farming, building, quarrying, etc. Not handicapped as the women by the physiological burdens of pregnancy and nursing, he can range farther afield to hunt, herd, till and trade. Women were at no disadvantage, however, in lighter tasks which can be performed by women in or near home for example gardening, weeding, harvesting, etc., they are known for their proficiency. Essentially, all known human societies have developed specialization and cooperation between the sexes along this biologically determined line of cleavage. As a result, the biologically determined explanation of gender-labour division can stand as an explanation of what Marx calls the 'natural division of labour'. However, it lacked adequate explanation for the changes in the division of labour over time when simple production relations no longer exist. The study proved that gender-labour changes were impacted by the commercialization of tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties. The labour practices were based on patriarchal assumptions that allocated household tasks on a gender stereotyped criteria.

The Kenyan dynamic in this regard explored into various literatures, for instance, according to Zarina and Davinder (2001) the gender division of labour, unlike sexual differentiation between females and males as such, was socially constructed and is further reinforced by education, training and societal attitudes. The construction of the division of labour is based on the perception of women as being there to serve and care for the family and community at large. Gender division of labour further constructs a family form in which the male head of the household is supposedly responsible for financial support of a dependent wife and children. This study affirmed that sexual differentiation between females and males in Kuria Sub-Counties was a source of differentiated labour input at the household level. This was even made serious by the intense demands of tobacco farming in the region, in which men played specific roles which were believed to be masculine but occasionally in the farm, whereas women performed tasks which were believed to be feminine but more regular in the farm.

Besides, Odhiambo (1997) has asserted that forms of women slavery in tobacco farms have been reported. This is a disturbing development, whereby women especially concubines were highly exploited in terms of labour by their male counterparts in tobacco fields. A number of social studies on cash crop production in Kenya such as Coffee, Kavetsa (1992), Tea, Korir (1976) and Wattle, Cowen (1975) have been made. These studies have often focused on the problems of production, marketing and the whole spectrum of commodity analysis. This study established that gender construction amongst the Kuria people denied women the opportunity and right to equal benefits as well as effective participation in the household economy. Further, the construction largely drew its cultural logic from patriarchal ideology.

Saito (1994) indicates that the Kenyan gender-labour divisions and relations by tasks are also breaking down. The farm women as compared to men are increasingly taking to tasks previously done by men. In fact, women now do most of the farm operations themselves with the supplementary help from family and hired labour. In Kenya for example, it is outstanding to have a higher proportion of women as compared to men, engaged in most of the phases of the production cycle of food/cash crops and livestock, in addition to their daily household chores. On the other hand, the distribution of labour for maize production by type of activity shows that 87% of women as compared to 54% of men participated in the regular work of ploughing, planting, weeding, and harvesting. Curiously, only 50% of women and 80% of men are involved in the selling and taking of the profits accrued from the crops. Therefore, this becomes a problem. Saito (1994) further explains that the unequal relationship here presents a sociological problem that is attuned with the focus of this study. And so, this literature may be a good source of reference for the methodology and theoretical approach essential for this study. Similar patterns of the division of labour in the traditional societies living in western Kenya today show some regional variations, but the general pattern is very much the same. The main differences seem to be related to the pattern found in most communities, namely, men are responsible for animal production, the cattle, and women were the daily workers in the cultivated crop fields. Further, patterns show that men are responsible for the kind of work in agriculture involving physical strength in short peak periods, thus women were the real cultivators. Once the land is cleared and ploughed by men, it is women who do the planting, weeding, and harvesting, and finally, men intervene during the selling of the crops so as to appropriate the profits accrued. Therefore, the study of labour relations above including the intra-family labour relations, naturally led to the analysis of the special work conditions of women as compared to men. This is double exploitation of peasant women relative to that of the peasant men. The general trend here is that, for most African rural communities men control and own land. This means that men own land and land is inherited by male descendants. A man who owns the land may dispose over the land and allocation of food and cash crops and what types to be grown, as he was the decision maker. This study determined that there were changes in household labour relations, for instance, women were taking on more masculine tasks in the farms, especially in tobacco production in Kuria Sub-Counties. It also emerged that men did less farm work thereby disadvantaging women in household tasks and responsibilities.

Consequently, Susan (1994) has strongly expressed the view that, human behavior is modified by modeling and reinforcement, whereby human behavior is modified by its own consequences. The behavior that receives approval is likely to be repeated and one which is punished is less likely to be performed again. Reinforcement of gendered behavior in the family and at the societal level through observation and initiation of others socializes the children into their socio-cultural milieu. This study affirmed that cultural gender dimensions were well socialized in Kuria Sub-Counties. It is men who meticulously ensured that gender values prospered and gave advantage to them.

Gender-labour relations in agricultural production in most parts of the world are socio-culturally rooted and stratified. Household tasks are allocated on the basis of a gendered criterion. However, most studies done in this area are discipline bound thereby disregarding the complexity of gender-labour relations, especially in tobacco production in areas like Kuria Sub-Counties. This is manifested in asymmetrical power relations between women and men, particularly recognized in stereotypes in the access to and control over household resources. Thus, it is on the strength of this background that this study was undertaken. The social dilemma in this study was that household gender-labour relations were affected by tobacco production, which eventually affected other important household features such as socio-economic status and welfare necessities amongst tobacco farmers in Kuria Sub-Counties. Therefore, at the onset, this study investigated how tobacco production dynamics operated at the household level, mainly premised in gender-labour relations, anchored in socio-cultural practices. These terminate in how their interactions informed household welfare.

#### 4. Results

Results of this study reveal that men mainly performed herding, which accounted for 85 percent (180) followed by gardening at 9 percent (19) while those who combined herding and gardening were at 6 percent (13). This finding has implications on gender-labour relations, for instance, herding could be considered a masculine household activity, thereby performed by men as their major contribution to the household economy. Further, this is compared to gardening which could be considered to be a feminine household activity but with numerous difficult activities. In fact, results show the specific tasks performed by women in Kuria Sub-Counties. Women did gardening at 53 percent (113), house chores occupied 40 percent (84), Herding 1 percent (2) while those who combined both gardening and house chores were 6 percent (13). The percentages above indicate that intra-household labour had a gender dimension. The tasks performed by women above, clearly show how they typically combine their daily household chores and tobacco farming that is a major economic activity. For instance, at the height of tobacco farming husbandry, they spend most of their time in the farm and partly in the household chores. Thus,

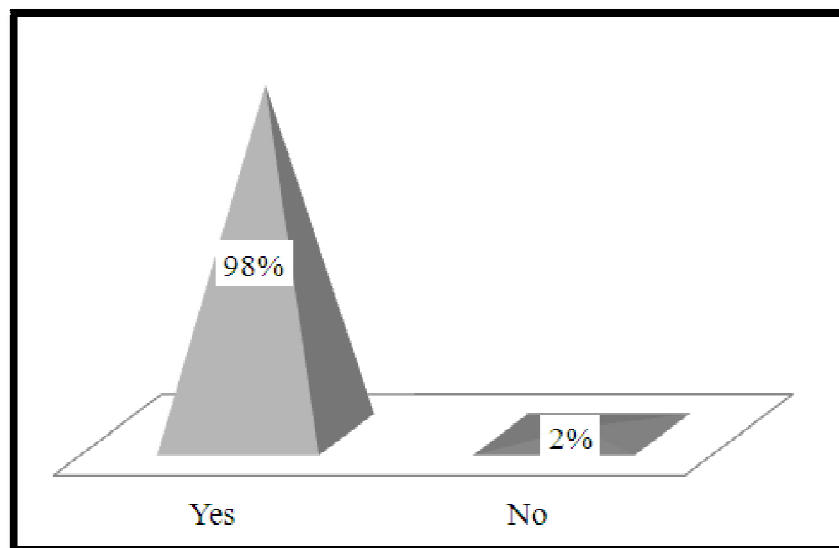
gardening/farming becomes a significant role played by women in the households' gender division of labour. In addition, FGDs were mounted as an alternative source of data to either compliment or disagree with the quantitative data. In this case, it proved that gender is a strong factor in tobacco production and continues to be upheld in Kuria Sub-Counties.

"Labour was traditionally undertaken at household level among family members"  
 "Cultural dimensions affected household gender-labour relations"  
 "Gender notions are in the middle of gender-labour relations"  
 "Child labour is an important factor in the labour input of tobacco production, the more children the easier the work"

*Figure 1: Summary of Regional Excerpts on Intra-Household Labour Relations*  
 Source: Field Data (2015)

The findings of the FGD above illustrate and compliment the earlier argument, in which the two genders play differentiated roles at the household economic activities. On the other hand, FGDs inform this study that child labour is a significant contribution in tobacco production. In fact, one of the respondents alarmingly reported that children contributed immensely in tobacco farming activities in which both boys and girls are allocated various workloads depending on their genders respectively.

Besides, results indicate that 91 percent (194) agreed to the question on whether times had changed in Kuria Sub-Counties and whether it was female biased. Some 8 percent (17) thought it was male biased and 1 percent (1) agreed that household labour structures had changed generally, especially in the attitudes towards masculinity and femininity of household farming duties in Kuria society. It seems then that tobacco production has altered labour dimensions in which women were made to work more in feminine activities compared to less male activities.



*Figure 2: Tobacco Farming Affected Intra-Household Relations*  
 Source: Field Data (2015)

Research results show above that tobacco affected intra-household relations at 98 percent (209), while 2 percent (3) indicated that they were not affected. Thus, it emerges clearly that the effects of tobacco production were felt by majority of the households in Kuria society. The farm labour input of men was meager; standing only at 28 (60) compared the women at 72 percent (152) as illustrated below.

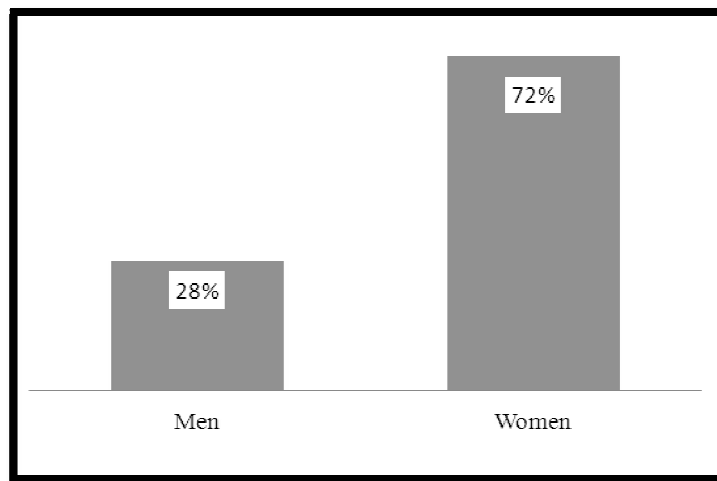


Figure 3: Comparison between Men and Women in Tobacco Farming Labour Input  
Source: Field Data (2015)

Basically, this had implications on households division of labour which was skewed to the disadvantage of women in Kuria Sub-Countries. Both masculinity and femininity played crucial roles in work allocations and participation in tobacco production. Clearly, findings agree with this postulation. Thus, it is apparent that gender percolates every farming activity amongst men, women and children throughout the entire period of tobacco crop husbandry. Without doubt, gender cultural sentiments seem to be actively involved in sustaining this gender ideals and realities in Kuria Sub-Countries. Results show the respondents' rationale for such divisions of labour. For instance, as indicated below 53 percent (107) respondents agreed that division of labour was based on biological differences, while 47 percent (105) of the respondents explained that the divisions were socio cultural.

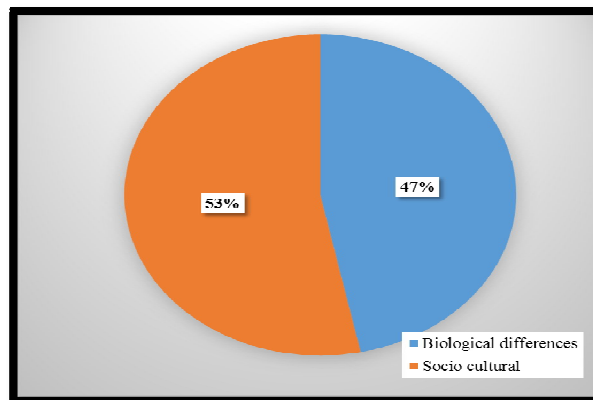


Figure 4: Rationale for Such Divisions  
Source: Field Data (2015)

Thus, in this scenario, the division of labour seemed to be shaped up by the above sentiments and the real implications are on intra-households' relations and the subsequent welfare aspects. The effects of the labour rationale are illustrated, for instance, some 98 percent (207) respondents indicated that the rationale affected them moderately, whereas, 2 percent (5) indicate that the rationale affected them either significantly. Hence, this shows that division of labour is well inculcated along gender notions amongst the Kuria people, which explain how such practices are widely practiced and accepted in Kuria Sub-Countries. Besides, the FGDs (illustration attached below) were conducted in order to help weigh both quantitative and qualitative data of this study respectively. In fact, men have great control of household labour input as well as other spheres within the household.

"Division of labour was actively controlled in the household by men"  
 "Women played a major role in tobacco production under the guidance of men"  
 "Gender differentiations exercised in household tobacco labour practices"

Figure 5: Summary of Regional Excerpts on Gender Division of Work and Its Control  
Source: Field Data (2015)



This study confirms that this notion exhibits the significance of patriarchy in Kuria Sub-Counties. For instance, in all the 3 responses acquired from both men and women respondents, they indicated that men maintained labour control in the household - men are the superiors in workload distributions and control at the household level. On the other hand, 100 percent (212) respondents indicated that tobacco farming had led to widespread polygamy and concubinage in Kuria Sub-Counties. This seems to be a stable source of labour, implying that more wives and children implied a greater source of labour. It was also regarded as a source of social prestige, especially amongst the more active farmers who generate a lot of household income. In addition, research results as illustrated below indicate that tobacco farming had led to polygamy in Kuria Sub-Counties. 88 percent (187) indicated that it was a source of labour, while 12 percent (25) asserted that it was due to cultural family growth. Thus, it is evident that polygamy plays a vital role in tobacco farming activities, especially in labour provision in Kuria Sub-Counties.

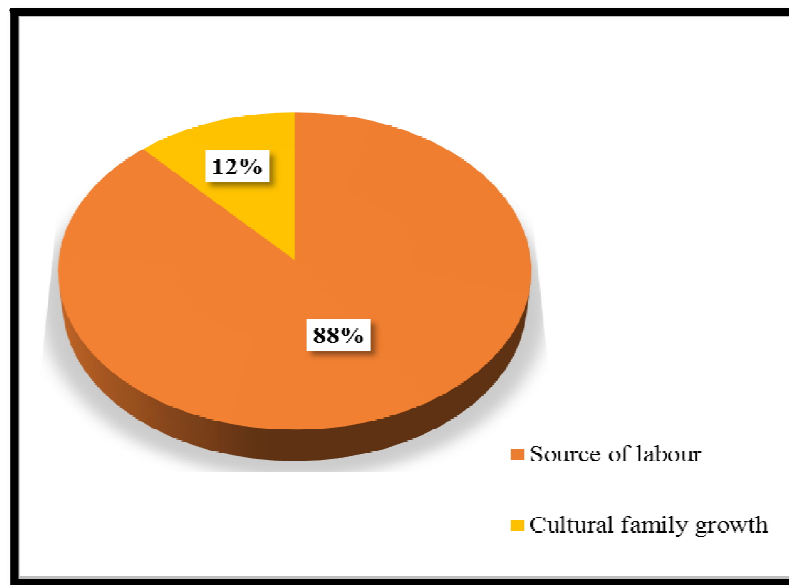


Figure 6: Explanation as to Why Tobacco Farming Has Led to Polygamy  
Source: Field Data (2015)

The working hours bothered 93 percent (198) of the respondents while those who indicated that they could not enjoy the benefits were 7 percent (14). These statistics quantitatively gives details the intensity of tobacco farming, most particularly, the household labour input that bothers majority of the members.

	Frequency	Percentage
Long working hours	198	93
Can't enjoy the benefits	14	7
Total	212	100

Table 1: Aspects That Bother Most in Tobacco Work  
Source: Field Data (2015)

Seemingly, this hard work seems to have less corresponding welfare benefits, as will be illustrated in the subsequent sections. Tobacco work was intensive and difficult indeed. Responses from the participants further described other gender difficulties involved in tobacco production. Thus, from the aforementioned, this study deems tobacco production as one which has imposed unique labour demands amongst Kuria farmers. Gender-labour relations in tobacco production exhibited particularly peculiar characteristics that results of this study confirmed. Basically, traditional Kuria labour practices entail that each gender as well as each age category performed different household economic roles. Besides, it also emerged in FGDs results that children played a major role in tobacco production. On the other hand, men also did their part of labour but largely below the contributions by women in the farm activities. 100 percent of the respondents agreed with this assertion.

Drawing from results, the distribution of work had bias on women. Thus, it was women who labored in tobacco production the most as echoed below in the excerpts.

*"Gender-labour input had intensified in tobacco production"*  
*"Male household heads had bias on female counterparts"*  
*"Men have discretion on labour allocations in the household"*  
*"Men's dominance is prevalent in the household control"*

Figure 7: Summary of Regional Excerpts on the Difficulties Involved in Tobacco Production  
 Source: Field Data (2015)

Besides, FGDs results above broaden the understanding of gender difficulties in tobacco production, especially in socio-economic fronts. This involves areas such as participating in tobacco production in gendered labour environment on long term basis, with unpleasant welfare consequences in the household, in which women were disadvantaged. This was mirrored in FGDs results which affirmed that cultural gender-labour input had intensified in tobacco production and with a bias on women.

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