

WOMEN IN THE TANZANIAN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

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INTRODUCTION

Women extension workers in Tanzania came into the picture of the renowned male dominated agricultural extension service to provide information to farmers in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Women who took agricultural training in the MATI system were employed and joined their male colleagues in the villages. Their specific extension job descriptions (duties) were genderless and likewise their salaries.

Because of the higher number of Women farmers, it was felt that more women extension workers were needed. Efforts were made by the then Ministry of Agriculture to allocate more places for Women in Agricultural and Livestock Training Institutes. Over the years their work performance was not questioned. However, by mid to late 1970s studies were made to determine the perception of both male and female extension workers in the extension service. In a study on the perception of Agricultural Extension Service, Ibrahim and Lawrence (1979) observed a striking difference of opinion between male and female extension workers. Female extension workers strongly agreed (mean 4.21) whereas males were somewhat less enthusiastic (mean 3.08) with respect to the statement that female extension officers perform as competently as male extension officers in the villages. And that male and female extension officers need to work in the villages whereas employers (mean 3.57) expressed indifference.

This paper is another attempt to make an overview analysis of Women training in agriculture, the role played by women extension workers; how many there are, where they are in Mwanza, Shinyanga, Mara and Morogoro regions. Their qualification, placement—village or at district head offices, and how their performance is perceived by their supervisors.

The information contained herein was collected through a mailed questionnaire to the RALDOs and DALDOs in Mwanza, Shinyanga, Mara and Morogoro regions. Also information on women recruits and enrols into the MATI/LITI system for five years 1985 - 1989 was sought by mail correspondence, and personal conversations.

1. **Students Recruitment for Training in Agriculture and Livestock Production (1985 - 1989)**

The total number of female recruits into Certificate and Diploma courses offered by MATIs-Ukiriguru, Nyegezi, Tumbi and Ilonga and LITI Morogoro in the 1989/90 intakes included fewer female candidates varying in numbers from one institute to another. There were only 11 out of 274 students recruited for LITI Morogoro which is equivalent to 4 percent; and 138 out of 412 recruited for MATI Ilonga which is equivalent to 33.7 percent. The total number of female candidates for the five institutes for five years was 378 out of 2425 which is equivalent to 15.6 percent.

Three reasons were advanced for low female candidates recruited for agricultural training in the MATI and LITIs. First the Ministry does not get the number of pre-service female candidates requested for joining agricultural training. Secondly not all female candidates called for interviews attend in-service selection interviews. Third, even those female in-service candidates who are selected after the interviews some fail to take the offer because of family commitments and occasionally due to other feminine responsibilities.

2. Enrolment of Women into MATIs and LITIs compared to men 1985-1989

There has been lower enrolment of female students in 1985-1989 period. During this period the women/female enrolment ranged from 5.4; 7.9; 17.5; 23.9 to 35.5 percent of the total enrolment at LITI Morogoro and MATIs Nyegezi, Ukiriguru, Tumbi and Ilonga respectively. This was an average of 17 percent for the period under review.

Table 1. Enrolment of Women Into MATIs/LITIs Compared to Mean 1985-1989.

Institute	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		Totals		Percent			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Female			
Ukiriguru	90	16	83	19	99	20	80	23	92	16	444	94	17.5 (538)			
Nyegezi	123	11	110	12	117	14	105	6	92	4	547	47	7.9 (594)			
Tumbi	52	8	32	14	43	17	53	12	35	17	216	68	23.9 (284)			
Ilonga	41	18	74	28	48	34	53	32	46	32	262	144	35.5 (406)			
Morogoro	103	0	44	5	86	1	43	6	72	8	348	20	5.5 (368)			
Sub-total	409	53	344	78	393	86	334	79	337	77	1817	373				
Total											(462)	(422)	(479)	(413)	(414)	(2190)
% Female											13.0	22.7	21.9	23.7	22.8	17.0

3. Enrolment of Women by Courses

An analysis of women enrolment in various courses offered in the MATIs and LITIs revealed that certain specialised courses have not registered female students at all. No particular reasons have been given. This same trend affects certain degree options at the Sokoine University of Agriculture, implying that women are quite choosy when selecting disciplines for training. In his review of enrolment in the Agricultural Education and Extension option at SUA, Mattee (1988) observed that:

Since the option was established no single female student has joined it; which is unfortunate considering the fact that over 50 percent of our extension clientele consists of women.

Table 2 shows the enrolment of female students in courses offered at MATIs Ukiriguru, Nyegezi, Tumbi and Ilonga and LITI Morogoro.

Table 2. Female Students Enrolment by Courses 1985 - 1989.

Institute	Courses	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	Total
Ukiriguru	Certificate in Agric.	6	7	15	13	9	50
	Diploma in Crop Produc.	10	12	5	10	7	44
	Certificate in Agric.	11	10	11	5	4	41
	Diploma in Irrigation	-	-	2	1	-	3
	Diploma in Land Use	-	2	1	-	-	3
	Diploma in Agromechanics	-	-	-	-	-	0
Tumbi	Certificate in Agric.	8	14	17	12	17	68
Ifoga	Certificate in Agric.	18	16	22	17	19	92
	Diploma in Food Production & Nutrition	-	12	12	15	13	52
Morogoro	Certificate in Tsetse	-	-	-	-	-	0
	Certificate in Animal Husbandry	-	5	1	6	7	19
	Diploma in Range Management	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total		53	78	86	79	77	373

It could be urged that the disciplines which registered no female students are those which by nature involve a lot of field work. It is not known why no females opted for Agricultural Education and Extension at the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). However, Mattee (1988) suggested that:

The curriculum will need to address women's issues especially those related to Agricultural production. There is also a need to recruit more female staff members in the department so that they can take a lead in this endeavour; and can act as role models for students:

Nonetheless, if this trend continues i.e. women decline taking the option how then are we ever going to get high calibre women extension workers.

4. Women Extension workers in the Districts as at November 1, 1990

Responses to the question on the number of women Extension Workers in the survey districts compared with their male counterparts revealed that their numbers varied by districts ranging from 1 (2.7 percent) in Meatu up to 16 (15.5 percent) in Kilosa district (Table 4). It seems this is a reflection of the effects of lower enrolment of female students in the MATIs and LITIs as shown under Table 1 and 2.

Table 3. Women Extension Workers Compared to Male Extension Workers by Districts (November 1990).

District	Total No.	Male No.	%	Female No.	%
Sengerema	58	51	87.9	7	12.1
Geita	54	51	94.4	3	5.6
Kwimba	63	58	92.1	5	7.9
Magu	65	54	83.1	11	16.9
Musoma	68	59	86.8	9	13.2
Meatu	37	37	97.3	1	2.7
Kilosa	103	87	84.5	16	15.5
Total	448	396	88.4	52	11.6

The lower number of Women Extension workers in Meatu made it impossible to make comparisons between women and male extension workers performance, and offer of training opportunities.

Positing of Extension Workers in Rural and Urban Centres

The results from respondents indicated there were fewer women extension workers at District Head Office/Urban Centres compared to their male counterparts with a range from 0 in Meatu to 10 in Kilosa.

With the exception of Meatu (which has only one woman extension workers), Musoma and Kilosa districts, other districts interviewed placed most female extension workers in the villages. This contradicted the DALDOs opinion that women do not like Agricultural Field Worker because they think field activities are for men, and that is why there are fewer women extension workers compared to men.

In Geita, the general physique and health status of women extension workers made them quite choosy. In other districts married female extension workers whose husbands work in urban centres are posted in or near urban centres. Otherwise, there are no gender influences in posting extension workers.

Classification of Extension Workers according to qualification and specialization

A review of the extension workers in the districts involved in the survey gives a mixed grill of about 336 agricultural and Livestock Field Attendants or Auxiliaries (AFA/ALF). These by the Ministry's definition are not extension workers because for one to be an extension worker he/she has to have a minimum qualification of a certificate in Agriculture or Livestock Production. Information collected from the seven districts shows that out of 789 Agricultural and Livestock staff in the surveyed districts 336 were AFA/ALF who are not extension workers by Ministry Standards. Of the remaining 453, 251 were certificate level extension workers of whom only 26 or 10.4 percent were women. There were 184 diploma level extension workers of whom 30 or 16.3 percent were women while of the 18 graduates non-was a woman. This means of the 453 extension workers only 56 or 12.4 percent were women.

5. Comparisons of Field Performance between Male and Female

An earlier study revealed that female extension workers strongly believed that they perform as competently as male extension workers. While male extension workers were somewhat less enthusiastic.

In this survey the field performance of male and female extension workers was rated better for male in Kwimba, and Sengerema districts. In Kilosa and Geita their performance is considered the same although in some cases female field performance was affected by family responsibilities. In Magu district the respondent was of the opinion that the difference in field work performance was perseverance where females get tired faster than males and so cannot cover longer distances e.g. 36 km.

Women extension workers performance was rated very good in their dealings with Youths Groups in Sengerema and Magu districts and rated fair to average in other districts. The only reason given for lower ratings on female performance is the effect of social and family responsibilities.

In Magu districts family commitments in child care and household chores for married females took about 50 - 60 of time of extension work. The parameters used to arrive at this rating were not explicitly clear. The average number of years of service ranged from 4 years in Meatu to 30 years in Sengerema for male extension workers. While for female extension workers was 8 years in Musoma to 26 years in Sengerema.

6. Farmers' perception of the service rendered by Female Extension Workers

In Kwimba district female extension workers were perceived in the same way as their male counterparts although farmers took longer to positively accept female extension workers. In Kilosa females were considered more theoretical than practical.

In Geita and Magu they were perceived to perform just like their male counterparts, and differences, if any, are attributed to personal approach; while in Musoma the respondent could not tell the difference in performance.

7. Opportunity for Training

All respondents with the exception of Sengerema district were of the opinion that female extension workers have the same opportunities to training while in Sengerema they stated that female extension workers were not give equal training opportunities.

Supervisor's Preference of Extension Workers. With the exception of Geita District, Supervisors preferred females to male extension workers because they are easy to handle, the rest preferred male to female extension workers. They stated that male extension workers are hardy, tolerant and are full-time on the job. They can work anywhere regardless of marital status, locality and social interactions. Whereas female extension workers' services are sometimes selective and interrupted by family and motherhood responsibilities.

IMPLICATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this survey revealed quite vital concerns for extension services and decision makers:-

1. There are fewer female students offered training opportunities in agriculture and livestock production. Females were only 15.6 percent of the total recruits for the 1995/96 through 1998/99 academic years. The smaller number of female candidates

is due to lack of necessary qualifications for joining the MATI/LITI system.

2. There are fewer female students enrolled in the MATIs, and LITIs where they made only 17 percent of the enrols during the 1985 through 1989/90 academic years.

3. The number of female extension workers in the districts also compares unfavourably to male extension workers. In the surveyed districts female extension workers made only 11.6 percent.

4. The survey also revealed that there were no graduate level female extension workers in the surveyed areas implying that we may not get graduate level female extension workers in these areas for quite sometime.

5. Female students are quite choosy when it come to selecting disciplines for training. No female students registered for Diploma in Tsetse Control and Agromechanization, while very few enrolled in the Range Management, Land Use and Irrigation disciplines.

6. The continued low intake of female students has one obvious implication; and that is, the extension service is and will continue to be "male dominated profession" which is unfortunate considering the fact that the majority of farmers in Tanzania are women.

7. Feminine roles to some extent affect the performance of female extension workers. The majority of extension service supervisors preferred male to female extension workers, because males are known to be hardy, tolerant and are full-time on the job. They can work anywhere regardless of marital status, locality and social interactions.

8. This survey also revealed that there are virtually no gender consideration in the placement of extension workers in the villages or urban centres, and that there are no big differences in field performance between female and male extension workers.

9. Nonetheless there is a need to conduct an intensive study on the effect of existing curriculum of Training Agricultural Extension Workers and determine whether it is appropriate for female extension workers in light of feminine roles.

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