



Role of Women in Agriculture

S. Sakthi Ganga¹, D. Sornamugi²

^{1,2}II M.A. English, Sri Sarada College for Women (Autonomous), Tirunelveli-11

Email: sakthiganga2002@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

An important profitable development and poverty- reduction motorist is husbandry. The fact that women, who are constantly a vital resource in husbandry and the pastoral frugality, encounter obstacles that lower their affair, contributes to the sector's underperformance in numerous nations. In this work, we examine where and how important women share in husbandry by using the empirical data that's presently accessible. According to overall numbers, women make up roughly 43 of the agrarian labour force worldwide and in arising nations. Still, this statistic conceals significant differences in age and social status among regions and within nations. Time operation checks, which are more thorough but constantly not nationally representative, give fresh sapience into the significant variation between and within nation. But this figure masks considerable variation across regions and within countries according to age and social class. Time use checks, which are more comprehensive but generally not nationally representative, add farther sapience into the substantial diversity among countries and within countries in women's donation to husbandry. They show that womanish time- use in husbandry varies also by crop, product cycle, age and ethnical group. A many time- use checks have data by exertion and these show that in general weeding and harvesting were generally womanish conditioning. Overall the labour burden of pastoral women exceeds that of men, and includes a advanced proportion of overdue ménage liabilities related to preparing food and collecting energy and water. The donation of women to agrarian and food product is significant but it's insolvable to corroborate empirically the share produced by women. Women's participation in pastoral labour requests varies vastly across regions, but always women are over represented in overdue, seasonal and part- time work, and the available substantiation suggests that women are frequently paid lower than men, for the same work. Available data on pastoral and agrarian feminization shows that this isn't a general trend but substantially a sub-Saharan Africa marvels, as well as observed in some sectors similar as unskilled labour in the fruit, vegetable and cut- flower import sector. This papered-affirms that women make essential benefactions to husbandry and pastoral enterprises across the developing world. But there's important diversity in women's places and over-generalization undermines policy applicability and planning. The environment is important and programs must be grounded on sound data and gender is unfit to empirically corroborate the chance of work generated by women. The engagement of women in pastoral labour requests varies greatly among regions, but they're nearly always overrepresented in overdue, seasonal, and part- time labour. Also, the exploration that's presently available indicates that women are constantly paid lower than males for same work. The data that's presently available on pastoral and agrarian feminization indicates that this isn't a general trend but rather primarily a sub Saharan African miracle. It has also been seen in specific diligence, similar as unskilled labour in the import of fruits, vegetables, and cut flowers. In the underdeveloped world, women contribute significantly to husbandry and pastoral enterprises, as this exploration affirms. Still, there's a great deal of diversity in women's jobs, and sophisticating them makes planning and policy less.

Keywords: Agrarian feminization, agriculture and harvesting.

Introduction:

The agricultural sector has been a cornerstone of human civilization, providing sustenance and livelihoods. Historically, women have played essential yet often overlooked roles in agricultural activities. Traditionally, women were confined to domestic chores while men engaged in farming and other productive tasks. However, this paradigm has shifted in recent decades, as women have increasingly taken on active roles in agriculture, from fieldwork to managing farm operations. A woman cannot be thanked enough for her indefinite position and constant responsibility towards her children, family, community and society.

Historical Context:

Throughout history, women's contributions to agriculture have been integral, though often unrecognized. In many societies, women were responsible for tending to home gardens, managing livestock, and preserving seeds – practices that have profound implications for food security. The Green Revolution of the mid-20th century, while increasing agricultural productivity, often overlooked the role of women. Their contributions were side lined as mechanization and modernization gained momentum. Throughout history, women's agricultural contributions have been pivotal yet often unacknowledged. They managed gardens, livestock, and seeds, crucial for food security. The mid-20th-century Green Revolution marginalized their roles amid mechanization. Women's historical significance in sustaining agriculture is now being recognized, prompting a shift toward empowerment,

education, and inclusive practices for improved productivity and gender equality. Historical context provides other puzzle pieces needed to complete the picture. Without these pieces, you cannot see the entire picture.

Challenges Faced by Women in Agriculture:

Despite their significant contributions, women in agriculture face numerous challenges. These challenges include limited access to land and resources, discriminatory social norms, lack of access to education and training, and limited access to financial services. Gender disparities often lead to reduced yields and incomes for women farmers, affecting overall household well-being. Women in agriculture confront multifaceted challenges that hinder their full participation and potential. Limited access to land and resources is a prominent issue, with cultural norms often favoring men as landowners. This lack of land ownership restricts women's decision-making power and their ability to invest in sustainable practices. Additionally, discriminatory social norms prevalent in many societies undermine women's authority in agricultural activities.

Education and training gaps pose another challenge. Women often have less access to education and training opportunities compared to their male counterparts. This knowledge deficit can hinder their adoption of modern agricultural techniques and technologies, limiting their productivity. The lack of access to credit and financial services further exacerbates this situation, making it difficult for women to invest in their farms and businesses. Gender-based violence is a distressing issue that affects women in agricultural settings. The physical and emotional toll of violence not only directly harms women but also disrupts their ability to engage in farming and other income-generating activities. This contributes to a cycle of poverty and disempowerment.

Women's workloads are often overwhelming due to their dual responsibilities as caregivers and farmers. This unpaid care work, which includes tasks like cooking, cleaning, and childcare, limits the time and energy they can devote to agricultural activities. This results in lower yields and reduced income, perpetuating gender disparities in agriculture. Inadequate access to markets and market information is another hurdle. Women often lack the networks and knowledge needed to market their produce effectively, leading to lower prices for their products. This, in turn, affects their economic stability and bargaining power. Efforts to address these challenges must encompass legal reforms that guarantee women's land rights, access to education and training, and financial services tailored to their needs. Promoting gender-sensitive agricultural policies and investing in infrastructure like childcare facilities can help alleviate women's work burdens. Encouraging women's participation in cooperative farming ventures and providing market access support can enable them to realize fairer economic returns. Ultimately, addressing these challenges is essential not only for women's empowerment but also for achieving sustainable agricultural development and food security.

Opportunities and Transformative Impact:

The changing landscape of agriculture presents new opportunities for women. As societies recognize the vital role of women in food production and rural economies, initiatives have emerged to empower women in agriculture. Access to education, training, and technology can enhance women's skills and productivity. When women are given equal access to resources and decision-making power, agricultural productivity and household welfare improve. The evolving landscape of agriculture offers significant opportunities for women's empowerment and their transformative impact. Recognition of women's pivotal role in food production has led to increased focus on education, training, and technology access for women farmers. When women have equal access to resources and decision-making, agricultural productivity improves, leading to enhanced household welfare and economic growth. Furthermore, women's engagement in sustainable farming practices is instrumental in achieving environmental sustainability. Their close connection to local ecosystems often results in a deeper understanding of agroecological approaches, promoting biodiversity, natural resource conservation, and soil health. This contribution is crucial in addressing global sustainability challenges. Empowering women in agriculture also serves as a catalyst for broader gender equality. When women participate in decision-making processes at household and community levels, it leads to more equitable distribution of resources and benefits. Economic empowerment through agriculture enhances women's social status, education, and healthcare access, contributing to a more balanced and inclusive society. In essence, the opportunities afforded by women's involvement in agriculture extend beyond farms, enriching communities and fostering a more resilient and equitable future.

Women's Role in Sustainable Farming Practices:

Women have proven to be champions of sustainable agricultural practices. Their close connection to the land and local ecosystems often results in a deeper understanding of environmental needs. Women farmers frequently embrace agro ecological approaches, promoting biodiversity, natural resource conservation, and soil health. Their contributions are crucial for achieving global sustainability goals. Women play a pivotal role in driving sustainable farming practices, contributing to environmental preservation, food security, and rural development. Their close connection to the land, natural resources, and local ecosystems empowers them to adopt and promote agro ecological approaches that prioritize sustainability. Women are often keen observers of their environment, understanding subtle changes that influence crop health and productivity. Their traditional knowledge, passed down through generations, encompasses indigenous agricultural practices that are inherently sustainable. Women are more likely to practice crop diversification, intercropping, and organic farming, minimizing the need for synthetic inputs and preserving soil fertility.

Seed preservation is another significant aspect of women's role in sustainable agriculture. They safeguard traditional and native plant varieties, maintaining biodiversity and enhancing resilience to climate change. Women's expertise in seed saving contributes to the on-going availability of diverse crops, crucial for food security in the face of shifting environmental conditions. Furthermore, women's engagement in livestock management emphasizes holistic practices. They often integrate livestock into farming systems, recycling organic waste and promoting nutrient cycling. This reduces the need for external

inputs and minimizes environmental pollution. Women's contributions extend to water management as well. With their careful resource management, they often adopt water-efficient practices such as rainwater harvesting and efficient irrigation techniques. This directly supports sustainable water use and resilience in the face of water scarcity. However, women's contributions to sustainable farming practices are often undervalued and underrepresented. To fully harness their potential, it is essential to provide them with equitable access to resources, education, and decision-making power. Recognizing and supporting women's role in sustainable agriculture not only benefits the environment but also contributes to improved livelihoods, food security, and rural development. It is imperative that policies and initiatives prioritize gender-responsive approaches to ensure a holistic and effective transition towards sustainable agriculture.

Empowerment and Gender Equality:

Women's involvement in agriculture not only contributes to food security and economic growth but also serves as a catalyst for gender equality and women's empowerment. When women participate in decision-making processes, both at the household and community levels, it leads to more equitable distribution of resources and benefits. Economic empowerment through agriculture can enhance women's social status, education, and healthcare access. Women's empowerment through agriculture is a critical avenue for advancing gender equality and fostering inclusive development. When women are empowered, they gain the agency to make decisions, access resources, and participate in social, economic, and political spheres, thereby breaking down systemic gender disparities. Agriculture serves as a potent tool for women's empowerment. By engaging in productive activities, women gain financial independence and enhanced decision-making abilities within their households and communities. Economic empowerment not only improves their own well-being but also amplifies their influence in family matters, often leading to more equitable resource allocation. Moreover, education and training opportunities in agriculture expand women's skills and knowledge, enabling them to adopt innovative farming techniques and technologies. This not only boosts agricultural productivity but also equips them with the expertise to participate in broader economic activities, reducing their vulnerability to poverty. Empowerment through agriculture also has far-reaching social impacts. Women's increased visibility and participation challenge traditional gender norms, promoting a shift towards more inclusive attitudes. This, in turn, contributes to dismantling stereotypes and biases that hinder gender equality. Engendering agriculture policies and programs is vital. Ensuring women's access to land, credit, and market opportunities creates an enabling environment for their economic and social advancement. Furthermore, providing safe spaces for women to collaborate and learn from one another enhances their self-esteem and solidarity, crucial for collective progress. Empowering women in agriculture advances gender equality not just within rural communities, but also on a broader societal scale. When women are educated, economically empowered, and actively engaged in decision-making, it lays the foundation for equitable societies. This transformational process reverberates through generations, shaping a future where men and women have equal opportunities, rights, and influence in shaping their lives and communities.

Case Studies:

This section presents case studies from various regions, showcasing successful initiatives that have empowered women in agriculture. Examples include microfinance programs tailored for women farmers, women-led cooperative farming ventures, and training programs focused on sustainable agricultural practices. Several case studies from different regions highlight successful initiatives that empower women in agriculture, demonstrating their transformative impact on livelihoods, gender equality, and sustainable development. In India, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been instrumental in transforming women's roles in agriculture. These groups provide women with access to credit, training, and collective decision-making platforms. For instance, the Deccan Development Society has empowered women in Andhra Pradesh to revive traditional millet farming, enhancing food security and preserving biodiversity.

Conclusion:

The role of women in agriculture has transformed significantly, shifting from being relegated to domestic roles to becoming key actors in the sector's development. Women's contributions to sustainable practices, food security, and rural development cannot be understated. To fully harness the potential of women in agriculture, it is imperative to address the existing gender disparities and create an enabling environment that ensures equal access to resources and opportunities. Only through such measures can women's contributions be fully recognized and valued, leading to a more equitable and prosperous agricultural sector and society as a whole.

Reference

1. <https://www.studysmarter.com>
2. <https://www.jcreview.com>