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Review Article

A REVIEW ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION FACED BY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Richa Pandey* and PushpaKumari

Department of Home Science, Banaras Hindu University

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ABSTRACT

Gender refers to the qualities or characteristics that society ascribes to each sex. In all culture gender determines roles and responsibilities as well as power and resources of women and men. Women in all regions face gender-related constrains that reduce their productivity and impose real cost on society. At least 70% of world's very poor people live in rural areas in developing countries. In developing countries like India, women play an important role in agricultural and other sectors like livestock production, horticulture, crop production, post-harvest operation, fisheries and forestry etcetera. According to Swami Nathan, the famous agricultural scientist, "some historians believe that it was woman who first domesticated crop plants and thereby initiated the art and science of farming." According to the traditional pattern of work distribution within households in most developing countries women are primarily responsible to meet the basic needs of their families. In addition, women farming households in developing countries are female headed due to male migration and some other reasons. The role that women play and their position in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quit dominant and prominent. Above all she faces ignorance, financial constraints, non-availability of adequate education facilities, sexual harassment, low payment etc. Their role in agriculture sector is as important as men. Therefore, farm women should educate themselves in agriculture and allied fields. They have to aware about their surroundings, modern farm technologies, existing rights and judicial relief and other things which they don't have. This Paper reviews highlight the role and position of women workers in agricultural sector.

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INTRODUCTION

A woman who operates a farm or cultivates land is called farm women and Discrimination means treating a person unfairly because of which they are or because they possess certain characteristics. Gender equality has been enshrined as a human right and Gender equality is the result of the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities and the allocation of resources or benefits. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which offers a comprehensive description of this right "Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of deferent groups of women and men."

A study by reserve bank of India showed that India is 2nd largest producer of agriculture products. India accounts for 7.68 percent of total global agricultural output. The share of agriculture in employment was 48.9 per cent of the workforce. In other words Agriculture is the principal source of livelihood for more than 58% of the population of this country. As per the Economic Survey the sector share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 17.4 in 2015-16. Agriculture is one of the key to promoting growth and reducing poverty and food insecurity in India. A report by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) shows that India is the world's largest producer of milk, vegetables, wheat, spices, fish and livestock but still 70 percent of India's population lives in rural areas and they are counted among one-third of world's poor. Almost two third of the country's rural population still lives in poverty, and women are over presented among the poor.

*Corresponding author: **Richa Pandey**
Department of Home Science, Banaras Hindu University

Some major areas in which farm women face discrimination

- Employment and social participation
- Crop production
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Tangible assets (Financial, physical and technical)
- Knowledge and extension services
- Investment in agriculture and rural development
- Food safety, security and nutrition
- Livestock production
- Gender sensitivity among counterpart organization and implementing teams
- Forest and tree management, natural resource management & environment challenge's
- Preparedness and response to emergencies

Women agricultural workers are finding it harder to shift out of agriculture than men, and their stake is increasing in a sector that is riddled with adverse economic conditions and where they have little rights, authority, access to or control of resources required for enhancing production and household income (Aruna, 2010). Some studies show that women are less likely to belong to a lead production organizations, cooperatives workers unions and out-grower schemes. After that women rarely hold decision-making position. Credit, loan and capital are the most important and basic needs for the production. How farm women can survive without it? She needs credit to buy seed, equipment's, fertilizers, to hire laborers for working in the field, to buy pesticides and insecticides and to give money in the return of harvest technologies and also if conditions are favorable she needs long-term credit for transport, preservation of product and to set up a new business or enterprise. Around the world, female smallholders access to credit is lower than that of male smallholders (FAO2011) this unequal access to credit may affect economic efficiency. In country like India rural women have less land in compare to man and they are less educated than man not because of only external but also due to some internal and personal reasons. M.A. Damisa and M. Yohanna (2007) found in their study that socio-economic characteristics (health, age, education and financial status etc.) of the farm women significantly affect their decision making in agriculture. Women in rural areas have less access than men to resources particularly to productive assets such as land, credit and agriculture inputs. This disparity helps account for women's higher levels of poverty and vulnerability (Quisumbing 2013, deere 2005, FAO2011). Women's economic condition is poorer than men because they paid less for their labor time and own fewer assets (FAO 2011). Other potential issues include lower levels of education access to financial institutions mobility social network etcetera. The benefits of any project or policy (new inputs irrigation etc.) depend on the availability of complementary assets such as land, credit, education and labor, all of which tend to harder to come by for female-headed households (FAO2011) Farm women's are tending to be less aware than men of information about production, crop, storage or details about new interventions and policies. And decrease women's opportunities to participate in networks that convey important information from the outside their society. If we talk about the new technologies in agriculture they are not easy to handle for women. They are improved, modern and time saving but there is not sufficient access to training in such technology.

Various studies argue that the disparity between male and female in the rate of use of machine and technology is higher in developing countries. Similar studies shows that women's have lower adoption of technologies is due to lower access to labor and credit and lower levels of education which are related to market failures in these areas (croppenstedt, celdstein and rosas 2013). A recent survey by FAO shows that female farmers receive only 5% of all agricultural services worldwide and that only 15% of the World's extension agents are women. In India men are the legally recognized landowners than that women and limited Participation of women in male dominated farmers associations are some of the most knowing reasons for their less access to credit, limited connection with extension agents and other sources of knowledge. Rural women throughout the world tend to have lower levels of literacy and technical knowledge than men and it affects agricultural productivity, limiting the adaptation of improved technology and their own development. Farm women have less access to information and communication technologies like internet and smart phones because their low education level. There are so many taboos, rituals and religious factor that affect rural women's working conditions and access to education. And this makes it less likely that about market information, prices, access to technologies, input availability and so on. Studies showed that men score higher than women on all indicators of agricultural employment. If rural women in developing countries had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30 percent (FAO2011). According to the report of FAO in 2008, among the 86 countries, approximately 5.4 million women worked in the sector of fisheries. For example, two major fish producing countries, India and China, representation of women is respectively 24% and 21% of the total percent which is about 12% of all agricultural production. The income gap between men and women varies significantly across countries. For example, the income from labor of rural women in India is 40-60% lower than that of men. Yet, women after face a heavy burden of unremunerated household work i.e. cooking, fetching water, collecting firewood and caring for the very young and the elderly. Kanagarathinam (2014) investigated that around 52% of unorganized workers are engaged in agriculture and allied sectors. Agricultural workers are disadvantages rural groups such as small, subsistence farmers, tenants & sharecroppers, the unemployed and the landless. They get very low and irregular wages, wage discrimination between male & females, no public holiday and no standard daily working hours. In addition, they have very poor working conditions, lack of dignity, seasonal unemployment and harassment issues. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), women experience systemic barriers in almost every aspect of work, ranging from whether they have paid work at all, to the type of work they obtain or are excluded from, the availability of support such as childcare, the level of their pay, their working conditions, their access to higher paying "male" occupations, the insecurity of their jobs, the absence of pension entitlements or benefits, and the lack of time, resources or information necessary to enforce their rights. Seasonality further influences labor allocations. If seasonal demand coincides with migration by men, women's burdens become even heavier, taking a toll on crop production as women allocate their time between food and cash crops (World Bank,

FAO and IFAD 2009). working more hours than men, farm women in the rural area has an important role in post-harvest and commercial tasks, as well as with livestock and subsistence crops and in providing for their family's basic needs by collecting water and fuel wood, tending the farms and preparing food stuff (FAO 1999, ponce 2012). MultaniNeela and Sanghavi A.N.(2017) showed in their study that Women workers have no facilities like regulated working hours, good working conditions, maternity benefits, and medical assistance etc. which are available to organized sector's female workers. So, work status of female agricultural workers in India is still more or less similar to what it was decades ago. Women make up the majority of the poor in both developed and developing nations, and they face multiple barriers to accessing social security too, owing to their roles as mothers, careers, informal workers, migrants, and precarious and part-time workers. condition in which man and women participate as equals, have equal access to resources and equal opportunities to exercise control fair treatment for both women and men According to their respective needs called gender equity. KumariVarsha(2014) find in her study that Gender discrimination also happens, men think that women are not capable enough to work properly and unable to take decision in a better way. Swamikannan and Jeyalakshmi (2015) argued that participation rate of women in agriculture sector has declined drastically during last few decades, which shows that female workers are moved from agricultural to non-agricultural activities because wage differences between male and female workers for the same type of work discourages female workers. For that reason mainstreaming gender in agriculture not only is essential for the sectors performance but is also essential for poverty reduction, food security and gender quality. Singh Shashibhushan (2013) finds in his study that, non-agricultural activities are more profitable rather than depending only on agriculture. Because there are things like differentiation and competition between big and small farmers are hindering the equal development. Kishor R., B. Gupta *et al* (1999) reported that Women are the axis of our society. It is a very difficult to ignore their participation and achieve the goal of society. Their contribution in every field of development is necessary. Discrimination against women in agriculture; therefore is not only a violation of their rights; it also has social and economic productivity losses.

CONCLUSION

The present review paper concluded that Woman's contribution in agriculture can describe as farm to table. From planting to harvesting and after post-harvest to making food women play an important and crucial role that we cannot avoid? Even after the Involvement of women in every field of agricultural development, she faces discrimination not only in credit, land and in the field of resource allocation but also she gets discriminate in division of labor. Warisamtul *et al* 2016 gave suggestion in their study that if we want to promote gender equity steps have to be taken to increase women's participation in the labor force with necessary skill development, labor policies, social security framework and also Giving women farmers equal access to equipment and services such as seeds,

tools, credit and land will help in achieving sustainable agricultural growth. In Asia Women produce on average 60% of all the food that is produced. We can say that women are the invisible partner of the development. The migration of women from rural areas to town and cities in search of paid employment is because of lack of sufficient land, capital, unemployment and other reasons. The process of gathering and building capacities to exercise control over one's life called employment and it is also a powerful tool for women which can be used as an alternate for empowering them. Those who do not have land and have not any other option to promote their living standard are requiring to be employed.

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