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A STUDY ON ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES; GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Abstracts: Gender issues in agriculture are of prime importance in present time, in addition access to and control over resources is vital concern to think about. Access to refer as right & opportunity and control over refers to right and power over the productive resources. This present study was framed to look over the scenario of access to and control over productive resources under integrated farming system in both plain and hilly region of Tripura. For this study ex-post facto research design was followed and total 100 farm families were considered for final data collection. Result of the study shows that, in both the region male farmers had more access to the resources rather than females; comparatively it has been found that in plain region jointly access to the resources was more comfy rather than in hilly region. In case of control over the resources results revealed that females of the hilly region were more dynamic compare to plain area and jointly control over the resources was also added advantage in hilly region. Based on the findings of the study it has been concluded that still there are potential to uplift the condition of women both in plain as well as in hilly region; need to be strengthen infrastructural as well as social aspect of farming system so that further both the gender can make use of their potentiality in farming.
Keywords: Access to, control over, gender, integrated farming system, resources.

Introduction

In India where stratified society is leading access and empowerment of different section of the societies are becoming serious concerns which have started deliberating and devising way out like anything. In Agriculture or farming systems gender issues are govern over other susceptible issues like poverty, communities, ethnic issues etc. In agricultural context, before introducing any technologies with the aim of improving gender equity in conservative patriarchal societies, it is necessary to have information on gender roles. In such a societies, opportunities of every kind favour men, who are generally recognised as the head of the family and have a major role in decision making within the family. Men are dominant in production and community activities. Women, who play a major role in the household economy, have limited economic options and less access to social services. There is growing evidence that gender plays an important role in economic growth, poverty reduction and

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development effectiveness (Taj, 2001). To help women it is necessary to make them more visible in productive work and that is possible only if we fully understand the mechanism of gender roles prevailing in the society and extent to which men and women are able to access different livelihood opportunities. Agriculture is the main source of national income, as more than 85 per cent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Tripura is one of the North eastern states of the India where agriculture has contribution of 22.10 per cent in State domestic product in the year 2013-14 (indiastat.com) and farmers are generally depend on integrated farming system for their livelihood in their small holding coverage.

Gender Roles in farming:

Gender roles are that played by both women and men are not determined by biological factors but by the socio-economic and cultural situation. Gender anyhow affects the distribution of labour, resources, wealth, work, decision-making, political power as well as the enjoyment of rights and entitlements within the family as well as in public life. Traditional gender roles have a great influence on gender relationship in the society and the pattern of gender socialisation in the region has been shaped by the deeply rooted culture of patriarchy. Women typically take on three types of roles in terms of the paid and unpaid labour they undertake. These three roles are:

1. The productive role: It refers to commercial or subsistence production undertaken by women which generates an income or helps in maintenance of family

2. The reproductive role: It refers to the child-bearing and child-rearing responsibilities borne by women (which are essential to the reproduction of the workforce).

3. The community management role: It refers to activities undertaken by women to ensure the provision of resources at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role.

Women perform a variety of roles, of which many are of greater economic significance. The nature and extent of women involvement in agriculture, no doubt, varies greatly from region to region. Even within a region, their involvement varies widely among different ecological sub-zones, farming systems, castes, classes and stages in the family cycle. Agriculture sector employs $4/5^{th}$ of all economically active women in the country. On an average 48 per cent of India's self-employed farmers are women. In this context, keeping in mind enormous roles of women, the present study was framed to look into the picture of access to and control over resources by male, female independently as well as jointly in integrated farming system in both hill and plain region of Tripura.

Materials and Methods

The study was purposefully conducted in the North-eastern state Tripura of India and for that ex-post-facto research design was applied. Two districts one from plain region (West Tripura) and another from hilly region (Unakoti) were selected randomly. From each selected district randomly two blocks were selected, all together four blocks were considered for this study. The respondents were those who were following dairy farming system. As the present study has concerned gender issues in integrated farming system, hence, a list was prepared of farm families in which both husband and wife had active participation in farming system. Then 25 farm families has selected from cluster of villages under each selected block. In this way, the data was collected from total 100 farm families; both male and female were separately interviewed for collecting first-hand information in present study. To know the access and control over resources a schedule was developed for integrated farming system particularly, whether by male, female or by joint (both male and female) in both plain as well as hilly areas.

Result and Discussion

Socio- economic Profile of respondents

Gender always remain a part of social role and responsibilities; Kabeer and Mahmud 2004 reported that poverty implications for employment through a comparison of the socio-economic backgrounds, wages and working conditions. Here the socio-economic background of the respondents shows that majority of the respondents both male and female belonged to middle age (35-50 years) and falls under primary and middle level of education. The study exposed that 93 percent of the total respondents were marginal farmers in which 77 percent of them had more than 5 years experience in their integrated farming system and majority of the respondents in the region had medium (5-8 members) family size. The farmers preferred integrated farming system where they were able to incorporate different enterprises for year round income generation and the annual income of majority (57%) of respondents varies from Rs. 143400-184890.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of the respondents

Age:

Category	Plain (n=50)		Hilly(n=50)	
	M	F	M	F
Young age <35 Years	10(20.00)	15(30.00)	8(16.00)	11(22.00)
Middle age 35-50 Years	33(66.00)	32(64.00)	29(58.00)	33(66.00)
Old age >50 Years	7(14.00)	3(6.00)	7(14.00)	6(12.00)

Education level:

	M	F	M	F
Illiterate	0(0.00)	5(10.00)	0(0.00)	10(20.00)
Functional literate	5(10.00)	12(24.00)	16(32.00)	14(28.00)
Primary	6(12.00)	20(40.00)	21(42.00)	18(36.00)
Middle	19(38.00)	9(18.00)	4(8.00)	6(12.00)
Secondary	9(18.00)	4(8.00)	5(10.00)	2(4.00)
H. Secondary	8(16.00)	0(0.00)	2(4.00)	0(0.00)
Graduate & above	3(6.00)	0(0.00)	2(4.00)	0(0.00)

Family Size:

	Plain (n=50)	Hilly (n=50)
Low (< 5 members)	14(28.00)	4(8.00)
Mediu(5-8 members)	28(56.00)	33(66.00)
High (>8 members)	8(16.00)	13(26.00)

Land Holding:

Marginal(<1 ha)	50(100.00)	43(86.00)
Small(1-2 ha)	0(0.00)	6(12.00)
Semi-medium (2-4 ha)	0(0.00)	1(2.00)

Annual Income:

Low(<143400)	15(30.00)	18(36.00)
Medium (143400-184890)	31(62.00)	26(52.00)
High (>184890)	4(8.00)	6(12.00)

Access to and Control over resources under Integrated farming system (IFS):

Access and control over resources is an important variable to think about in any gender studies. Access refers to right & opportunity of male and female to use the resources as per one's need to carry out the activities and control refers to the rights and power of both the gender to decide on the use of the resources under the integrated farming system. For measuring the access and control over the different resources under farming system the data were collected on three point such as by male, female or jointly.

Access to the resources:

Regarding access and control over resources collected data was analysed and it has found that, in plain region the male farmers were having 86.20 per cent access over the resources, independently female had 7.70 per cent, and jointly they had 6.10 per cent share over the resources. In case of hilly region, male farmers were self-sufficient enough, they had 67.43 per cent share to access the resources. In other hand, Female farmers of hilly region independently had 4.00 per cent share in access over the resources under integrated farming system.

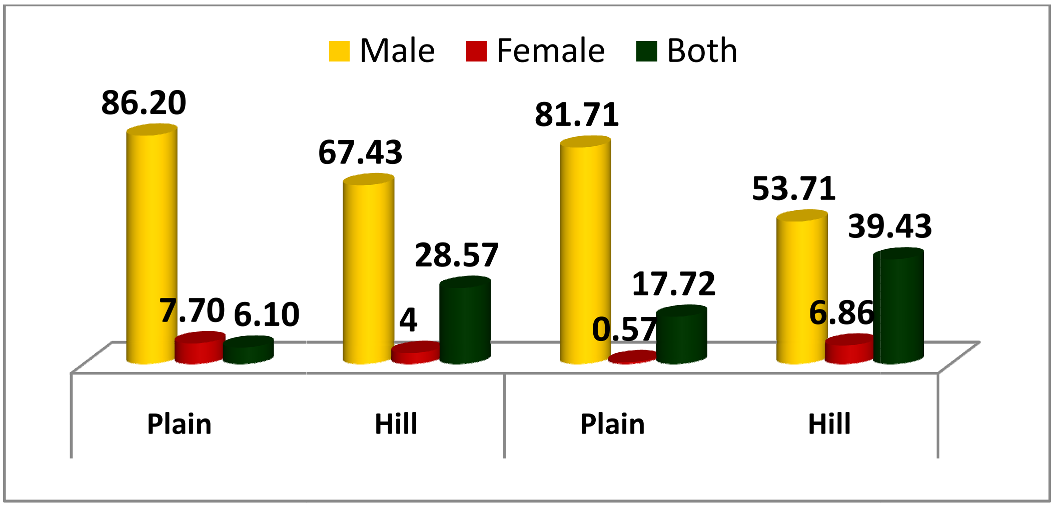

Fig: 1 Access and control over the resources in farming system

Control over the resources

In plain region male farmers independently were having 81.71 per cent share, female had only 0.57 per cent share and jointly they had 17.72 per cent share over the control of resources. In hilly region, male farmers had 53.71 per cent share, female independently had 6.86 per cent and jointly they had 39.43 per cent share in control over the resources. Under integrated farming system (IFS) access and control over the resources observed in like ownership of the enterprises, borrowing of the capital from bank or other financial institutes, marketing of the products, share on profit, other extension services etc. were shared by whom whether male or female independently or by jointly.

In every enterprise mostly in all activities male farmers were dominant in taking decision, followed by joint decision and by female farmers in plain region. In case of hilly region, the participation of female farmers were more in decision making as well as in performance of the activities, as a consequence their access and control over the resources were also more compare to female farmers of plain region, even the share of jointly (by male and female together) were also more in hilly region rather than plain region. Adereti (2005) also reported that in nutshell none of the women respondents has absolute control over land and mechanized equipment, formal sources of capital and chemicals. Even the findings in which Jazairy (1992) opined that in many places, women were not allowed to own land and control family finances. Further, Lund and Srinivas (2000) has also revealed some strategies to increase gender equitable access to social protection, even they talked about monitoring mechanism to protect gender equity.

Conclusion

It was very gratifying for me to note down the scenario of access to and control over the productive resources in integrated farming system by both the gender independently or jointly in both plain and hill region of Tripura. The result of the study surprised me that male and female had different level of access to and control over the resources in different region of Tripura. It can be stated that there is still a big potential to lift to improve the social as well as infrastructural aspect of farming so that farmers of the study area be more empowered and energetic enough.

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