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Examining gender dynamics in terms of benefit accessibility and control gained from tea farming in Kiganjo Division, Gatundu District, Iran

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The foundation of Kenya's economy is agriculture. Accordingly, the majority of Kenyan families rely on agriculture for both food and livelihood. Notably, in many of these families, the largest share of agricultural work is carried out by women; nevertheless, regardless of their significant role, these women are faced with discrimination in terms of having access to and control over the benefits gained from agricultural labor. In 2011, tea farming managed to become the primary foreign exchange earner. However, gender inequalities with respect to access to and control of the benefits gained from tea farming in Kenya is prevalent despite the important role of this sector. Moreover, there is a lack of adequate academic examinations on the present gender inequalities. Consequently, this study was aimed at conducting an investigation into the gender dynamics while taking into account access to tea benefits and control over them in Mundoro which is located in Kiganjo division, Gatundu District. Accordingly, two sub-locations were selected using simple random sampling; in addition, random sampling was employed for selecting 73 tea farming households. In this study, respondents included the heads of households and two authorities from *Theta* tea factory. Data collection was carried out through conducting interviews with the household heads as well as an interview guide prepared for the officials of the tea factory. Data analysis was based on the emerging themes related to the purposes of the study. Results demonstrated the discrimination faced by women living in male-headed households with respect to access to tea benefits and control over them. Conversely, the female heads of households were found to have access to tea benefits and control over them in their own households. The identified obstacles that support gender discrimination entailed culture, the KTDA (Kenya Tea Development Authority), education level, and widowhood. Conscious attempts should be made with the purpose of informing stakeholders on the need for equitable sharing of benefits gained from tea farming. It is recommended to employ strategies in which gender equity is enhanced so that every woman and man are allowed to have access to and control over tea benefits.

Keywords: Gender Dynamics, Access and Control of Benefits Accrued, Tea

INTRODUCTION

A large number of Africans have agriculture as their primary economic base. Furthermore, in most nations, agriculture is regarded as a substantial economic sector. According to many descriptions, agriculture is the backbone of many

nations, particularly in the Sub-Saharan Africa, and the foundation of human life. The EU states that nearly one third of Africa's GDP belongs to agriculture (Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2020). Moreover, 60 to 90% of employment is provided by this sector to low-income farmers who account for the majority of the production in Africa

(Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2020). Additionally, poverty in China, Bangladesh, and India has been considerably reduced by agriculture (Fataei, Varamesh et al. 2018, Khayatnezhad and Gholamin 2020). Consequently, agriculture in Africa involves an equal potential for creating employment and mitigating poverty among the population.

The World Bank reports that Africa encompasses large amounts of untouched resources in agriculture along with unseen growth reserves in its population, particularly the women. In agricultural production, African women play distinguished, yet significantly substantial roles (Arjaghi, et al. 2021). In this continent, women are responsible for over half of the labor despite the lack of equitable access to the resources and control over them. In this situation, contributions made by women in agriculture are hidden and neglected (Mitra and Chowdhury 2019, Karasakal, et al. 2020). Women in Africa suffer from having little or no voice in making decisions; meanwhile, public policy choices and priorities lack information as well due to the lack of influence among women's constraints and requirements (World Bank, 2001). A fundamental barrier against economic development of women involves extreme gender imbalance regarding access to and control over agricultural benefits as well as land ownership (f, 2008). UNDP/IMF (2007) reported the importance of African women and their initiatives to agriculture in elevating the productivity of sectors which cannot be overlooked, especially due to the agrarian nature of most societies (Nokandeh and Khoshmanesh 2019, Khayatnezhad and Gholamin, 2021a, Ren and Khayatnezhad, 2021, Sun et al. 2021, Tao et al. 2021, Yin et al. 2021).

Located in East Africa, Kenya is a tropical country with a diverse climate; Kenya's geographical regions offer conditions where numerous crops can be grown successfully. As a result, Agriculture is the main driver behind employment, economic growth, and foreign exchange earner. Moreover, for many households, agriculture is the main source of livelihood both currently and in the future (Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2020, Khayatnezhad and Gholamin 2020). Major cash crops in Kenya include tobacco, coffee, sugarcane, tea, and wheat. Occupying a position among the largest black tea producers on earth competing exclusively with India and Sri Lanka, Kenya has tea as the nation's key export crop (Ghomi Avili and Makaremi 2020, karasakal, et al.

2020). Accordingly, the tea sector is the most significant employer where over 80,000 individuals work; additionally, approximately 3 million people earn their livelihood from this sector (Esmailzadeh, et al. 2020, Farhadi, et al. 2020). As a consequence, Tea farming in Kenya is the single greatest foreign exchange earner. In 2010-11, total earnings of tea managed to reach 97 billion Kenya shillings compared to 69 billion in the previous year (Li, et al.).

More than 80% of the agricultural labor force in Kenya is provided by women; however, Kenyan women merely account for 5% of registered landholders across the nation (Fataei 2017). Women in Kenya provide a major part of the required labor in smallholder tea farming; yet despite their significant role in the business, their capacity to access and control tea benefits suffer from controversies (Bi et al. 2021, Gholamin and Khayatnezhad, 2021, Khayatnezhad and Gholamin, 2021b, Ma et al. 2021, Sun and Khayatnezhad, 2021, Xu et al. 2021). Furthermore, the discrimination against women continues in the context of ownership over other farm equipment as the equipment owned by female leads of households are less than half of those owned by their male counterparts (Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2012, et al. 2020).

Growing tea by Kenyan farmers is under a contract with the KTDA which is a free, private tea enterprise offering professional services and management to individual factories and companies. The LTDA is owned by smallholder tea farmers. In addition, the TBK (Tea Board of Kenya) cooperates with the farmers by providing leadership, management, and professional services on quality and production. Nonetheless, regardless of both women and men's participation in tea production, gender issues and concerns are left unmentioned in the strategic plans of both the KTDA and the TBK.

According to Kenyan Government's NAPEP (the National Poverty Eradication Plan), the performance of the economy in general is influenced by agriculture; this achieved through agriculture's contribution to the GDP. Subsequently, it is considered the basis for growth in other economy sectors as well (Jalili 2020). The government's dependence on agriculture as the primary leader in development continues. In both the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the ERSWEC (Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation) (Republic of Kenya, 2001 and 2003, respectively), agriculture is recognized as the sector that will guide economic growth and

provide employment for the Kenyan population. Nevertheless, Omrani (2019) states that the aforementioned economic growth in agriculture can exclusively be actualized through addressing the particular aspects of women's contribution along with the limitations they face as they attend to their various roles and responsibilities (Khayatnezhad and Nasehi, 2021, Zhang et al. Zhu et al. 2021, Omrani and Fataei 2018).

All in all, the sector falls short in addressing the gender dynamics that indeed influence supply response or hold elevations in production, despite the significant role of agriculture in Kenya or the progressive policies and strategies. Such failure to address inequalities regarding gender issues can deprive women of benefiting from structural adjustment actions in agriculture, hence denying this major part of the society their livelihood. It is emphasized by the World Bank (2005) that it is solely through addressing gender related issues that the necessity to secure the importance of agriculture in the development agenda can be tackled. Meanwhile, agricultural growth that offers benefits to both men and women is capable of addressing gender inequality which is the basis of this research (Khayatnezhad and Gholamin 2012).

In both material and perceptual terms, gender is considered men and women's social relationship. Being a socially constructed notion, it is often employed with the aim of governing and organizing various processes such as consumption, distribution, production, and reproduction (March, 1999). Populations are faced with a variety of limitations and deprivations due to the interaction between social and economic processes resulting from gender biases (World Bank, 2000). Importantly, there exists a variety of deep-seated socioeconomic factors that form the basis of farming; subsequently, comprehending the conditions that enable women and men to have access to productive resources and gain control over them is imperative (Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2020). There is an association between accessing and controlling productive resources, and membership in social groups; meanwhile, production and land ownership patterns are influenced by the structures of relations among members (UNDP, 2001). Consequently, the importance of establishing the limitations faced by female farmers in their households with respect to having access to tea benefits and gaining control over them as well as recognizing the effective factors is highlighted.

The African Union (AU) Protocol on women

reports that women's rights should be encouraged, actualized, and protected, so that women can thoroughly enjoy each and every human right (Huang, Wang et al. 2021). The hope behind advocating this was that the entire stakeholders in agriculture and alternative sectors would use gender lenses both now and in the future to become capable of asking the following questions: who produces? Who earns? Who reproduces? Who owns? Who has access? Who controls? Who decides? Who gains benefits? And who loses? Consequently, it would be impossible to neglect the great contributions of women in agriculture and particularly, tea farming (Si, Gao et al. 2020). Equitable and sustainable agricultural and rural development cannot be followed without asserting women's vital role in indicating and guaranteeing the entire household's health and well-being. Ensuring the provision of support for all the potential actors in tea farming to access benefits and gain control over them to enjoy better lives and sustainable livelihoods is essential (Gholamin and Khayatnezhad 2020). In this case, women's access to tea benefits and control over them with the purpose of improving their livelihoods, esp. in Gatundu District would primarily originate from women's empowerment.

Statement of the Problem

Both men and women are involved in activities related to tea productions through distinguished approaches in their households; therefore, both genders play essential roles in agriculture. Compared to the roles of men in tea production, women's roles are more apparent and more difficult. Providing the majority of labor required on tea farms, women work in these areas for longer hours than the men. Nevertheless, regardless of their involvement, women are discriminated against in each and every affair pertaining to ownership over lands whilst being set aside in the area of having access to benefits including tea and gaining control over them. Such a concern led the present inquiry to establish the gender discrimination regarding access to tea benefits and gaining control over them, as tea farming is an agricultural activity in which women are involved in, especially in Kiganjo Division located in Gatundu District.

Objectives of the Study

Overall, this research was aimed at examining the gender dynamics with respect to access to benefits obtained from tea farming in Kiganjo division and gaining control over them.

The particular purposes of the research included:

1. Identifying the roles of genders in tea production;
2. Identifying the benefits obtained from tea farming carried out in Kiganjo Division;
3. Establishing the access to specific tea benefits and gaining control over them in various households by gender;
4. And identifying the factors that affect the access to tea benefits and gaining control over them in various households.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Theoretical Framework

The theory of gender equity entails a set of propositions aimed at describing the forces behind retaining a gender inequality system along with a theory regarding how to alter such a system. The basis of the theory is the supposition that in the end, interventionist acts of gender inequality are associated with gendered labor division in a given society. Here, it is argued that labor division is gendered and it is a person's sexes that defines work and distribute resources (Muhibbu-din 2020).

Increased male advantage over women in terms of power and material originating from the gendered labor division results in a larger number of men using such power when communicating and interacting with women. Therefore, it would be less likely for men to make contributions to domestic work and family which can overwhelm women with burdens such as domestic chores. In

such cases, domestic work for women becomes extremely difficult where they may fail to compete with men in gaining access to and control over resources (Khayatnezhad and Gholamin 2012). In this theory, it is highlighted that material and power resources are under men's control to their own benefit; here, the work situation is controlled and micro encounters emerging between men and women are regulated. Through such approaches, men in society are able to control the elite positions which, in turn, can sustain definitions of worth in favor of men; what follows is the devaluation of women's works and activities, whether it is inside or outside of the domestic environment. The emphasis of the theory is that roles of women in the family are unpaid or undervalued because valuation of men's and women's roles is far from equal. The significance of this issue in the present inquiry relates to the identification of household roles, the value of women's labor, the benefits, and the beneficiaries of tea by gender. Consequently, given the focus of the study and the theoretical framework the conceptual framework used in this research is as follows.

Considering the conceptual framework presented above, the primary roles performed in households included planting tea, picking plants, transporting products, weeding, and pruning. Men' access to tea benefits and control over them were found to be higher than those of the women. Role distribution along with access to resources and control over them were indicated by community norms, culture, gender, and the KTDA policies.

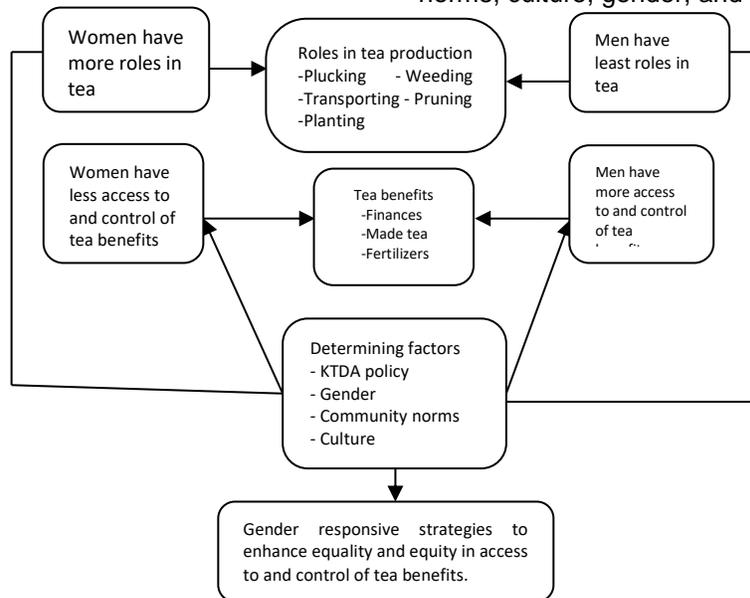


Figure 1: Gender Dynamics in Access to Tea Benefits and Control Over Them

Research Design

In this research, an exploratory descriptive survey design was followed in which the nature of the present conditions is described. Subsequently, a number of scheduled interviews were conducted with the aim of identifying and describing the roles of genders in both tea production and tea benefits. Moreover, the access to tea benefits and control over them were established and factors that improve this access and control and subsequently enable the recognition of engendered strategies were identified using the said design. Data collected in this study represented the comments and opinions of people and reported the situations as they were on the ground. Out of five possible locations, Mundoro Location was chosen on purpose since it is currently considered the largest producer of tea. Two sub-locations out four located in Mundoro were selected via simple random sampling. There was 1797 tea farming families living in the two sub-locations. The size of a sample should be one figure greater than or equal to 5% of the population of households; as a result 5% of the households were selected. Respondents included 24 and 49 female and male heads of households, respectively, as well as 2 tea factory officials selected randomly.

The instruments used for collecting data involved interviews with household respondents and an interview guide for the officials of the tea factory. In order to take a closer look at the daily activities, observation checklists were employed in both the households and at the tea factory as well. The collection of the primary data was carried out through questionnaires and interview schedule. Additionally, a body of related literature and registration records in factories purchasing and processing tea were placed under examination to generate secondary data

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the higher number of roles for women from male-headed households in tea production compared to men was established. As opposed to men who attended to seasonal roles such as planting and pruning as depicted below, the examined women were assigned tedious roles that required long hours including tea plucking and transportation.

Based on the results, men as heads of households had access to benefits obtained from tea farming and control over them as opposed to the women living in male-headed families.

Table 1: Gender roles in tea production

Activity	Male	Female
Land preparation	*	*
Tea planting	*	*
Weeding		*
Pruning	*	
Picking		*
Tea transportation		*

Nevertheless, women as heads of households did have access to tea benefits and control over them. As a result, women living in male-headed households with men as their heads faced discriminations with respect to access to tea benefits and control over them.

Table 2: Tea benefits access to and control over in MHH and FHH

Benefits	Access		Control	
	MHH	FHH	MHH	FHH
Finance	49	25	49	25
Fertilizer	49	25	49	25
Processed tea	49	25	49	25
Total	49	25	49	25

Women faced numerous challenges and hardships in benefiting from roles in tea production due to several factors including community norms, gender biased culture, the KTDA's Policy of registering men as tea owners, illiteracy, and the lack of title deeds by women.

All men as heads of households enjoyed access to benefits and control over them in their households and made decisions on how the resources should be utilized and how much should be allocated to their wives as well as to the other family requirements. Nonetheless, as a result of men's power over tea benefits in households, the majority of women from households with men as their heads faced discriminations with regards to access to tea benefits and control over them. The access to tea benefits and control over them were found to be unequal between women and men. As men were regarded as registered tea owners, the male heads of households were capable of having access to tea benefits and control over them. Regardless of men's lack of active participation in producing the benefits, they controlled the productive benefits of women. All in all, the women from the households with women as their heads had the ability to access to tea benefits and have control over them due to their acquisition of the tea owners' rights following their husbands' death as well as through inheritance gained from

their fathers.

CONCLUSION

Results of the study suggested the presence of gender discrimination with respect to access to tea benefits and control over them in households of Kiganjo division. Despite women's involvement in tea production, they were denied access to tea benefits and control over them; however, the exception was that these rights were available to them solely through their husbands, fathers or in case they were widowed. The conclusion drawn from the findings of the study is that regarding the access to tea benefits and control over them, the male heads of households should recognize women as their equal partners. Furthermore, in the area of access and control, women should be empowered through suitable actions that are devoid of gender discrimination.

Recommendations

The present research recommends that the KTDA review tea ownership with the purpose of issuing tea owner licenses for both men (husbands) and women (wives). Such a measure contributes to women's empowerment across the entire tea farming households through which they would be able to grow their own tea. This way, they can also take control of a portion of the household tea farm under their names so that they can have access to tea benefits and gain control over them. In addition, frequent workshops need be held with the aim of educating and instructing tea farmers on gender problems and issues in the area of access to tea benefits and gaining control over these advantages. These measures could help demystify men's various gender stereotypes related to women, hence mitigating gender-based discrimination.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declared that present study was performed in absence of any conflict of interest.

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This paper was from Personal interest research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Masoud Radmanesh conducted, planned, Analyzed the data, wrote manuscript and interpreted the results and involved in manuscript preparation, The data was received from my parterenr Dr Michael lango, Member of Kenya police training college-kiganjo. All authors read and approved the final version.

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