

Gender Issues in Iligan's Agricultural Sector: Basis for Proposed Gender Mainstreaming Programs

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ABSTRACT

Global resource shortages mainly affect women farmers, including labor, credit, training, and information. With significant contributions to food production, subsistence farming, and the labor force in the agricultural sector in developing nations, gender mainstreaming is an issue for global food security. This study aims to determine whether the Iligan City agriculture sector is experiencing the gender challenges recognized in the associated literature. A quantitative method was applied in the descriptive study design. The conclusions will serve as the foundation for any gender mainstreaming programs suggested to solve gender challenges. It was assumed that the respondents may have experienced these issues or may not have, or may not have been aware of the gender issues mentioned. Everyone has to be included, according to respondents in the agriculture industry who were asked about gender analysis and participation. Overall, the respondents are unbiased on gender issues that exist in Iligan City's agricultural industry. It suggests that the respondents noticed that the city's agriculture sector is somehow experiencing or impacted by these gender difficulties. It is possible that the respondents did not know about the gender concerns that have been documented, or they may have experienced these problems but chose not to disclose them. Conclusions were reached, indicating that there were gender difficulties in the agriculture industry but that it was difficult for participants to assess them due to a possible lack of knowledge regarding gender equality. There may not be a strong emphasis on gender analysis in agriculture policies and practices. The researchers recommended that government agriculture agencies, both local and national, include gender sensitivity training and other activities relating to gender concerns and challenges in their programs and orientation for farmers.

Keywords: Gender Analysis, Gender Mainstreaming, Women Farmers, Agriculture, Gender and Development, Gender Issues

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has consistently proved in its work that gender equality is not just a question of human rights, but also a prerequisite for eradicating poverty and hunger. Sustainable agriculture and rural development can only attain its full potential if the gender gap is closed (FAO, 2011). As a result, FAO is committed to promoting gender equality in all of its activities, as well as through fostering gender equality in the workplace gaining knowledge, identifying promising methods, and sharing them widely across member states and national partners (FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS Budapest, 2018).

Internationally diverse nearly all nations have ratified international conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), emphasizing the importance of

attaining gender equality within national legal systems (FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS Budapest, 2018).

Women farmers, in particular, face a global shortage of resources, including production inputs, labor, credit, training, and information. Gender mainstreaming in information and communication technology (ICT) is a concern for global food security because of their huge contributions to food production, subsistence farming, and the agricultural labor force in the developing countries. It's also at the heart of a global development strategy based on human rights and successful, long-term development outcomes (USAID, GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ICT FOR AGRICULTURE).

In addition, ensuring gender equality in agriculture entails guaranteeing women's empowerment, agency, and involvement in the field. It entails figuring out how to get over the barriers and limits that women encounter, as well as comprehending the links between women's empowerment, food security, and agricultural progress (https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaec808.pdf).

In fact, satisfying future global food needs will increasingly rely on resolving gender issues and bolstering women's competencies and resources. Around 98 percent of economically active rural women work in agriculture, and in many regions of the world, they are the primary food producers. The role of women in agricultural production is becoming increasingly dominating as males leave rural areas in search of paid employment in towns and cities. Food production depends heavily on women. Women make up 45% of the agricultural work force in emerging nations, and in some regions of Africa and Asia, that percentage rises to 60%. However, compared to men, women farmers have less access to land, markets, and education, and their participation in decision-making is unequal (FAO, 2021).

Agricultural and rural development are, in reality, inextricably linked to people's everyday lives. Gender perspective allows for visualizing participation and control, as well as boosting awareness among mediators (e.g., those who create a plan, those who implement the plan, and government counterparts) and farmers as the project's aim. More improved attempts will be made to improve cooperation, or, to put it another way, to attain the aim more effectively and efficiently. Gender perspectives should be taken into account for these reasons (Agriculture Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines.)

Furthermore, the gender mainstreaming of climate change's impact on agriculture has a variety of consequences for people. Men and women who rely on agriculture for a living and food security do not have the same demands or objectives, nor do they have equal access to resources or a vote in decision-making processes. It is critical to be aware of these differences and ensure that they are taken into account when countries draft agricultural adaptation plans in order to lessen their vulnerability to climate change and draw on their expertise and abilities (FAO, 2021). According to Acosta in 2020, local customs and culture were recognized as a significant barrier to achieving gender equality, but the proposed solutions did not specifically address these issues. Instead, the remedies suggested in the study relied on global discussions about gender equality that were stripped of political significance, effectively accepting and normalizing gender disparities without considering their impact on local gender dynamics. Her study highlights the crucial involvement of local feminist movements in driving transformative changes regarding gender, emphasizing the need to view "the local" as a domain that enables critical discussions and debates.

Similarly, agricultural extension studies have revealed a variety of flaws in reaching rural women. Farmers who own land and are willing and able to borrow financing and spend it on inputs and technical improvements have traditionally received the majority of extension services. Extension services mistakenly skip women since they often lack access to property or other forms of collateral with which to secure loans. (<https://www.manage.gov.in/study material/GM-E.pdf>). For far too long, policies have been founded on the erroneous premise that knowledge provided to a household's male leader will be passed on to its female members. Men, on the other hand, do not always consult their spouses about production decisions or pass on

extended knowledge.

Furthermore, policymakers fail to comprehend that men and women are typically in charge of different crops, animals, tasks, and income-generating activities, and as a result, their extension needs differ (<https://www.manage.gov.in/studymaterial/GM-E.pdf>). Several research studies and articles have shown that gender mainstreaming in agriculture is a great contribution for food security.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to analyse if the identified gender issues reflected in the related literature are present or happening in the agricultural sector in Iligan City. More specifically, this research project seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the gender issues identified in the related literature present or happening in the agricultural sector of Iligan?

The following are the identified gender issues:

- rural women are much more over-burdened than men
- technologies are reported to have affected farm women adversely
- lack of female targeted extension services
- women's landholdings are three times smaller than men
- non participation of women in decision making at various levels
- depriving the women of the benefits arising out of any technological advances
- Based on the findings of the study, what gender mainstreaming programs to address the present issues in the agricultural sector of Iligan?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Gender Issues in Agriculture

Due to many vocations, rural women are far more overworked than males. According to studies of women in agriculture, they work 15-16 hours every day on average. Farm operations, which are time and labor consuming, boring, repetitive, and prone to drudgery, are primarily carried out by women, according to studies. Because these tasks are performed by hand, they result in significant physical and mental exhaustion, as well as health issues (<https://www.manage.gov.in/study material/GM-E.pdf>).

Furthermore, agriculture remains the primary source of rural employment in Sub-Saharan Africa for both men and women. Globally, women make approximately 43% of the formal agricultural workforce. Rural women comprise the majority of the world's population. Rural men are more likely to be self-employed (and consequently less likely to earn a living) than urban women.

Agricultural inputs, loans, information, and technology are among the resources that women have less access to than males as well as training/extension. A key challenge for women farmers is the dearth of female-targeted extension services. Females only 15% of extension workers in the globe are women. When women connect with men, they typically feel uneasy. Extension professionals, particularly male extension agents, are sometimes oblivious to the needs of female farmers. (<https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf docs/pnaec 808.pdf>).

Women's landholdings are three times lower than men's globally, and they lack land in many countries. Property rights are also different for men and women in terms of crop, household, and livestock

management (https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnaec_808.pdf).

Gender mainstreaming activities in Ethiopia's agricultural research system have been ongoing since the mid-1990s, with the goal of encouraging gender disaggregated data collecting and analysis. However, formal gender mainstreaming activities began in 1999, as part of the research system's institutionalization of gender concerns. Various gender mainstreaming approaches, such as establishing a gender mainstreaming unit at the headquarters and gender focal units at research centers, sorting out gender mainstreaming priorities, organizational assessment, development and implementation of a national gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan, capacity building for gender analysis, establishment of international research links, and enforcement of women's rights, have been implemented since 1999. Positive workplace initiatives had been implemented (Zegeye, Teshome, & Musema, 2017).

Gender components in agricultural research have been studied to produce and transfer client- and need-based agricultural technologies, in addition to the supply and transfer of research products. Gender mainstreaming holds significance as it embraces the fundamental notion that individuals, regardless of their gender, encounter distinct circumstances and prospects throughout life. They possess divergent interests and requirements while being influenced in varying manners by social, political, and economic factors, as explained by the Department for International Development (DFID) (2009). As a direct consequence of their gender (Zegeye, Teshome, & Musema, 2017).

Women must be empowered and gender mainstreamed in agriculture, not only because of the magnitude and importance of their contribution, but also to ensure equal economic connections and a progressive social environment. Building the capacity of the enormous human capital (women) supporting agricultural production, marketing, and consumption is critical (Sharma, Kumar, Ravula & Tyagi, 2016). Gender mainstreaming has been highlighted as one of the project's important goals, and as a result, a gender mainstreaming strategy has been developed.

As part of the initiative, a number of interventions have been developed with the goal of empowering women in community agriculture. These include the development of women's self-help groups (SHGs), farmer training, and more. Crop displays, water harvesting techniques, and novel agricultural practices for women farmers value chains, common property resource management (CPRs), and other initiatives that have aided farmers in enhancing their living conditions (Sharma, Kumar, Ravula & Tyagi, 2016).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive research design using quantitative approach was used in determining the identified gender issues reflected in the related literature that are also present or happening in the agricultural sector in Iligan. The findings will be the basis of proposing gender mainstreaming programs to address the gender issues. In choosing the participants, stratified random sampling will be used because it is a sampling method in which a population group is divided into one or many distinct units – called strata – based on shared behaviors or characteristics. Stratification is the process of classifying a set of data into categories or subgroups based on a set of predetermined criteria. After classifying the participants based on stratified random sampling, purposive and convenience sampling was used.

The participants of this study were ninety-five (95) participants. Participants were from the office of agriculture sector in Iligan City, LGU barangay officials and household farmers and teachers in Dep Ed Agricultural Schools of Iligan City.

The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, monthly family income and educational attainment. It can be observed that most of the respondents were female with 64.2 percent of the total number of respondents and 34 out of 95 respondents were male. In terms of age most of the respondents are

in ages 49 years old and above with 22 responses, followed by the ages ranging from 34-38 years old with 15 responses and respondents with ages 24-28 years old, 39-43 years old and 44-48 years old have the least frequency with 8 responses each. Monthly family income P5000.00 and below has the highest responses made by the respondents with 63 responses and 66.3 percent of the total number of respondents while income ranging from P46,000.00 and above has the lesser responses with 2.1 percent. In terms of educational attainment 38 out of 95 respondents has attained secondary level in education. 18.9 percent of the respondents were in the elementary level and 17.9 percent has acquired post graduate degrees while 15.8 percent attained college level in education.

This study utilized a survey questionnaire to gather the data. Then the survey questionnaire was formulated, validated and sent to the purposely selected research respondents. The questionnaire consisted of 11 items which were divided into two parts. The first part was asking about the demographic profile of the respondents that ask about, the sex, age, income and educational background. The second part of the questionnaire is asking the respondents experiences and perception about the common gender issues that are present in the agricultural sector of Iligan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. What are the gender issues identified in the related literature present or happening in the agricultural sector of Iligan?

Table 1. Gender Issues that are present or happening in the Agricultural Sector of Iligan

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Interpretation
1. Women in rural areas are far more overworked than men.	3.1368	1.17247	neutral
2. Farm women are said to have suffered as a result of technological advancements.	2.9579	.93303	neutral
3. A scarcity of services aimed specifically at women	2.7053	1.17486	neutral
4. The landholdings of women are three times smaller than those of men.	3.2211	1.33033	neutral
5. The size of women's landholdings is three times that of men's.	3.2000	1.21690	neutral
6. Women's non-participation in decision-making at various levels	2.8105	1.24878	neutral
7. Denying women access to the benefits of any technological advancements	2.7368	1.01280	neutral
Overall Mean	2.9671	.63902	neutral
Legend: 4.20–5.00 (strongly agree); 3.40–4.19 (agree); 2.60–3.39 (neutral); 1.80–2.59 (disagree); 1.00–1.79 (strongly disagree)			

Table 1 presents the gender issues that recognized or happening in the agriculture sector of Iligan city. On the average respondents are neutral to farmers landholdings that women have smaller holdings than men and in the services for women respondents are neutral that there is scarcity in terms of services that are specifically given to women farmers. Overall, in terms of gender issues that are present in the sector of agriculture in Iligan city the respondents are neutral. It implies that respondents observed that these gender

issues are somehow nor happening or present in the agricultural sector of the city. It can be deduced that respondents may have or have not experience these issues or it might be that the respondents were not informed on what are the gender issues identified. As it was recommended in the study of Ani and Casasola 2020, that the data from surveys should include important information for men and women as a valuable source in creating programs and interventions in agriculture sector that are more holistic and gender-biased. Also, it was mentioned in the study that due to lack of consciousness in women's legal rights and entitlement contributes on different inequality issues in agriculture (Ani & Casasola, 2020). Moreover, it is integral to educate rural communities that women are in par with men in terms of knowledge and skills in farming, also women are capable in accepting as overseer of farm operation and food production (ILO, 2015)

2. Based on the findings of the study, what gender mainstreaming programs to address the present issues in the agricultural sector of Iligan?

Based on the findings mentioned the following programs were suggested to address the present issues in the agricultural sector of Iligan and to help inform the farmers, teachers, staff and community that were involved in agricultural industry.

Suggested Programs

Gender Mainstreaming Seminar

Gender Mainstreaming or Gender and Development (GAD) mainstreaming is the major global strategy for ensuring that the government pursues gender equality in all aspects of the development process to realize the vision of a gender-responsive society women and men both contribute to and gain from progress in equal measure (PCW, 2022).

The program will aid agricultural sector of Iligan in giving out additional information on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming policies that are suitable for farmers, teachers, staff and administrators. It can give a comprehensive knowledge about relationship between men and women in accessing and control their resources, decision-making and benefits given by the agriculture sector. According to PCW, the process of gender mainstreaming calls for the modification of institutional structures, culture, and practices so that gender concerns are no longer seen to be minor concerns. The gender mainstreaming strategy is unique in that it aims to institutionalize equality by incorporating gender-sensitive norms and practices into the framework, procedures, and environment of public policy (Daly, 2005).

Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDD) Seminar

The Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDD) was developed to provide a common instrument in integrating gender perspective in development programs and projects among government agencies, donor organizations and other stakeholders. HGDD is a vital contribution to this process of gender mainstreaming. HGDD guides the integration of a Gender and Development (GAD) perspective into the various stages of development planning and project implementation, as well as address the challenges related to inadequate resources. (ODA-GAD Network,2022).

The HGDD will help provide suitable information and guides for agricultural sector of Iligan City as it will provide resources and develop their own GAD checklist which is tailored to the sector need. It will also help facilitate gender mainstreaming efforts by using guidelines and checklist that helps achieved results and identify best practices with promising GAD prospects.

PIMME Seminar

In order to achieve gender equality or Gender and Development (GAD) objectives, the successful execution

of the project, the executing agency, or the project itself plays a crucial role. The Project Management Office (PMO) assumes a critical role in this process as it is responsible for interpreting and implementing initiatives and goals related to gender equality. The effectiveness of these efforts is reflected in the outcomes produced. While programs and initiatives have a limited duration, the sustainability of the changes they introduce or foster depends on the extent to which the agenda for change has been integrated into the core concerns of the government agency, office, or unit. Additionally, it relies on the capacities developed within the organization to manage the transition. This principle is also applicable to GAD program or project activities. This also holds for GAD efforts of programs or projects. The focus at this stage must therefore be on both the management of the project and the participation of the implementing government agency or unit. This also applies to GAD program or project activities. At this point, the emphasis must be on both project management and the participation of the implementing government department or unit.

SUMMARY

Stakeholders in the agricultural sector in Iligan City, including farmers, educators, employees, and administrators, frequently deal with gender-related problems and difficulties. Some respondents might be completely cognizant of these problems, while others might not. Respondents do, however, generally agree that gender analysis and involvement are critical for all parties. The necessity of gender-neutral duties and activities in agricultural organizations is emphasized in the conclusion. Members from all throughout the sector show their support for inclusivity and gender equality, as well as their readiness to take part in Gender and Development (GAD) activities and conduct gender analysis. It is suggested that seminars on gender mainstreaming, PIMME, and the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG) be held in order to provide the agriculture sector with the tools it needs to effectively address gender issues through information sharing and the use of guidelines.

CONCLUSION

Gender issues were present in many sectors in the country which the government are addressing through agencies that will help in implementing the plans and programs in order to overcome the challenges in gender equality. Based on the findings in the study the following conclusions were drawn:

- Gender issues were present in the agricultural sector but constituents cannot really assess maybe due to lack of awareness and information about gender equality.
- Women farmers experiences were indifferent about gender equality in managing farms, land acquisitions and programs in the agriculture sector.
- Gender analysis plans and programs were implemented but it lacks participation of staff and constituents.
- Gender analysis might not be stressed in policies and activities in the agricultural sector.
- In decision making process about gender analysis administrators gives information and communicates with its constituents and stakeholders.

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