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Role of Rural Women in Production and Marketing of Agricultural product in Khormal Sub-District -Halabja Governorate

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the role of rural women in production and marketing of agricultural products in Zalm village, and identify the differences in production and marketing of agricultural products of rural women's role according to some variables (Age, Level of Education, Marital status, number of family, Standard of Living, Profession and Women's income). The research population involved all women in zalm village included (50) women. The data was collected through personal interviews; questionnaire was prepared for this purpose, to confirm the validity the questionnaire was reviewed by some experts. The results showed that the Role of rural women's in Agricultural production was medium tend to low, while the Role of rural women's in marketing of agricultural products was low tend to medium. The results indicated significant differences in women's role of agricultural production according to (Level of Education, Standard of Living, and profession), while no-significant differences according to (age, Marital status, number of family, Women's income), also The results appeared significant differences in women's role of agricultural marketing according (Level of Education, and profession), while no significant differences according (age, Marital status, number of family, Standard of Living, Women's income). Depending on the results we conclude that the work in the agricultural sector has changed due to the lack of government support for farmers in terms of providing agriculture Requirements for production or marketing of their products. The result shows that the level of education affects the role of women in production and marketing, as well as educational levels leads to an increase in their awareness and culture, and the expanding their knowledge of the importance of the agricultural sector. The Researcher recommended encouraging and supporting rural women to engage in agricultural work by the responsible authorities, and increasing their awareness of the importance of working in this field through the use of various extension methods, as well as working to provide agricultural production and marketing requirements so that their potential is properly exploited for the development of the agricultural sector.

KEY WORDS:

Rural Women, Role of rural women, Agricultural Production, Agricultural Marketing, Agricultural product

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دور المرأة الريفية في انتاج وتسويق المنتجات الزراعية في ناحية خورمال – محافظة حلبجة

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الخلاصة

استهدف هذا البحث تحديد دور المرأة الريفية في مجال انتاج و تسويق المنتجات الزراعية في قرية زلم التابعة لمحافظة حلبجة ، كذلك تحديد الفروقات في دور المرأة الريفية وفقا لبعض المتغيرات. شمل مجتمع البحث جميع النساء في قرية زلم (50) امرأة. تم جمع البيانات من خلال المقابلة الشخصية ، وتم اعداد استمارة استبيان لهذا الغرض ، و لتأكد من صحة الاستمارة تم عرضها على مجموعة من الخبراء في هذا المجال. اظهرت النتائج ان دور المرأة الريفية في انتاج و تسويق المنتجات الزراعية متوسط يميل الى الانخفاض ، و اشارت النتائج الى وجود فروقات معنوية في دور المرأة في الانتاج الزراعي وفقا لمتغيرات (المستوى التعليمي ، المستوى المعيشي ، المهنة)، بينما لا توجد فروقات معنوية وفقا لمتغيرات (العمر ، الحالة الاجتماعية ، عدد افراد الاسرة ، دخل المرأة). كذلك اظهرت النتائج وجود فروقات معنوية في دور المرأة في التسويق الزراعي وفقا لمتغير (المستوى التعليمي ، والمهنة)، بينما لا توجد فروقات معنوية وفقا لمتغيرات (العمر ، الحالة الاجتماعية ، عدد افراد الاسرة ، المستوى المعيشي ، دخل المرأة). كما يتضح من الاستنتاجات ان دور المرأة في الإنتاج المتوسط يميل إلى الانخفاض ، ومنخفض يميل إلى المتوسط في تسويق المنتجات الزراعية. نستنتج من ذلك أن العمل في القطاع الزراعي قد تغير بسبب نقص الدعم الحكومي للمزارعين من حيث توفير المتطلبات الزراعية لإنتاج أو تسويق منتجاتهم. وأظهرت النتيجة أن مستوى التعليم يؤثر على دور المرأة في الإنتاج والتسويق. نستنتج أن التحصيل العلمي يؤدي إلى زيادة وعيهم وثقافتهم ، وكذلك توسيع معرفتهم بأهمية القطاع الزراعي.

أوصى الباحث بتشجيع و دعم المرأة الريفية في الانخراط في العمل الزراعي من قبل الجهات المسؤولة ، وزيادة وعيهم بأهمية العمل في هذا المجال من خلال استخدام انواع الطرق الارشادية، كذلك العمل على توفير مستلزمات الانتاج والتسويق الزراعي حتى يتم استغلال امكاناتهم بشكل صحيح من اجل تنمية وتطوير قطاع الزراعة.

كلمات المفتاحية: المرأة الريفية، دور المرأة الريفية، الانتاج الزراعي ، التسويق الزراعي ، المنتجات الزراعية.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is known as a fundamental instrument for sustainable development and it helps in poverty reduction as it is the main source of food, income and employment for the rural population of the world, therefore, agriculture plays a crucial role in production system. And it is an engine of growth in developing countries where it is the main occupation of the poor people. In Area, most of the women are major producers of food (Kanani, 2020).

Rural people are mainly dependent on agriculture and Agro-based productivity (Islam and Bhuyan, 2020). Rural Women played a major role in agriculture production in developing countries (Das et al., 2019), (Onyalo, 2019), (Islam and Bhuyan, 2020), (Rai, 2017), (Al-Doski, and Saleh, 2017). The roles of rural women vary in comparison with the roles of urban women since the former have multiple social and economic family activities; they are responsible for saving food consumption of their living units; they are the first school of the social upbringing of the children; they are the strong and continuous element of supporting the head of the household, in family decision making, besides their active support in the production activity (Al-Doski, and Saleh, 2017).

Women remain as a backbone of agricultural workforce (Arunkumar and Kalirajan, 2020). Their role in agriculture and rural society is fundamental to rural development (Onyalo, 2019). Have been contributing to socio-economic productivity since the starting of human history (Islam and Bhuyan, 2020). Rural Women form the most important productive work force in the economy and marketing of majority of the developing nations. Rural women often manage complex households and pursue multiple livelihood strategies (Rai, 2017). The practice of agriculture is one of the most important activities of women in the rural area as a source of income (Famiwole and Okeke, 2012). The women role in farming and marketing is an important aspect of increasing farmer household income (Astria and Tinggogoy, 2022). In addition, women play a critical role in agriculture right from the soil preparation to postharvest activities (crop and livestock production) at subsistence and commercial levels. Besides, women produce food and cash crops and manage mixed agricultural operations, they are extensively still involved and considered part of the agricultural labor force ((Das *et al.*, 2019), (Onyalo, 2019)).

They are largely engaged in small-scale activities and have better access to the local market. The challenge is to aggregate their small-scale production and improve the access to markets. This needs capacity development for access of women to technology, financial services and markets (Patil and Babus, 2018). In addition, the entitlements of female farmers will be the key to enhance agriculture productivity (Rai, 2017). Despite their role in agriculture in developing countries, women remain limited to their access to critical resources and services. In all of these, the working competencies of the rural women can be strengthened and upgraded by providing training, along with different factors training is one of the most important. Training refers to the “acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relates to specific useful skills” (Iftikhar and Ahmad, 2007). Therefore, this paper examines four main issues in an attempt to highlight the role of women in agricultural production and marketing in Zalm village in Hawraman, in Halabja district, through answering the following research questions: What is the role of rural women in agricultural production in Zalm village? What is the role of rural women in marketing of agricultural products in Zalm village? What are the differences in agricultural production and marketing of rural women according to some socio-economic characteristics in Zalm village?

The main objectives of this study are to determine the role of rural women in agricultural production in Zalm village, determine the role of rural women in marketing of agricultural

products in Zalm village, and identify the differences in agricultural production and agricultural product marketing of rural women according to some socio-economic characteristics in Zalm village.

Research Hypotheses:

There is a significant difference in the mean of total roles in agricultural production and marketing according to (age, level of education). There is a significant difference in the mean of total roles in agricultural production and marketing according to (marital state , numbers of family). There is a significant difference in the mean of total roles in agricultural production and marketing according to (standard of living, profession, women's income)

PROCEDURAL DEFINITIONS

Rural Women: Rural women form the backbone of the agricultural labour force across much of the developing world. who are active agents of economic and social change and environmental protection.

Role of rural women: Rural women play a key role in supporting their households reproductive and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being.

Agricultural Production: Agricultural production is a series of activities that result in a product that will ultimately be sold at retail.

Agricultural Marketing: is a process that involves the assembling, storage, processing, transportation, packaging, grading and distribution of different agricultural commodities across the country.

Agricultural product: means any product or commodity, raw or processed, that is marketed for human consumption.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Zalm village is one of the villages that is built by the hands and arms of its inhabitants from mountain stones. The village was rebuilt after the 1991 uprising. The houses are made of mud and stone. The stones of the mountains are like cement. The secret of the charm of Zalm village is dense and tall trees. In the past, there were more than 150 households but now there are 40 households **the reason for this is due to the migration of the population from village to**

city. The source of Zalm is a high lake that falls like white snow from the Hawraman Mountains. It is a sweet and Healthful water. According to the villagers, the source of the water is unknown, the residents of Hawraman and Sharazoor use it for gardening and agriculture. A few steps away from the village, there is the Zalm water source, which has been a Source of income to the villager. Zalm village is located in the east of Khormal township. The residents of Zalm are engaged in livestock and agriculture.

Geographical Span: This research conducted in Zalm village in hawraman area of Halabja governorate of the Kurdistan region-Iraq.

Human Span: The research population included all women of Zalm village in hawraman area of Halabja governorate of the Kurdistan region-Iraq, included (50) respondents.

Research Questionnaire: the **questionnaire was used to collecting the data as instrument** to measure the role of rural women's in Production and Marketing in Agricultural product , which consisted of two parts: The first part: Included a number of questions related to the personal characteristics of the women, including (Age, Level of Education, Marital status, number of family, Standard of Living, Profession and Women's income), while the second part included statements related to the determination the role of women in agricultural production and marketing of the Agricultural products. To evaluate each item of the total roles of production and marketing three alternatives were assigned to each item as an indicator to determine the level of the items. The alternative of achievement levels (Rarely, Sometime, Always) was detected with the numbers of (1,2,3) respectively. **After the data was collected by face to face the data were arranged and classified after analyzing with SPSS software.**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To determine the Total Women's Role in Production the respondents were classified into three levels depending on the actual range as described in table (1). It is appearing that the (76%) medium tends to low. This result is indicated the existence that the women in rural areas have less Role in Production. This result supports the second aim of this research also indicates that.

Table 1: Distribution of rural women’s role of production

N	Levels of total roles	Frequency	Percentage%	Mean of Total roles
1	Low (8 - 12) degree	18	36	10.88
2	Medium (13 - 17) degree	20	40	14.45
3	High (18 - 22) degree	12	24	19.50
	Total	50	100	

Minimum = 8, Maximum =22, Std. Dev. =3.57, Mean=14.38

To determine the Total Women’s Role in marketing the respondents were classified into three levels depending on the actual range as described in table (2). It is shows that the (94%) medium tends to low. This result is indicated the existence that the women in rural areas have less role in marketing, despite the Women have importance role in almost every sphere of agriculture activity.

Table 2: Distribution of rural women’s role of marketing

N	Levels of total roles	Frequency	Percentage%	Mean of Total roles
1	Low (6 - 8) degree	30	60	7.90
2	Medium (9 - 11) degree	17	34	9.58
3	High (12 - 14) degree	3	6	13.00
	Total	50	100	

Minimum = 6, Maximum =14, Std. Dev. =1.46, Mean=8.78

To determine the differences in women’s role in production and marketing (as a dependent variable) according to the different characteristics of the women (as independent variables), t-test and analysis of variance were used.

1.Age: The result in table 3,4 indicated that majority (32%) of the respondents fell within the active age range of (45-54) years. This implies that the majority of respondents are productive stage in life. F- test was used to find the difference in the total role of production and marketing. The calculated F-value of production (2.25), as well as the calculated of marketing (2.17), are less than the table value, this means that there is no significant difference in the Women’s Role in Production and marketing according to age.

Meaning that the age is no affecting to women’s role of production and marketing.

2.Level of Education: The result revealed that (44%) of the respondents had illiteracy level of education, this means nearly half of respondent’s had low level of education. Analysis of variance was used to find the difference in the total roles of production and marketing, the calculated F-

value of production (3.86), as well as the calculated F-value of marketing (5.27) are more than the table value. This means that there are significant differences in women's role in production and marketing according to the education.

3. Family condition: The results indicated that the majority of the respondents are married (60%), to suit the condition of the women in the study area to enhance productivity of the double role of home keeper and other activities including marketing. t- test was used to find the difference in the total roles of production and marketing. The calculated t-test of production (1.08) and the calculated t-test of marketing (0.86), are less than the table value, this means that there are no significant differences in marital in Production and marketing role. It might be of their customs and traditions which makes female to be continued in producing and marketing even, if they are single or married.

4. Family Number: The results appeared that the majority of the respondents (52%) belonged to (5-9) family numbers category. F- test was used to find the difference in women's role of production and marketing, the calculated F-value of production (0.13) also the calculated F-value of marketing (0.073), are less than the table value, this means that there is no significant difference in the Women's Role in Production and marketing according to family numbers. This implies that rural women had obsession with working and hand-made producing in Zalm Village.

5. Standard of living: The result indicated that majority of rural women (70%) were from medium to good income group, it might be due to the reason that annual income is certainly a mean to improve livelihood. To find the difference between standard of living and women's role of productions and marketing F-test was used. the calculated F-value of production (2.37), is less than the table value, it means there is no significant difference of women's role of production. while the calculated F-value of marketing (7.67) is more than the table value. it means there is a significant difference of women's role of production. It may be attributed the greater role of women in marketing it led to increase standard of living.

6. Profession: the results revealed that the highest rate of respondents (76%) is housewife. To find the difference between profession and women's role of productions and marketing F-test was used. the calculated F-value of production (7.18), is more than the table value, it means there is no significant difference of women's role of production. while the calculated F-value of marketing (14.01) is more than the table value. it means there is a significant difference of women's role in

production and marketing according to profession, it is attributed to those who work in other fields they have more desire to work and have more ambitions.

7. Personal income for whom: the results indicated that the majority (%78) of the women are working for herself and her family. To find the difference between her income for whom and women’s role of productions and marketing F-test was used. the calculated F-value of production (0.20), also the calculated F-value of marketing (2.99) are less than the table, it means there is no significant difference of women’s role in production and marketing. it means the income is no effect of women’s role in production and marketing.

Table:(3) Distribution the women’s role in production according to some variables

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentag e%	Means role value	t-value, F-value	Significant
Age/ years	15 – 24	4	8	18.500	F 2.252	0.06 N.S
	25 – 34	12	24	15.58		
	35 - 44	10	20	14.10		
	45 - 54	16	32	13.50		
	55 - 64	5	10	13.20		
	65 & more than	3	6	11.66		
Level of Education	Illiterate	22	44	12.45	F 3.86	0.009 Sig
	Reads and writes	12	24	15.08		
	Primary	2	4	16.00		
	Middle School	6	12	16.66		
Marital Status	High school	8	16	16.50	t 1.08	0.28 N.S
	Married	30	60	13.93		
Number of family	Single	20	40	15.05	F 0.13	0.87 N.S
	1 - 4	23	46	14.60		
	5 - 9	26	52	14.23		
Standard of Living	10 - 13	1	2	13.00	F 2.37	0.082 N.S
	Very good	12	24	14.91		
	Good	20	40	12.85		
	Medium	15	30	15.60		
Profession	Bad	3	6	16.33	F 7.18	0.00 Sig
	Housewife	38	76	13.162		
	Employee	9	18	17.00		
Women’s income	Another Job	3	6	20.00	F 0.20	0.81 N.S
	My self	3	6	15.00		
	My family	8	16	15.00		
	Both of them	39	78	14.00		

Table:(4) Distribution the women’s role in marketing according to some variables

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage %	Means role value	t-value, F-value	Significance
Age/ years	15 – 24	4	8	10.75	F 2.17	0.074 N.S
	25 – 34	12	24	8.91		
	35 - 44	10	20	8.80		
	45 - 54	16	32	8.43		
	55 - 64	5	10	8.00		
	65 & more than	3	6	8.66		
Level of Education	Illiterate	22	44	8.22	F 5.27	0.001 Sig
	Reads and writes	12	24	9.00		
	Primary	2	4	8.50		
	Middle School	6	12	10.83		
Marital Status	High school	8	16	8.50	t 0.86	0.39 N.S
	Married	30	60	9.00		
Number of family	Single	20	40	8.63	F 0.073	0.92 N.S
	1 - 4	23	46	8.69		
	5 - 9	26	52	8.84		
Standard of living	10 - 13	1	2	9.00	F 7.67	0.00 Sig
	Very good	12	24	8.50		
	Good	20	40	8.05		
	Medium	15	30	9.53		
Profession	Bad	3	6	11.00	F 14.01	0.00 Sig
	Housewife	38	76	8.71		
	Employee	9	18	8.88		
Women’s income	Another Job	3	6	12.66	2.99	0.06 N.S
	My self	3	6	10.66		
	My family	8	16	8.87		
	Both of them	39	78	8.61		

CONCLUSIONS

The result indicated that the women’s role in production medium tends to low and marketing of Agricultural low tends to medium, we conclude from this that work in the agricultural sector has decreased due to the lack of government support for farmers in terms of providing agricultural production requirements or marketing their products. The result shows that the level of education effect on the women’s role in production and marketing, we conclude that the education achievement leads to increasing their awareness and culture, as well as expanding their knowledge of the importance of the agricultural sector. The results appeared that the profession variable effect on the women’s role in production and marketing, we conclude that the category

of another job the category of those who work in other fields are the housewife at the same time and they are farmers, and this is evidence that they are active and enthusiastic to work. The results shows that the level of living effect on the women's role of marketing, we conclude that the increased women's role in agricultural marketing activity affects improvement of the standard of living.

RECOMMENDATION

Depending on the results the Ministry of Agriculture have to focus to encouraging and supporting rural women to engage in agricultural work. Increasing their awareness of the importance of working in this field through using of various agricultural extension methods. Depending on the results the Ministry of Agriculture have to focus to help people of rural areas by providing production and agricultural requirements, and to help them in marketing their products, especially the village of Zalm, as it is a village specialized in all areas of agricultural production and food processing. Encouraging rural communities, especially this village, to work in agricultural production and food processing, considering that the agricultural profession has a large income when it is properly exploited. Through training courses, field visits and interviews.

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