



INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

**ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE
CASE IN SODDACHIWOREDA OF OROMIA REGIONAL STATE,
ETHIOPIA**

By

Shimekit Fikadu

November 14/ /2014

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Enrolment No: ID1218870

**A DISSERTATION /THESIS SUBMITTED TO INDIRA GANDHI
NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT OF MASTER OF ART DEGREE IN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

November, 2014

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Dissertation entitledASSESSMENT OF FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE IN SODO DACHI WOREDA OF OROMIA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIAsubmitted by me for the partial fulfillment of M.A. in Rural Development to Indira Gandhi National University, (IGNOU) New Delhi, is my original work and has not been submitted earlier to IGNOU or to any other institutions for the fulfillment of the requirement for any course of the study. I also declare that no chapter of this manuscript in whole or in part is lifted and incorporated in this report from earlier work done by me or others.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr. ShimekitFikadu, student of M.A (RD) from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, was working under my supervision and guidance for his project work for the course MRDP-001. His project work entitled ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE IN SODO DACHI WOREDA OF OROMIA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA which he is submitting, is his genuine and original work.

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ACRONYMS

ARDO Agricultural and Rural Development Office

CADU Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit

CIPPs Comprehensive Integrated Package Projects

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization

GDP Gross Domestic Product

ILC International Land Coalition

MOA Mister of Agriculture

MPP Minimum Package Program

MoFED Mister of Finance and Economy Development

PADEPs Peasant Agricultural Development Extension Projects

OAU Organization of Africa Union

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID United Stat of America International Department

WARDOWoreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office

WADUWolayita Agricultural Development Unit

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to assess the factors affecting rural women contribution in Agricultural development in SodoDachiWoreda of Oromia National Regional State. The research applied quantitative research method where 120 women were selected as sample respondents by using simple random sampling techniques. Triangulation method was applied in data collection, data presentation and analysis of findings.

Study findings revealed that though women have significant contribution in agricultural activities they were less involved in final decision making concerning major agricultural issues. The finding also identified the major factors affected women's contribution / participation in agricultural development. Poor access to Agricultural extension service, lack of ownership and control over productive resources, lack of credit facilities, illiteracy, low social status of women and overburden responsibilities of women in household chores were the major constraints to women participation in agricultural development.

This study forwarded recommendation to women constraints in order to ensure women's equal access to and control over economic productive resource, to address women special needs, to empower and increase their participation both in agricultural production and sharing of the benefit from what they produced.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Women are equal partners to men in all chains or aspects of agricultural production. Women are responsible for at least 70% of food staple production in Africa. They are also important in other agricultural activities, including food processing, marketing, cash crop production, and livestock (World Bank 1989).

Rural women play a key role in agricultural sector production by working with full passion in production of crops right from the soil preparation till post-harvest and food security activities (Ahmed and Hussain, 2004). It is estimated that women are responsible for 70 percent of actual farm work and constitute up to 60 percent of the farming population. Women's active involvement in decision making is considered essential for rapid economic development of any country. Despite women's critical contribution to the family income through productive activities, no recognition is given to them as an important contributor and their contribution is not recorded. They are still remaining invisible workers Choudhary and Singh,(2003).

In rural areas of Ethiopia, women play a major role in agricultural production. They are equally efficient in seed bed preparation, tilling, sowing, fertilizer application, fodder cutting, weeding, intercultural operations, transplanting, husking, threshing, drying, storing cereals and fodder, selling agricultural commodities and harvesting of all the crops, fruits and vegetables. Rural women have significant contribution in the labor force for agricultural activities. Yet, the role of women in these activities, so important economically, has remained obscure for long because women seldom played any major roles in political activities or decision making processes. They also face various difficulties on agricultural productivity and they operate agricultural activities under greater constraints than men

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world with high illiterate rates. Illiteracy affects women to a higher extent due to heavy household workloads, cultural influence, and lack of know-how. However, it is impossible to think of development while neglecting the women work force, as women represent the major force for rural changes, largely as an untapped resource that could boost rural development and lead to higher growth rates and increased food production

For development to take root in our country women's role should be recognized and they have to be given their share over all the properties. These days' government and non-government organizations are trying to help women get recognition from society which they are part of what is more surprising is that most women themselves do not realize that they are prevented from owning what they deserve recognition and appreciation(DawitTesfaye, 2012 cited on Lemlem et al., 2010). As other parts of Ethiopia, the study area has the same problem that give less attention to women role in their everyday activity.

Most development theorists consider women participation as an essential component of development. Chambers (2008) explains women participation as the growth of fundamental Human dignity and human responsibility in the productive and reproductive decision making and action, deliberate and thoughtful. Guy (1992), in the formulating of participation views emphasize on an important issue and it is conscious efforts of social groups to control their destiny and living conditions that is one of the most important criteria is participation rate of women in decisions regarding to producing and affairs of the family.

By taking the aforementioned facts in to account it is possible to define participation as a process through which all members of a community or households(including women and

girls) are involved in and have influence on decisions related to development activities that will affect them.

In this study, the researcher considered three types of participation. These are;

- I. Women participation in performing agricultural activities
- II. Extent of Women's Participation in decision making in house household resources allocation
- III. Participation in sharing of benefit obtained from farming activities

1.2.Statement of the problem

Women suffer from different types of powerlessness in social and economic sphere of life which reflects in their less education level, less income, control over their own income, less bargaining power in selling their own produce and labor, less participation in decision making, less access to production inputs and resources and employment opportunity than men. This vulnerable situation resulted in an overall dependency of women on their male kin through their life cycle. Many of the activities like caring for children, elders and the ill, fetching water and fuel for cooking and heat, maintaining households and preparing food in which rural women engage in their livelihood strategies were not defined as economically active employment in national accounts systems, yet are crucial to the well-being of household members(FAO , 2010).

Women are under privileged when it comes to having access to the tools of development and the means of raising the quality of life such as access to farm inputs, credit facility and extension services (Atala, 1988). Despite undeniable evidences of women's positive roles in the agricultural sector and growing awareness of the need to reach out to women farmers, agricultural extension services are generally geared toward male farmers. Bias toward male farmers is evident in the delivery of extension services which is generally provided by male

extension agents to men on the assumption that extension message will “trickle across” to women. Unfortunately, the evidences clearly show that this assumption don not work (World Bank, 1989).

From aforementioned literature review one can understand that there are different constraints which inhibit women participation in agricultural development. The interest of the researcher is to explore the extent of women’s contribution / participation and their constraints in agricultural development in SodoDachiWoreda. The researcher assumes that access to credit, resources, extension services and inputs, poor membership in grass root organization, household chores; culture, etc. Impede the contribution of women in agricultural development in the study area. The researcher choose these socio- economic factors because of their perceived influence on the participation of women in agricultural development in the study area and also because they are fundamental and significant resources to agricultural development. It is hoped that the findings of the study will foster better understanding of the gender- related constraints confronting women and also come up with needed recommendations to solve them.

1.3.Objectives of the study

2. To assess the nature and extent of women involvement in agricultural activities in SodoDachiWoreda.
3. To assess the Extent of Women’s Participation in decision making in house household resources allocation in SododDachiWoreda
4. To identify constraints limiting women’s contribution in agricultural development in SodoDachiWoreda

1.4. Significant of the study

Azahari (2008) reveals that, there is evidence indicating that the elimination of constraints to women's participation in agricultural activities can lead to agricultural development and women can earn recognition as important players in the development process.

The study will assess the extent of women participation and the barriers hinder their involvement in farming activities. The result of the study will have paramount importance to policy makers, SodoDachiworeda experts and Extension workers to plan and implement gender specific agricultural project/ program. It will also increase the understanding and awareness of gender issues in agriculture and rural development.

1.5. Scope of the study (universe)

The study was conducted in SodoDachiworeda, Oromia regional state, Ethiopia. The woreda has a total of 18 rural kebeles and one town. This study was limited to only three kebeles which are located near to 'Tere' town (main town of SodoDachiWoreda). This may limit some important aspect of gender issues existing in distant kebeles of the Woreda, finance and inaccessibility of the distant kebeles were the major constraints not to select distant kebeles. Nevertheless, this study will hopefully give insight in to women's contribution in agricultural development in sododDachiWoreda.

1.6.Important Terminologies

Agriculture

Agriculture is the cultivation of plant, animals and other products used to enhance and sustain human life (free encyclopedia). It is the science of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, and other products to sustain the life of the farmers and to market, if any left.

Agriculture is a Science because it employs scientific skill and methods to develop new strains of crops trees, animals, fish, and birds and develops innovative techniques to manage them under varying soil and environmental conditions.

Participation: Participation is a process through which all members of a community or households are involved in and have influence on decisions related to agricultural activities that will affect them. In this study participation indicates extent of women involvement in performing agricultural activities and decision making

Gender: For this study, gender refer to the socially constructed roles of men and women in agriculture

Kebele: It is the lowest administrative unit of Ethiopia. It is part of a Woreda. It is mostly similar to a localized and delimited group of people. Each kebele contain at least 500 households

Woreda: It is the second lowest (next to kebele) level administrative unit of Ethiopia. It is similar to district in India. It is it is composed of a number of kebeles

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Agriculture in Ethiopia: An overview

Ethiopia's economy is predominantly agrarian where Agriculture plays a key role in the social and economic development. The sector employs more than 83% of the population, accounts for 46.3% of the Nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is the source of over 90% of the export). Small holder agriculture is the dominant sub sector of agriculture accounting for 95% of the total cultivated land and production revenues (MoFED, 2007)

The nature of agriculture that has been practiced in Ethiopia is similar to those Sub Saharan Countries. It is not modernized, rather traditional in the way people practice it.

However, governments of different regimes of the country were attempting to introduce different mechanisms that were significant for agricultural development. Among these mechanisms, agricultural extension system is one of the primary vehicles for diffusing technologies.

Agriculture in Ethiopia has been practiced for many centuries yet there had been no sources that indicate the exact historical evolution of agricultural extension practices. The historical evolution of agricultural extension practices were written by different authors in different ways. For instance, FAO in 2008 reviewed the history of agricultural extension in Ethiopia covering the period of 1900 to the present and can be classified into four major epochs. They are I) early modernization period 1900-1910, II) age of missed opportunities- 1910-1953, III) classical transfer of technology approaches- 1954-1974, IV) quasi-participatory extension approaches- 1975 to the present. This classification is based on: a) the time of introduction of each system, b) nature of the introduced extension system and c) the degree of community participation (FAO, 2008). Information as to the tasks accomplished in agricultural extension between the 1910 and 1930 is scarce. The first agricultural school was established in Ambo in

1931. It offered agricultural education to its students and demonstrated the potential effects of improved varieties and agricultural practices to the surrounding farmers (ibid). As FAO stated the period 1954-1975 was characterized by development programs initiated to transfer products of modern science and technology from the West to the rest of the world. It is a development model that had been implemented by America through the Marshal Plan to restore the economies of war ravaged countries in Western Europe. However, the economies, institutional policy and cultural situations of African countries were much different from those of Western Europe. Therefore, the blueprint provided for African smallholder farmers could not be copied and did not work (FAO, 2008). This was what happened in Ethiopia following the introduction of the Transfer of Technology (ToT) models of extension. Policy situation such as the land tenure system, the feudal bureaucracy and the remoteness of many rural communities did not allow technologies such as fertilizers, improved crop varieties and exotic breeds to reach the vast majority of Ethiopian farmers (ibid). According to the explanation of FAO, in 1953 the Imperial Ethiopian College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (IECAMA) was established. In 1963 following the revision of the Ethiopian Constitution, ministries including Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) was established in well-organized manner with the mandate of providing Agricultural Extension Services (AESs) which leads to conventional extension approach (1963-1968). A short-lived success story in agriculture was also the turning point of Comprehensive Integrated Package Projects (CIPPs) to develop peasant agriculture from 1968-1975. Under the umbrella of the CIPPs only Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU) and Wolayita Agricultural Development Unit (WADU) were fully implemented whereas the others were either partially implemented or not started at all.

In addition to this, in 1971 the minimum-package program (MPP) a two phased program was launched; and the first phase MPP-1 served up to 1974. The extension approaches introduced

after MPP-1 have been categorized as quasi-participatory extension approach because they all had some participatory element at least in theory before being implemented. This quasi-participatory extension approach was characterized by different progress. The fundamental progress were the land reform and cooperative (human resource dimension) approach from 1975-1980, minimum-package program phase II from 1980-1985, the national program for food self-sufficiency later modified as Training and Visit (T&V) extension approach from 1986-1989, the Peasant Agricultural Development Extension Projects (PADEPs) from 1989-1995 and the National Extension Intervention Program (NEIP) following the Extension Management and Training Plot (EMTP) approach of Sasakawa Global 2000. The progress phase, however, could not take place as planned. Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) is another recent agricultural Extension program implemented in Ethiopia (MoFED, 2007).

2.2.Women's contribution in agricultural development

Women are key players in agriculture and allied fields. Rural women play key role by working with full passion in production of crops right from the soil preparation till post-harvest activities. Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural or other rural enterprises, collecting fuel and water, caring for family members and maintaining their homes. It is estimated that women are responsible for 70 percent of actual farm work and constitute up to 60 percent of the farming population (Ahmed and Hussain 2004).

Women have historically used agriculture as one of the strategies to address poverty and improve livelihoods, and also to maintain the stability and sustainability of their families. Women, especially in Africa, have played a significant role in the sustainable development

and economic development of their communities and countries. Rural women have historically played a crucial role in agriculture as food producers(Karki, K. 2009). He accepts that rural women alone are responsible for up to 50 percent of the world's food production and they also contribute about 60 to 80 percent of the production in many developing countries. Women play important roles to help their family in particular and their community in general in sewing their food demand, in the world. But the most surprising thing is that the community has not significantly understood the effort that they exert in the last several years. Women are involved in agricultural and rural development representing more than half of the labor required to produce food consumed in developing countries (Etenesh, B 2005)

Even though rural women contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of their countries through agriculture they continue to face major socio-cultural challenges, which differ from one community to another. Women's involvement is significant not only in terms of their labor input, but also in terms of decision-making authority. The challenge here is reaching a common understanding as to how female farmers are perceived in society; observations indicate that a female farmer is commonly perceived as a co-farmer as marginal players in agricultural development particularly by those individuals with significant influence in research, extension and development positions (Tsehai, 1991)

Women are often farming without benefit of the improved inputs and services and required for a more productive and remunerative agriculture. The paradox is most obvious in the African shifting where it is estimated the female do 60-80% of all agricultural work. Yet some females are rarely systematically targeted for training, extension, research technology or improved access to resource and thereby to increase productivity in the agricultural sector will need to be better directed to the female population goals for growth are to be achieved.

In addition to the substantial number of women documented national agricultural labor force data, many women and girls work as unpaid female laborers. Many are primarily involved in production of family food supply and domestic work, many work intensively in the fields only during the peak labor seasons, Duggan (1991).

2.3. International policy frameworks on gender equality

International law has framed gender equality as part of global concern on human rights and basic freedoms for social, economic and political rights. These include claims on access to and control over productive resources like land. Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948, and international laws and conventions developed afterwards have a number of provisions to address gender equality. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) prohibits any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of gender that harms or nullifies women's human rights and fundamental freedoms (UNCEDAW, 195:3). It establishes women's rights on par with those of men to political, economic and social participation and benefit. Articles 7-8, 10-13 and 16 of CEDAW have comprehensive coverage and oblige signatory states to achieve these goals.

The Beijing Declaration on its Article 35 states that governments should ensure women's equal access to economic resources including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, etc. as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women (UN DES DAW, 1995: 35). Governments are required to incorporate gender perspective in all policies and programs to bring about political, economic and social development through women's empowerment and gender equality. Women and the economy and women and poverty are critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action (UN/DESA/DAW (1995)).

These were considered critical areas of concern because feminization of poverty had become a significant problem in developing countries. Women's limited access to productive resources and inequitable decision-making power was put as major reason for feminization of poverty. Governments are required to re-formulate macro-economic policies that address gender disparities in economic power sharing to alleviate poverty and advance economic growth.

Gender mainstreaming was considered a major strategy to be followed by states to alleviate poverty especially among women living in rural households. The United Nations Higher Commission on Human Rights (UNHCR) passed resolution on women's equal ownership access to and control over property and land (UNHCR, 2003).

International conventions ratified by governments including international human rights instruments and women's equal rights conventions were bases for considering women's access to and control over land as human rights issue in the resolution. African Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa adopted by the then OAU called upon all African states to eliminate discrimination against women and to ensure women's rights as set in international declarations and conventions OAU (2003). It demanded African governments to combat all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative and institutional measures. The protocol includes a number of articles on women's social, economic and political equality and gives particular emphasis to the rights of widows and divorcees. UN agencies and international organizations play significant roles in supporting women's equal rights on access to and control over land. FAO is the responsible UN agency to lead international efforts to overcome hunger. FAO draws special attention to rural development and facilitates debate forums on land policy issues. FAO established ILC that focuses on women's access to land and gender relations in land tenure ILC runs 'Gender Relations in Tenure Project' on women's rights to land which focuses on key issues regarding

women's access to land Furthermore, the World Bank, USAID, SIDA, Oxfam GB, etc. are taking gender issues as major concern in land policy formulation in their land and agriculture related development programs in developing countries (ILC, 2007).

2.4. Women's Access to key economic resources

Access to resource is essential to improving agricultural productivity of both men and women farmers. Because women play crucial roles in agricultural production, improving productivity will depend to a great extent on ensuring that women farmers, as well as men farmers, have sufficient access to production inputs and support services. While both men and women smallholders lack sufficient access to agricultural resources, women generally have much less access to resources than men. The cause of this are rooted in; gender-blind development policies and research; discriminatory legislation, traditions and attitudes; and lack of access to decision making. Worldwide, women have insufficient access to land, membership in rural organization, credit, agricultural inputs and technologies, training and extension services, and marketing services. When women farmers have access to resources, they are more productive than men farmers (FAO, 2006).

2.4.1. Access to land

Women's access to and control over it is very critical as land is a major resource in women's livelihood. However, women are discriminated against in terms of realizing their rights to land over the past three decades women's issues and more recently gender issues have gained prominence on the development platform. International women's conferences held consecutively; in Mexico City in 1975, in Nairobi in 1985 and in Beijing in 1995 were measures towards realizing women's political, social and economic equality with men (UN

Action for Women, 2003). Many gender issues which are very important to well-being of millions of women and girls around the world got public attention after these conferences.

Despite this progress women have remained disadvantaged in many ways. Gender equality has not been achieved and women do not enjoy equal rights with men in accessing and having control over land and other productive resources. Access to and control over resources and benefits is determined by socio-cultural norms which have significant impacts on gender relations. Social relations of production and consumption (access to and control over means and benefits of production) show constraints on women in many communities. These inequalities of opportunities in access to and control over resources have made women more vulnerable to poverty than men in many parts of the world. World Bank, (2001) argues that constraints related to land which are faced by women farmers differ from country to country and culture to culture. In Nigeria, Afghanistan and other patriarchal societies for instance, women lack independent rights to land. Land rights are only allocated through men, either sons or husbands. The FAO (2009) agrees with the sentiment that women be allowed to access land either directly or indirectly, as the majority have limited or no access to or control over land. In some African countries, women are rarely allocated land in their own right, particularly in patrilineal areas. Land is allocated to men, who are the heads of household (FAO, 2009).

A synthesis report carried out in nine countries (Bennin, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Congo, Morocco, Sudan, Mauritania and Zimbabwe) also agrees that women rarely own land and when they do their holdings turn to be smaller and less fertile than those of men (Manuh, 1998:9). A study conducted by Naylor (1999) also supports the latter sentiment that Ghanaian women do not have ownership of land. To access or make use of land, they must first negotiate with men, which sometimes mean begging for it, and eventually they are allocated inferior or infertile land. A study conducted by Manuh (1998:9) also reveals that, in parts of

Northern Ghana, land that women have carefully tendered has been taken away leaving them with less fertile and more distant plots. Manuh (1998) also states that in Africa new land titles usually are registered in the name of a male household head regardless of women's economic contribution to the household, their customary rights or the increasing number of female headed household. Wanyeki (2003) argues that in Africa, customarily and/or traditionally men manage land. Women only come to fore in exceptional cases, depending not on custom and/or tradition, but on individual families who try to be reasonable in granting positions to their sisters or mothers. Women are disqualified from the management of land because of the gender based division of labor that exists in customary and/or traditional communities. In such communities women's land rights are limited to user rights.

In Ethiopia women's right on land emerged in 1974 during the Derg Regime. At the time, women were actively involved in the political arena. They had their own mass organization, known as the Revolutionary Ethiopia Women's Association (REWA). Their rights on land holdings were also recognized in the rural land proclamation promulgation by the dergue regime (Mamo, 2006). According to Mamo (2006), the rural land proclamation of 1975 has given women accesses to organize themselves in peasant association as head of household if they have independent residence. The current government regarding to land right in general has similar position to that of Dargue regime. Women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. Women have equal right with men with respect to use, transfer, and control of property. They also receive equal treatment in the inheritance of property right (Walta Information Center, 2007).

There are several articles, included in Ethiopia government constitution and also legal provision that should be exercised and implemented at different levels of government

organization, private sector and civil society. However, the ground reality does not match with the blueprint of the policy.

The place of women in the society is complex that involves many interrelated problems which made women's livelihood difficult in relation to men. Land is commonly allocated to households and is registered on names of household heads. The rural land administration process applies spousal-joint land registration and certification in married households. Land rights acquired through marriage expose women to crisis especially when marital conflicts lead to divorce or separation or upon death of husbands. Besides, women's marital statuses and their status under different family structures affect women's access to and control over land. Women in male headed households and FHHs (single, widowed and divorced women) access to land and the control power they have over land, particularly decision-making on land use and control of income earned from farm products is affected by their status in their households. Community customs and traditions become major challenges in implementing policies that favor women in land acquisition. Traditionally rights to property pass through the male line in Ethiopia. This implies that women's status is generally inferior to that of men (Almaz. W 2007).

2.4.2. Women's Access to Credit

In sub-Saharan Africa about 84% of women were employed in the informal business sectors. Rural women are usually employed in the informal sector that provides very low income. The income gained from such informal employment is insignificant and unbalanced. Women who were involved in the informal employment sector usually start business with little capital and little asset that is not sufficient to run their business.

Under Ethiopian condition women engaged in the informal employment not only contribute for household consumption but also to meet the medical cost, clothing, and etc, for the family. The income gained from these economic activities were used for household consumption and family support rather than re-investing it to expand their business. Similarly, being rural women, most are illiterate and have no proper skill for full employment opportunity (Linda, 2005).

According to Linda (2005) men have more power to control on the income made by women and often decide to finance their own personal interest instead of the households. This is because; women have less power /right/ to make decision on the household income independently. Provisions of credit support and micro-finance facilities for rural women were one of the most important strategies for empowering rural women in the economic aspect. Credit and micro-finance support for rural women are not only for economic empowerment of rural women, but also for poverty reduction and enhancing of better living condition of poor rural women.

Many credit associations limit membership to household heads in many African countries, thereby excluding married and single women). Women face greater difficulties than men, particularly with regard to participation in rural cooperatives and access to credit, training and agricultural extension. These difficulties rarely flow from explicitly discriminatory norms, as legislation on these issues is in most cases gender neutral. Rather, they mainly arise from cultural practices and stereotypes (e.g. on women's role within the family and on interactions between persons of different sexes) and from socio-economic factors (e.g. as for access to credit, women's higher illiteracy rates, lack of information about available credit

programmes, lack of land titles to be offered as collateral, more limited access to formal employment, and exclusion from credit cooperatives) (.(Manuh, 1998).

Onguonu(2010),notes that in Nigeria women do not have access to resources such as finance for the execution of planned projectslike their male contemporaries.

Berger and Buvinic (1990), note that there are various factors that limit women's access to credit. They argue that in some Mexican rural areas socio-cultural factors can be a major limitation to women's access to credit. In rural Mexico for instance, women are not allowed to walk long distances between their homes in rural areas and the banks in town by themselves or to offer the occasional bribe to male officials in charge of credit applications. Furthermore, entering a bank may intimidate the women because they are unfamiliar with the environment and the procedures. In addition women are often excluded from social gatherings where males learn about how and where to access certain sources of credit and how to apply.

For Berger and Buvinic (1990), the lack of collateral security, illiteracy and mere gender discrimination can negatively influence women's access to credit. For example, the culture based idea that rural women are financially supported by males and that their only responsibility is to maintain the household is the reason bankers refuse to give credit to rural women farmers. Berger and Buvinic (1990) conclude that, unless women are exposed to the relevant channels of credit distribution they will continue to be ignorant about many sources of loans and therefore they will continue to be at disadvantage when it comes to credit access. Collateral security seems to be one of the major factors constraining the access of women to agricultural inputs. A study conducted by Arun (1999) reports that, in India, women complained of having limited access to credit resources. These women were not allowed to

borrow money from the bank because they lacked collateral security. He explains that, because these women did not have collateral security which can be in the form of land or production equipment, they were denied the right to borrow money from banks(Berger, M. and Buvinic, M.(1990)

A recent study conducted by Baiyegunhi et al (2010) on determinants affecting credit access for rural households showed that the gender and age of the household head, ownership of land, value of assets and repayment capacity are statistically significant factors considered in determining whether a household is credit constrained or not. The results of the study showed that, younger household heads who own land or any other kind of collateral security such as poultry, oxen and livestock are less constrained in credit access. These results support the claim that credit policies can play an important role in rural development and that additional rural finance can enhance productivity and household welfare, thus contributing to pro-poor growth. Given the relatively high demand for credit and the limited access of rural households to both informal and formal credit in the Eastern Cape Province, the degree of effective credit rationing seems to be relatively high.

2.4.3. Women's access to membership in rural organizations

Members in rural organization such as cooperatives, agricultural producers' organizations and farmers' associations, is important for access to productive resources, credit, information, training and other support services. Those organizations also represent the interest of their members in relation to governments, project management, and development policy makers and planners at different levels.

When women farmers' access to membership and leadership positions in that organization is restricted, by-law, or custom, their access to resources and their ability to make their views known to policy makers and planers is also restricted. Women face greater difficulties than

men, particularly with regard to participation in rural cooperatives and access to credit, training and agricultural extension. The obvious result is the inability of women farmers to carry out their role and in agriculture and food security to optimum potential (Manuh, 1998).

The same agrarian reform the obvious result is the inability of women farmers to carry out their role and in agriculture and food security to optimum potential. Land reform programs that are given land titles to male heads of households and thus restricted women's ownership of land, have also restricted membership in agrarian reform organizations and cooperatives to male heads of households. Even where women do have access to membership in cooperatives and other rural organizations, they make up a small minority of the leadership, (FAO 2006).

2.4.4. Women's access to Agricultural inputs, technologies' and extension services

With the decreasing availability of arable land, increasing population pressure and growing environmental degradation, it becomes more and more important to increase productivity in sustainable ways. This requires access to appropriate agricultural inputs and technologies.

The access of women farmers to agricultural inputs and technologies is constrained by their lack of credit and membership in rural organization, but also by gender-blind development programs and lack of attention to the needs of women farmers in research and technologies development programs.

Because women farmers everywhere are engaged in a wide range of laborious tasks related to food security, there is a need for the development and introduction of appropriate labor saving technologies in food processing and storage as well as in food production, and in related areas such as water, sanitation, and fuel and food preparation (FAO 2006)

The gender equity dimension of agricultural extension service provision is an aspect that is widely addressed in the literature. Access to extension services is lower for women as

compared with men. There are systematic and significant differences between female and male heads of households and between female and male plot managers in terms of access to different channels of extension services and in the quality of these services as perceived by respondents. Female farmers are less likely to get extension services through various channels and are less likely to access quality services than their male counterparts. Advice received from DAs is strongly and positively significant in explaining fertilizer and improved seed use, but it does not significantly explain productivity. In all of the productivity models, plots of male and female farmers are as equally productive after holding other factors constant (Ragasa, 2008)

Despite undeniable evidences of women's positive roles in the agricultural sector and growing awareness of the need to reach out to women farmers, agricultural extension services are generally geared toward male farmers. Bias toward male farmers is evident in the delivery of extension services which is generally provided by male extension agents to men on the assumption that extension message will "trickle across" to women (Owolabi, J.O. 2001).

2.4.5. Women's Education and Agricultural development

Education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development. Rad et al (2010) agree that education is one of the important factors that help development to be realized. The purpose of education (formal and informal) as stated by Rad et al (2010) is to communicate accumulated wisdom and knowledge from one generation to the next. Secondly, education enhances active participation in innovation and the development of new knowledge. Ani et al (2004) further argue that education enhances the ability to derive, decode and evaluate useful information for agricultural production. The Food and Agricultural Organization/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [FAO/UNESCO] (2002) note that better education and training have become

essential for sustainable development and for rural economies to survive. Manuh (1998) is of the view that the lack of education and training has been identified as a key barrier to women's advancement in the society. She argues that in Africa, female illiteracy rates were over 60 percent in 1996 compared to 41 percent of men. Certain countries have extremely high rates of low education on women, Burkina Faso at 91 percent, Sierra Leone 88.7 percent, Chad at 82.1 percent and Guinea at 86.6 percent. In many African countries parents still prefer to send boys to school, seeing little need for sending girls. Hence, illiteracy is still evident in most African countries (Ravinder et al 2009).

A study conducted by the South Africa Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (2010), reveals that, illiteracy is a major constraint facing women in development. Women are unable to understand and utilize technical information because they lack basic formal education. This department also reveals that, because of their illiteracy, women farmers are unable to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs that educate farmers. Penin (1999) supports the latter sentiment by arguing that, education has a relationship with farming progressiveness. The reason is that there is a positive correlation between education and farming. Through education, farmers are able to acquire new improved and effective written material. Educated farmers are able to acquire more information in the form of written material such as magazines, newsletters and farming instruction pamphlets, booklets and on packaged hybrid seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and many more. Education plays a significant role in positively influencing the status of women in farm decision-making. Highly educated women are likely to make a higher contribution to farm decision making than uneducated ones (Penin, 1999:). Ravinder et al (2009) noted that socio-cultural factors also play a role in hindering women from accessing and furthering their educational interests. They argue that, factors such as early marriage place a greater burden

on household labour and acts as a barrier to girls' progress in education. A study conducted by Gundu (2009) in a rural area of Zimbabwe called Chirau also reveals that one of the major factors that affect women in farming is illiteracy. It was argued that this constrained one's access to needed farming information. Gundu, argues that even though there may be available reading material for farmers who want to improve themselves women in the village are ultimately limited by their illiteracy. Gundu, further observed that illiteracy among respondents seriously inhibited the respondents' ability to access and use agricultural information to achieve and sustain household food security. She further notes that the illiteracy situation limits women's capacities to access agricultural training, credit, participation in economic activities and also access to information from other relevant organizations, not to mention the post-harvest and surplus management offered. She adds that the lack of education also affects the reception of services such as extension, as generally, adaptation and diffusion of innovations is often slow among the less literate populations in society.

1.7. Gender Relation in Ethiopia

Ethiopia women have played a traditional role of motherhood and home maker in both rural and areas. However, their work has never been limited to the household and the family. Ethiopia women are actively involved in all aspects of social life. Women are both producers and procreators and they are active participant in the social and cultural activities of the community. However, the important roles they play have not always been recognized. Without equal opportunities, they have lagged behind men in all fields of self-advancement. Economic development is unthinkable without women participation; however, because their participation in the economy has not been valued Ethiopian women have not received even their share of the nation wealth (The Ethiopian Herald, 2004). Woman's productivity is

predominated in the processing and marketing of food in rearing, and food processing and industries. In rural areas, women are engaged in a wide variety of economic activities including the construction of houses, land cultivating and harvesting, and food storage and marketing (Amarech, 2004). However, women's work in the agricultural sector has often been erroneously documented as marginal and they have been considered more as consumer than producers. Women have secondary status within the family and in the society, which is why they get little credit for their productivity. Hence, women continue to be regarded as an appendage to the family and as consumer but not as producers. It is important to understand how conditions for women have changed in what ways has the country mobilized the labor of women to optimize human resource in the overall economic development of a nation? Important changes have taken place with the introduction of the socialist ideology, which advocates equal rights for all, irrespective of sex, religion, racial or social origin. Ethiopia's women seem to have gained somewhat better experience since the 1974 socio-economic and political transformation. They have expanded their horizons with educational advancement and increased economic activity (Amarech, 2004). Since 90% of the Ethiopia inhabit in the countryside, our focus is on rural women because women in urban a small comparison. Under changes such as the rise in the literacy an increase in school enrolment and growing competition in the employment market, have not directly affected the lives of rural women. Many women in developing countries have a direct contact with the natural environment as they collect essential items for everyday needs. There are also women consumers or purchasers whose link with the environment is less direct, but the action can have a bearing in the future. Therefore, it could be important to include women on both the planning process of the different organizational institutions as to safeguard the alarming rate of environmental degradation though involving all the members of the country in which half of have previously been ignored from direct participation due to cultural influence that sees women

as consumers only. Though, it is understood that women have triple role in society only one of the roles was recognized until recently, the productive role, but not given reasonable remuneration as that of men's. In all these activities, women receive no remuneration for their labor, no monetary or material gains and no benefit in luxury time and improving their living condition (Mokonen, 1996). The point is not that women should place themselves above the need of their family, or that their need and wants are similar to those of urban women with higher income. Rural women spend their time in productive activities, which directly benefits their families and society in economic term. There should be some terms (measurable means) of remunerating their productive services and of providing incentives for them to produce efficiently and use their energies meaningfully (Mokonen, 1996)

1.8. Women and poverty

Although there is an overall agreement on the notion that men and women experience poverty differently, linking gender and poverty is a complex matter that has increasingly become the focus of analysis. The growing literature on poverty has helped to broaden the definition of poverty and generated greater recognition on the multi- dimensionality of poverty. It called for better understanding of poverty not only in terms of income and expenditure, but in the broader sense of human poverty- a state of deprivation in capabilities (education, health, nutrition, etc). Household income/ expenditure based measures, while they are important and provide comparative analysis of incidences of poverty between male headed and female headed households, they do not show the level of poverty experienced by women and men within the households. The gender dimension of poverty emerge more clearly through approaches of social indicators and those that capture the intra- Household processes underlying resource allocation (DAI, 2005).

There are fundamental gender inequalities in access to and control over productive assets such as land, labor and credits, earned income as well as gender biases in the labor market that form the ground for women's enhanced vulnerability to poverty. Women's high illiteracy rate, lack of decision making power over their fertility and early marriage of girls limit their chances of coming out of poverty. In addition, due to the disproportionate gender division of labor in the household and their increased responsibilities for domestic and productive work, women tend to be poor. Poverty is also related to the type of employment in which people are engaged, and the majority of the poor are in informal employment (Pausewang, 1990).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

3.1. Description of the study area

SodoDachiWoreda is located 75 Km away from Addis Ababa AddisAbaba towards south on the main highway of Butagira town. It is found in the Oromia National Regional State. According to the Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, the total population of the Woreda is 48,352, whereby 24,150 and 24,202 are males and females respectively. The total area of the Woreda is 39, 920 hectare of land. Topographically the woreda is divided in to high land (16%), mid land (44%) and low land (40%). Its altitude ranges from 1850 to 2500 m.a.s.l. The mean annual rainfall is 1150 mm, and its temperature ranges from 12 -32 degree centigrade

The rain fall pattern is erratic and irregular in the area. Due to the severe and heavy rains, soil erosion and flooding are very common in low-lying of the study area. In times of extreme rainfall, mudslides damage roads, small bridges and other infrastructure and localized flooding are common (ARDO, 2014).

The dominant soil type of the study area is fine to medium textured sandy loam underlie with ancient Precambrian basement rocks. Over-clearing has led to significant soil erosion problems, with mudslides occurring on the area. The dominant means of livelihood is crop farming, but livestock production is also an important source of food and income (ARDO, 2014).

3.2. Sampling Technique and Size

The study was conducted at SodoDachiWoreda in Oromia National Regional State. The study was carried out in three peasant associations found in SodoDachiWoreda. ‘Tereshino’, ‘Muchichata’, and Woredi’ kebelles were selected as a sample kebeles among 19 kebeles found in the Woreda. Both purposive and random sampling techniques were employed as a representative for the whole Sample framework. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select three ‘Kebelles’ out of 19 kebeles by using some selection criteria. The criteria to select the three kebeles were

- accesses to transportation ,
- agro ecological zones,
- Population number etc.
- Cost

The second sampling technique was random sampling which employed to find the respondents at household level. Therefore, 120 respondents were taken as representative respondents from the three kebeles (40 respondents per kebele were selected). The main reason for selecting only 120 respondents was that the homogeneity nature of the Woreda population.

In addition, all Agricultural Extension Workers working in selected three kebeles were selected as respondents, and concerned government experts; Women affairs and cooperative promotion office were also asked to fill questionnaires prepared for this purpose.

3.3. Data collection: tools and procedures

Even though methods of data collection in social science highly depend on the nature of the research topic, the researcher believed that single method is bound to have limited relevance

in meeting the overall objective of a research: thus, different tools were employed to collect the required data.

Primary data were collected using structured personal interview and questionnaire schedule as research tool to elicit information on women role and constraints in agriculture activities. In most cases **closed ended** question was employed. Maximum efforts were exerted to keep it simple and understandable so as to capture all the necessary information need for the study. Personal observation was also used in reliable data collection, as information which is difficult to be obtained by way of interview

Secondary data from the Woreda government records were also reviewed to support the findings from the primary data

3.4. Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted to find out the required results of the study. The quantitative raw data collected using close-ended interviewing schedules was organized and pre-processing test was carried out right after the field data collection was completed. Questionnaires were coded by each peasant association to facilitate analysis of questions on which respondents require to specify their opinions and to facilitate analysis of the close-ended questionnaire. Responses on these questions were carefully collected and summarized. Outputs were categorized into different components relating to relevant variables for convenience in analyzing the findings.

Major themes were identified and analyzed in line with research objectives, and were summarized for use in descriptive analysis. The raw data collected using personal interview, questionnaire and personal observation was organized, arranged, scrutinized and tabulated for

analysis. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution and percentage were used to analyze the data

3.5. Quality and ethical consideration

The researcher received official permit SodoDachiWoreda administration office to conduct this study. SodoDachiWoreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office was willing to assist the researcher. Quantitative survey respondents and qualitative survey informants were provided detail explanation on the overall objective of the study ahead of time. Interview is administered on free will of interviewees. Respondents were informed that they can decline if they don't want to be interviewed. The researcher promised the respondents that the information provided by interviewees will only be used for academic purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data which was collected from respondents using different data collection tools. Different ideas, perceptions, attitudes and knowledge concerning the factors affecting women participation in agricultural development were gathered. This chapter primarily analyzed the socio demographic characteristics, role of women in agricultural activities, women decision making role in agricultures issues and major factors affecting women's contribution in agricultural development.

4.1. Socio-demographic Data on the sampled respondents

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were looked at to see the connections in the search for the factors affecting women participation in agricultural development in SodoDachiWoreda. These characteristics were age, educational level marital status and land holding size

Table 1; Socio- personal characteristics of respondents (n=120)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	(20-30)	43	35.8%
	(31-60)	71	59.2%
	Greater than 60	6	5 %
Marital status	Married	105	87.5%
	Single	-	-
	Divorced	3	2.5%
	Widowed	12	10
Educational Status	Read and write	37	30.8%
	Elementary education completed	10	8.3%
	Secondary education completed		
Land holding	Less than 1 hectare	35	29%
	1 – 2 hectare	65	54%
	2- 5 hectare	20	17%
	Greater than 5 hectare	-	-

Source: own survey, August 2014

The table above depicts responses obtained on educational background, age category, marital status and land holding size of respondents. Out of the total 120 respondents 73 (60.8%) were illiterate, 37 (30.8.3%) can read and write, 10 (8.3%) have completed primary education (completed grade 8). Survey findings on educational status of respondents reflects high illiteracy rate among women in the study area.

The age of the sampled rural households in SodoDachiWereda ranges from 20-65 years. The age groups were categorized into three; the first 20-30 years, the second 31-60 years and the third age group was greater 60 years. Therefore, out of 120 respondent 43 (35.8%) of them were aged 20-30 years while 71 (59.2%) of them were aged 31-60 years. The rest 6 (5%) of the rural household respondents were aged above 60. Around 95 % of the respondents were found at productive age.

Results on land holding revealed that majority (54%) of the respondents had medium size (1-2 hectare) land holding followed by small (less one hectare) (29%), and large (greater than 2 hectare) (17%) size land holding.

4.2. Means of income and major agricultural practice

Table 2; Means of income (n= 120)

Means of income	Number	Percent	Remark
Crop farming	120	100%	
Livestock production	120	100%	
Off - farm activities	-	-	
Labor	15	12.5%	
Other (remittance)	5	4.2 %	

Source: own survey, August 2014

Table 3: Major crops and livestock produced

Crops/ livestock	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Wheat	76 (63.3%)	44 (36.7%)	
Teff	44 (36.7%)	76 (63.3)	
Sorghum			85 (70.80%)
Maize			
Cattle	120 (100%)		
Small ruminant		37 (30.8%)	
Poultry		115 (95.8)	

Source: own survey, August 2014

The above Tables (2 &3) illustrate that the major means of income of the respondents were crop farming and livestock production. Cereal crop farming was the most important agricultural activities practiced in the study area. Next to crop farming, livestock production was an important means of livelihood for the majority of the people residing in the study area.

The table above discloses that teff and wheat were the most preferred cereal crops. Teff, which is unique to Ethiopia, was used as a cash crop. The price of teff was increasing from time to time. As a result, the community preferred to sell teff instead of using it for domestic consumption. Wheat, sorghum and other cereal crops produced in the area used for stable food. Moreover, the farmers enjoy livestock production for their means of livelihood and for draught power

4.3. Women participation in agricultural activities and decision making

Table 4; Involvement of rural women in agricultural activities (n=120)

Agricultural activities	Women participation		Who participate more?	
	Yes	No	Women	Men
Ploughing (tilling the land with oxen)	-	120 (100%)	-	120 (100%)
Land preparation	120 (100%)	-	25 (20.8%)	95 (79.2%)
Weeding	120 (100%)	-	117 (97.5)	3 (0.2%)
Harvesting	120 (100%)	-	15 (12.5%)	114 (87.5%)
Threshing	120 (100%)	-	13 (10.8%)	107 (89.2 %)
Storing	120 (100%)	-	58 (48.3)	62 (51.7)
Looking after cattle and small ruminants	120 (100%)	-	65 (54.2)	55 (45.8)
Milking	120 (100%)	-	113 (94.2)	7 (5.8%)
Poultry production	120 (100%)	-	120 (100%)	-

Source: own survey, August 2014

The data presented in Table 4 depicts that almost all respondents participate in all agricultural activities except in ploughing (tilling of land with pair oxen). Moreover, 20.8%, 97.5%, 12.5%, 10.8%, 48.3%, 54.2%, 94.2% and 100% of the respondents respond that women participation in land preparation, weeding, harvesting, threshing, storing, looking after cattle,

milking and poultry production is more when compared to men, respectively. However, 100%, 79.2%, 0.2%, 87.5%, 89.5%, 51.7%, 45.8% and 5.8% of the respondents respond that men participation in ploughing, land preparation, weeding, harvesting, threshing, storing, looking after cattle and milking is more when compared to women, respectively

According to the respondents response women's participation in weeding, poultry production, milking and looking after livestock was more when compared to men's participation. On the contrary, women participation in ploughing , harvesting, threshing and storing was less when compared to men's participation. These farming activities (ploughing, harvesting, threshing and storing) by their nature are laborious and considered by the community as works performed by men. This finding is supported by Dawit(2012) Cited on Lemelem (2010). He reported that men are typically responsible for the heavier manual tasks such as land preparation and tillage with oxen. Moreover, traditionally, in most areas of Ethiopia weeding is considered as women's task.

In general, the findings illustrated that women have significant role on agricultural activities. This is also supported by Almaz(2000). She reported that up to 60% of farming activities in Ethiopia are done by rural women. Rural women play a key role in agricultural sector production by working with full passion in production of crops right from the soil preparation till post-harvest.

Table 5: Women involvement in decision making on major agricultural issues (n=120)

Decision areas	No involvement	Only consulted	Opinion considered	Have role in final decision
Land sizes for cultivation of different cereal crops and vegetables		72 (60%)	30 (25%)	18 (15%)
What type of crops to cultivate and when to cultivate		63 (52.5%)	37 (38.3%)	20 (16.7%)
Purchasing of inputs (such as fertilizer, pesticide and improved seeds)		60 (50%)	38 (31.7%)	22 (18.3%)
Marketing of grains		25(20.8%)	73 (60.9%)	22 (18.3%)
Types and numbers of cattle and small ruminants keeping		25 (20.8%)	63 (52.8%)	32 (26.7%)
Producing poultry				120 (100%)
Marketing of cattle and small ruminates		28 (23.3%)	71 (59.2%)	21 (17.5%)
Selling of livestock products (such as milk and milk products)			23 (19.2%)	97 (80.8%)
Selling of eggs and chicken				120 (100%)

Source: own survey, August 2014

The above table depict that out of 120 respondents 15%, 16.7%, 18.3%, 18.3%, 26.7%, 100%, 17.5%, 80.8% and 100% of the respondents participate in final decision making on allocation of land sites, what types of crop to produce, purchasing of inputs, marketing of grain, types of & number of cattle to be reared, poultry production, marketing of cattle / small ruminant, selling of livestock by products and selling of eggs, respectively. The results also showed that 60%, 52.5%, 50%, 20.5%, 20.5% and 23.3% of the respondents were only consulted on allocation of land sites, what types of crop to produce, purchasing of inputs, marketing of grain, types of and number of animals to be reared and marketing of domestic animals, respectively. Moreover, the result showed that 25%, 38.3%, 31.7%, 60.9%, 52.8%,

59.2% and 19.2 of the respondents' opinion was considered on allocation of land sites, what types of crop to produce, purchasing of inputs, marketing of grain, types of and number of cattle to be reared, marketing of cattle / small ruminant, and selling of livestock by products, respectively

In general, majority of the respondents responded that they participate in major agricultural decision making areas although the degree of participation varies. Their participation is less in final decision making in major agricultural issues and resource allocation. The finding is supported by Dawit (2012). He reported that the roles of rural women in final decision making on major agricultural issues is minimal.

1.4. Factors affecting women's contribution / participation in Agricultural activities

1.4.1. Access to education

Table 1 (Socio demographic data) showed that out of the total 120 respondents 73 (60.8%) were illiterate, 37 (30.8.3%) can read and write, 10 (8.3%) have completed primary education (completed grade 8). Survey findings on educational status of respondents reflects high illiteracy rate among women in the study area. Illiteracy affected women's participation in agricultural development. This argument is supported by the following literature evidence.

Education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development (Rad et al 2010). A study conducted by the South Africa Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (2010), reveals that, illiteracy is a major constraint facing women in Agricultural development. Women are unable to understand and utilize technical information because they lack basic formal education. This department also reveals that, because of their illiteracy, women farmers are unable to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs that educate farmers.

1.4.2. Access to Agricultural Extension Service

Table 6; Access to agricultural extension service (n=120)

Question raised		Frequency	Percent
Seeking of agricultural service for the last 12 months	Yes	12	10%
	No	108	90%
Extent of extension visit by Extension worker for the last 12 months	Regularly/ frequently	8	6.7%
	Rarely	35	29.2%
	No visit at all	77	64.2%
Access to training on agricultural issues	Yes	15	12.5%
	No	105	87.5%

Source: own survey, August 2014

The data for this study (Table 6) revealed that majority (64.2%) of respondents had not been visited by extension workers for the last 12 months, while 29.2% were rarely visited. Only 6.7% of the respondents had been frequently visited by extension worker. Out of 120 respondents only 10% of them were seek agricultural extension service from extension service whereas majority (90%) of them didn't seek agricultural extension service for the last 12 months. The table also depicts that 87.5% of the respondent didn't attend training on agricultural issues whereas only 12.5% attended trainings on agricultural issues for the last twelve months

The implication of this result is that the female farmers lack enough extension contact. This finding is supported by SodoDachiWoreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office. One of the Woreda agricultural expert explained that the office target only the head of the house

hold (who are mostly men) to provide extension Service. Women may be head of household if husbands died or left home for different reason. Otherwise, if they are married their husbands are the head of the household.

Based on this finding the researcher believes that poor contact of women with extension service provider affected women role in agricultural development. Therefore, as women are equal partner of men in agricultural activities and has a good deal of contribution to agricultural development, agricultural extension specialists should design the most appropriate extension strategy for women.

1.4.3. Access to Credit

Table 7; access to credit (n=120)

Questioned raised	Source of credit	Frequency	Percent
What is your sources of Sources of credit?	Cooperative	-	
	Financial institution	14	11.7%
	Personal sources	71	59.2%
	Friends / relatives	16	13.3%
	Money lender	19	15.8%
Did access to credit service effect your agricultural involvement	Yes	95	79.2%
	No	25	20.8%
Do you believe that credit availability improve agricultural productivity	Yes	117	97.5%
	No	3	2.5%

Source: own survey, August 2014

The above Table (table7) displays farmers' source (s) to credit facility. Most of the respondents interviewed complained of difficulties in securing loan from financial Institutions, about 59.2% of them sourced funds from personal saving while 15.8% secure

their financial need from moneylender. Only 11.7% of the respondent got financial assistance through financial institutions. The table also displays that out of 120 respondents 97.5% of them believe that credit facilities can improve agricultural production. 79.2% of them also responded that their involvement in agricultural activities was affected due to lack of credit facilities.

The finding is supported by Manuh (1998). He reported that women access to credit is affected due to women's higher illiteracy rates, lack of information about available credit programmes, lack of land titles to be offered as collateral, more limited access to formal employment, and exclusion from credit cooperatives. Linda (2005) reported that provisions of credit support and micro-finance facilities for rural women is one of the most important strategies for empowering rural women in the economic aspect. Credit and micro-finance support for rural women are not only for economic empowerment of rural women, but also for poverty reduction and for enhancing of better living condition of poor rural women

1.4.4. Access and Control over Productive economic resources

Table 8; Access to land (n =120)

		Frequency	%
Land acquiring	Through marriage	61	50.8%
	By inheritance	12	10%
	By leasing from other	9	7.5%
	Through land distribution	38	31.5%
Land registration and certification	registered and certified on my own name,	18	15%
	registered and certified in the name of my husband	102	85%
	registered and certified in the name of me and my husband	-	-

Source: own survey, August 2014

Data collected on means of land acquisition in the study area (table 8) reflected that out of the total 120 respondents 31.5% responded that they accessed land through land distribution, 50.8% responded they accessed land through marriage, 10% responded they accessed land through inheritance and 7.5% responded that they lease land from land holders.

This study shows that marriage has impact on women’s access rights to land. Most women have access to land through marriage, because most survey respondents are married women who get access to their husbands’ land.

According to AlmazW. (2007) women’s access to their husbands’ land offers them secondary rights and this right is seriously constrained in reality because women’s rights to their husbands’ land is secured as long as the marriage lasts

Table 9; Resource (physical asset) ownership and control (n =120)

Respondent answer	Frequency	Percent
I have equal ownership but, do not have control over assets	45	37.5%
I have equal ownership and control over these assets including income from sales	25	20.8%
I don’t own and control household assets	50	41.7%

Source: own survey, August 2014

The table above illustrates that 37.5% of women respond that they have equal ownership of economic productive assets, but don’t have control over them. 20.8 % the interviewed women responded that they equal ownership and control over these assets including income from sales whereas 41.7% didn’t have equal ownership and control over the assets. From these finding it is possible to conclude that majority of the respondent don’t have equal ownership and control over major economic resources which in turn affected their participation in agricultural development.

1.4.5. Households chores

Table 10: Women involvement in household's chores (routine domestic work)

Home activities	Time spent per day (on average)		
	Women	Men	
Cooking foods	2 hours and 30 minutes	-	
Fetching water	1 hours	-	
Cleaning house	45 minutes	-	
Caring of children	1 hours on average	-	
Fire wood collecting	1 hour and 40 minute on average	-	
Attend social meeting	35 minutes	1 hours and 30 minutes	
Other (such as milling of grain)	30 minutes on average	-	
Total time consumed per day	8 hours	1 hour and 30 min	
Did these household chores affect your involvement in agricultural activities?	Response	Frequency	Percent
	Yes	117	97.5%
	No	3	(2.5%)

Source: own survey, August 2014

The table above (table 10) depicts that all of the sampled women have been actively involved in household activities of food preparation, house cleaning, fetching water, caring of children, collecting firewood and other routine household chores. Most time consuming activities were food preparation, fire wood collecting, child care, and fetching water. The respondents spent an average 2.3, 1.4, 1 and 1 hours respectively on these activities. In general, the respondents spent on household chores 8 hours a day on average. The table also depicts that most of the respondents (97.5%) respond that these routine households' chores affected their participation in agricultural activities.

1.4.6. Social status of women

Table 11; women position in the societies (n= 120)

Question raised		Frequency	Percent	
Women consider themselves subordinate to men	Yes	87	72.8%	
	No	23	(19.2%)	

Source: own survey, August 2014

The table above (table 11) display that 72.8 % of respondents believed that they are subordinate to men. This finding is supported by SodoDachiWoreda women, youth and children affair office. According to the Woreda women affairs office, the position of women in society is notably poor. Society structure in the study area is hierarchical and dominated by men. The husband has full control over all the properties of the family. All important rituals and positions are held by the husband as a head of the family. The husband has full right of administering the family and is considered as the only head of the family.

CHAPTER FIVE; SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMOINDATION

5.1. Summary

Rural women play key role in agricultural development as they represent half of the population and perform significant agricultural activities in Ethiopia. Even though rural women contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of their country through agriculture they continue to face major economic and socio-cultural challenges.

This study was conducted at SodoDachiWoreda in order:

- to assess the nature and extent of women involvement in agricultural activities in the study area.
- to assess the extent of women participation in decision making in farming activities in the study area
- to identify constraints limiting women's contribution / participation in agricultural development in the study area

To conduct the research the following methodologies were employed;

- the total sample respondents were 120 women which were selected by using simple random sampling techniques
- data was collected by using close-ended semi structured questionnaire and
- the data was analyzed by using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution and percentage

Survey findings on educational status of respondents reflected high illiteracy rate among women in the study area. Out of the total 120 respondents, 73 (60.8%) were illiterate

The age of the sampled rural households ranges from 20-65 years. Around 95 % of the respondents were found at productive age (20-60). Results on land holding revealed that majority (54%) of the respondents had medium size (1- 2 hectare) land holding. The major sources of income of the respondents were crop and livestock farming.

Women involvement / participation in agricultural activities: the survey findings illustrated that women have participated in all agricultural activities except in ploughing (tilling land with oxen). When women participation with that of men in agricultural activities, women participated more in poultry production, weeding, small and cattle take caring.

Women involvement / participation in decision making; the survey result showed that the majority of the respondents responded that they participate in major agricultural decision making areas although the degree of participation varies. Their participation is less in final decision making in major agricultural issues.

Though women have been contributed significant role in agricultural development they have been constrained by different factors. The survey result identified the following factors which hinder women contribution / participation in agriculture;

Access to education; Survey findings on educational status of respondents reflects high illiteracy rate among women in the study area. Illiteracy affected women's participation in agricultural development. Illiterate Women were not able to understand and utilize technical information, to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs

Access to extension service; the research result revealed that the female farmers didn't get Agricultural extension service. Extension service provision focused on targeting of household heads which is mostly men.

Access to credit facilities: the finding showed that most of the respondents interviewed complained of difficulties in securing loan from financial Institutions. Only 11.7% of the respondent got financial assistance. Though most of the respondents believe that credit facilities can improve agricultural production, they didn't have access to formal credit facilities due to various reasons.

Access and Control over Productive economic resources: The finding revealed that 37.5% of women respond that they have equal ownership of physical assets, but don't have control over them. 20.8 % the interviewed women responded that they equal ownership and control over these assets including income from sales whereas 41.7% didn't have equal ownership and control over the assets. From these finding it is possible to conclude that majority of the respondent don't have equal ownership and control over major economic resources which in turn affected their participation in agricultural development.

Households chores: the research finding depict that all of the respondents have been actively involved in household activities of food preparation, house cleaning, fetching water, caring of children, collecting firewood and other routine household chores. In general, the respondents spent on household chores 8 hours a day on average which in turn affect their participation in agricultural activities.

Women social status: the survey finding showed that majority of interviewed women believed that they are subordinate to men. This finding was also supported by SodoDachiWoredawomen youth and children affair office. According to theWoredawomen, youth and children affair office, the position of women in society is notably poor. The husband has full control over the properties of the family

5.2. Conclusion

Women are the major working forces of farming activities in the study area. They regularly engaged and participated in critical farming activities including weeding, seed preparation, selling agricultural commodities, and harvesting. However, the level of their participation was limited in ploughing farmland and harvesting which traditionally consider implemented by men. Despite their incredible role in agricultural sector, their involvements in decision-making regarding farm management still seem questionable. Most women have less role in final decision making with regard to purchase/sale of crop and live animals, land preparation and determination of type and amount of crops to be cultivated,

Different factors constrained women contribution / participation in agricultural development in the study areas. Women have limited access and control over to land and other properties. Most women in the study area had access to land only through marriage. As the majority of the women in the study area were illiterate they were not able to understand and utilize technical information, to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs.

Based on the findings the researcher believes that poor contact of women with extension service provider affected women role in agricultural development. Therefore, as women are equal partner of men in agricultural activities and has a good deal of contribution to agricultural development, agricultural extension specialists should design the most appropriate extension strategy for women.

Although credit facilities have paramount importance for agricultural development in the study area women didn't have access to credit faculties. As a result, they were constrained to buy improved seeds and fertilizers. Moreover, women were responsible for household chores which consume 8 hours per day unlike of men. Therefore, these household chores affected their participation in agricultural activities. Women social status was also another constraint which affects their participation in agricultural development. Majority of women considered themselves as if they were subordinate to men.

5.3. Recommendation

- To enhance rural women's participation in household resources allocation decision making, all the possible opportunities should be created for rural women. Well organized and integrated awareness creation strategy should also be designed and facilitated by the Woreda government and its stakeholders to minimize the social, cultural, and economic factors that affecting rural women's decision making;
- Recognition of women's role and contribution to social and economic development in general and that of agricultural development in particular by planners and decision makers would help to enhance the status of women and increase food security at household and national level;
- As women are equal partner of men in agricultural activities and has a good deal of contribution to agricultural development, the Woreda agricultural extension specialists and planers should design the most appropriate extension strategy that address women needs;

- Organizing women has an aspect of empowerment and women's associations could serve as forum to women focused interventions. Thus, women should be initiated to organize and struggle for their equal ownership and control over economic resources;
- The ox-plough farming technology applied in the study area enforces women's dependence on male labor for ploughing. Hence the oxen plough technology should be innovated using local capacity to initiate women's participation in ploughing;
- Carrying out advocacy and awareness creation program to promote women's equal access to and control over economic resources;
- The secret of women contribution / participation in agricultural development lies on enhancing the level of education of women; educating a women mean educating the family and the society. Therefore, the Woreda government should give more attention to educate illiterate women;
- The Woreda political leaders / decision makers should facilitate financial services such as micro-financial institutions to disadvantaged rural women.

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