

Rural women in terms of education, sustainable development and agricultural Extension in Konya, Turkey

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Abstract: The overall purpose of this study was to examine factors influencing accessibility of women to agricultural Extension services in Konya. The second purpose of the study was to investigate specific needs and interests of women. In basis of the rural development, between the city and countryside, socio-cultural and reaching optimum level of economic differences, rural population to improve themselves in their rural area, in addition to that, the real women's effect on manufacturing and the improvement in social status has not been performed yet. Because, in Turkey, rural development practices are mostly done to improve the basis facilities, canalizing the new technologies to agriculture, modernizing the agriculture to take form to shape the improve the life standard. However, we can also see women in every part of agricultural production. When the criteria of education is taken care that bearer ring the importance of women's status, especially, there exist importance for education services that must be taken to women who live in the rural areas. Increasing in the women's education level, also increase in the participation level of the labor force.

This research used multi-method research approach that combined interviews by the questionnaire, participant observation, focus group interviews, document evaluation. Also, while 11.78% of farms are not in question, now they enforce as producer activities under cover. Rural women need to be informed as education, research, health, family planning, spread for the further generations, to provide them enough income and food secure.

Keywords: rural women, Turkey, Education, Agricultural Extension

Introduction

It examines the specific activities in which women participate, and investigates the way that this participation varies based on factors such as age, marital status, location and household structure. The research finds that women provide an important, and often underestimated, source of human capital for household livelihood strategies. In spite of women participate in household livelihoods in reality; the research illustrates the limited control and decision-making power that women have in agricultural pursuits. Widows enjoy the greatest autonomy; however they are most vulnerable due to inadequate Access to resources and human capital. Agriculture is the very backbone of the central government's plan to foster reconstruction and revitalization of the Turkish economy.

While rural women's contribution to agricultural and livestock production is well-documented, they have little or no access to productive inputs to enhance their economic participation in these sectors. Evidence based on national level data indicates that women's participation in agricultural activities is constrained by the lack of land and other assets [Sathar and Desai (1994)]. Contrary to the general view, women belonging to households that own land or other assets have a higher labor force participation rate than landless women. While landless women are more likely to work as agricultural laborers, however, the demand for wage employment is seasonal; limited to a few activities and certain regions, and their lack of assets to work with excludes any possibility of self-employment. Findings of village level research indicate a wide gap between the technology used by rural women

and the more efficient practices in livestock production, which is attributed to their lack of contact with extension services and to their lack of resources to adopt more efficient methods of livestock care [Haque (1986)]. In agricultural communities the development of viable solutions for dealing with economic, social and environmental problems is placed in jeopardy through numerical shrinkage of this section of the population. Agriculture is still an important activity in country areas, even in the most developed countries. In the southern regions of Europe such as Greece where the economy is distinctly agricultural in character, farming is the most important employment sector in the countryside. The devaluation of farming as a profession and the generally negative stance of young people, particularly young women, towards the prospect of farm employment or integration through marriage into a farming household is already well-documented (Gasson and Errington, 1993; Fonte et al., 1994; Dahlstrom, 1996; Gidarakou, 1999).

There is clearly a strong need to raise women's knowledge of efficient management practices and to facilitate their access to necessary resources. These interventions are essential not only because of their likely beneficial effect on women's economic autonomy, but also to meet the sector's objective of raising farm and livestock production. In agriculture sector, women have been striving the agricultural activities and besides their house-works. Women are drawers in agricultural development for Turkey. If the women who get good education, could be affect her husband and children, she can also be very sensitive about their agricultural environment (Oguz, 2009) This study also described the characteristics of women's farming and conservation groups, their tasks, objectives problems, and proposed solutions, and the content and implementation of Extension programs that promote increased food production and conservation at the local level.

Material and method

The main material that is used in this research is obtained from the questionnaire that is applied to the via inquiry from 50 volunteer women who are in the extent of leader farmer project in 12 village in Konya. Also some secondary data such as reports and statistics were used to facilitate and to support the research. This research is the secondary part of our previous study called as "The Role and the Importance of Women in Agricultural Production in Rural Area of Konya" in 1997 and the inquiry applications were realized in August-September months of 2009. The "judgement sampling" method was used in selecting the villages. Agricultural production techniques, economic structure and distribution of farms were taken into consideration as criteria in representing the village. The women's were selected randomly and those who are willingly and voluntarily cooperate with the researches were interviewed. Farms samples were investigated in 3 separated groups; there were 17 enterprises in 1-50 decare enterprise group, 15 enterprises in 50-100 decare enterprise group and 10 enterprises in 101-+ decare enterprise group. Appropriate computer programs will be used in the analysis of the data. Their levels of satisfaction, relevancy, quantity or quality using a four or five point scale; 1=Very Low, 2=Low, 3= Medium, 4= High, and 5= Very High. Additionally, the respondents were asked questions related to their demographic characteristics. These items incorporated b both open-ended and closed type of questions.

Rural women in sustainable Agriculture

Rural and farm women are generally among the most disadvantaged groups of a population, yet they play a key role in agriculture and rural development. The farms of Turkey have obtained a family business and small scale. Day to day, youths are not interesting in agriculture in the developing countries like Turkey. Almost 8 millions employee work in agriculture and about 60% of them are female in Turkey. In agriculture sector, women have been striving the agricultural activities and besides their house-works. Women are drawers in agricultural development for Turkey.

There is widespread agreement that rural women in World play an important role in agriculture (figure 1). From 1950 to 2010 agricultural population are rising in the world and also, share of agricultural population are rising of developing countries.

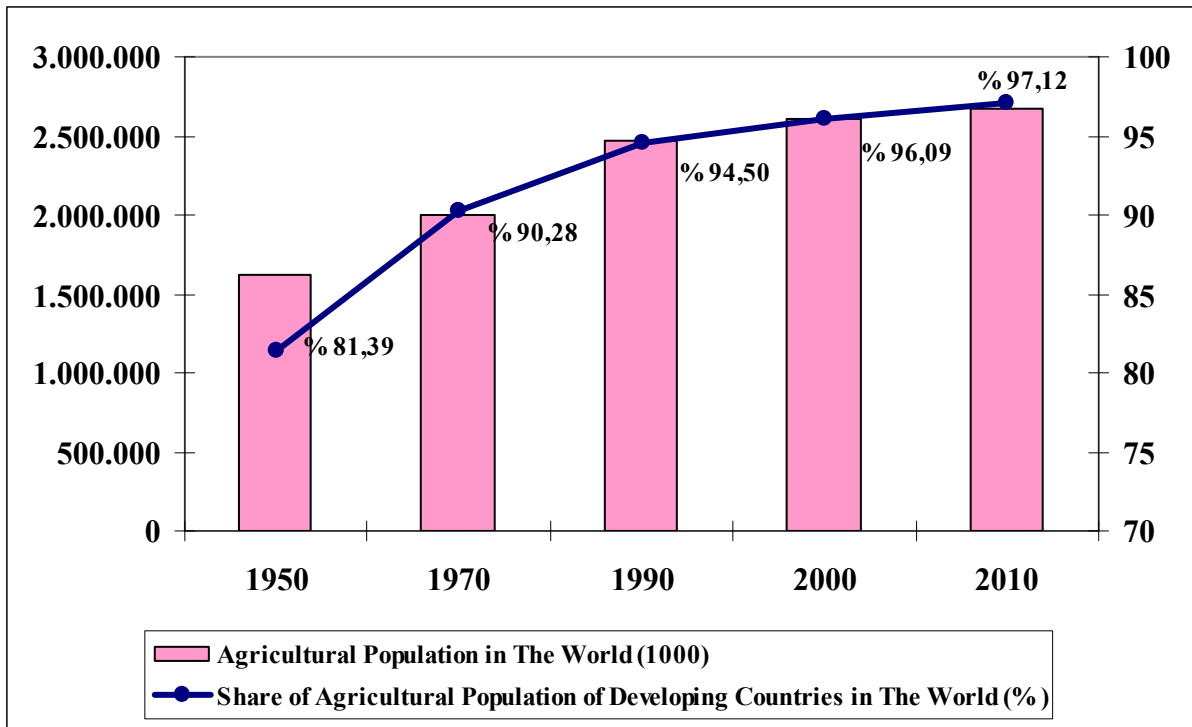


Figure.1 Agricultural Population in the World

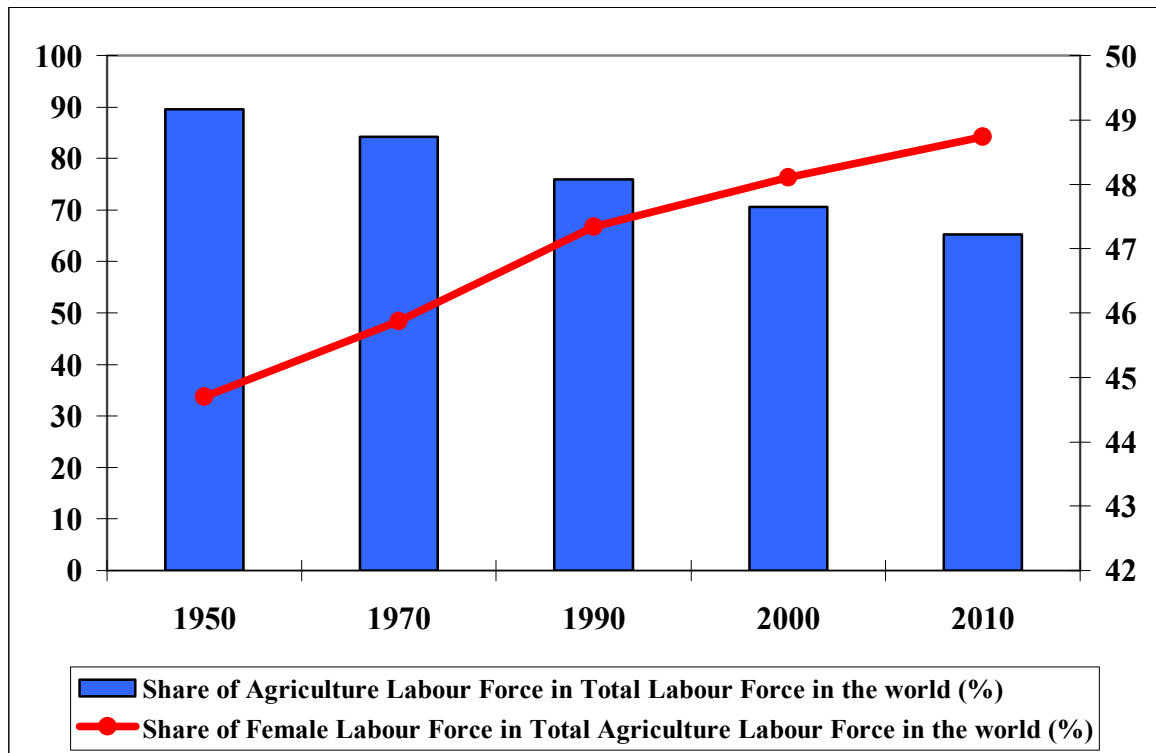


Figure 2. Share of female Labor Force and Agriculture Labor Force in Total Labor Force in the world (%)

We see that the share of agricultural labor force in total labor force in the world. Agricultural labor is decreasing on the 2010 years. But the shares of female labour force are rising in total agriculture labor force in 2010. So far the focus of the Division's programme has been on the data derived from agricultural censuses and

surveys. While these provide an overview of the structure of gender involvement in the agricultural activity, they do not suffice for providing guidance to policy makers to draft programs for agricultural and rural development. Therefore, in the new approach, it is planned to compile data from all sources (agricultural censuses and surveys as well as household income/expenditure surveys) to understand the role of women in the social, cultural and economic development and their impact on income, consumption, nutritional status etc. Thus, in addition to the traditional focus on the collection and compilation of data on status of holder, employment and population dependent on agriculture by gender, the new approach would attempt cross classifications of the attributes by size of holding, income classes etc. as well as establish linkages with income and consumption levels (Oguz, 2009).

The Republic of Turkey occupies a unique geographical and cultural position at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Turkey has a total land area of 78 million hectares and a population of more than 70 million. About one third of the land is arable, and 26 percent of the population lives in rural areas. The active population, work in the rural area of Turkey, is 14 767 000 and women have 61.26% of this population. The population of women work active in the agricultural activities shows an increase from year to year. From the point of this view, the place and importance of the women population in agricultural activities and rural development is understood. In agricultural enterprises in Turkey, the individuals are comprised from 54% men and 46% women whose main work is agricultural activities. Nevertheless the number of unpaid family worker is 5 265 431 and it is conspicuous that 66% of this is formed by women. While the major portions of the workers, who work for ownself, are employer and are paid, is creating by men, the altitude in the number of women as unpaid family worker shows the low degree of importance of women in the rural area. 49% of the workers in Konya whose main work is agricultural activities are women and the ratio of the unpaid family worker is about 59%. On the side of this, 2% of employers and 9% of who works for ownself are formed by women (Oguz, 2008)

In the research area, Konya, the study estimated 52 % of women labor in agriculture (Oguz et al., 1998). Even women has been taking big percentage of farm labor, they are not benefiting from rural development aids, so they are the most effectible gender in poverty. For civilization rural development aids must be reached to the women in rural area and women respect must be increased in developing countries. The women works in agriculture commonly are unpaid workers in Turkey since farm owners are men. In this case, rural development aid must be offered to women in order to establish their own business. The business sustainability is depending on the knowledge on the women in rural social and economical situation. For the woman who is in the rural area of Turkey, being made of manufacture and home works together, lowness of education level and social status, not being provided organization, not having possibilities for working as paid and the presence of legal regulations deficiencies about working as social security are seen as important problems (Yildirak et al., 2003).

Rural women in terms of education

In basis of the rural development, between the city and countryside, sociocultural and reaching optimum level of economic differences, rural population to improve themselves in their rural area, in addition to that, the real women's effect on manufacturing and the improvement in social status has not been performed yet. Because, in Turkey, rural development practices are mostly done to improve the basis facilities, canalizing the new technologies to agriculture, modernizing the agriculture to take form to shape the improve the life standard. However, we can also see women in every part of agricultural production. When the criteria of education is taken care that bearing the importance of women's status, especially, there exist importance for education services that must be taken to women who live in the rural areas. Increasing in the women's education level, also increase in the participation level of the labor force. In research area, 60.45% of women are literate or graduated from primary school, 34.76% graduated from secondary school or high school, 4.79% are graduated from academy (Table 1).

Farm Size Group(da)	Literate or primary school	Secondary school	High school	University	Total
1-50	3.57	1.56	0.36	0.20	5.69
51-100	4.00	2.40	0.50	0.50	7.40
101-+	5.60	2.00	0.55	0.30	8.15
<i>Enterprise average</i>	3.53	1.65	0.38	0.28	5.84
Ratio (%)	60.45	28.25	6.51	4.79	100.00

Table 1. The education position (person) and ratio (%) of the population that are more than 6 years old due to the enterprises groups

In research area, 26.18% of women take decisions which are about house work and children, 9.44% of women have an active role in provision of input, 40.40% of women attend in animal husbandry and 23.80 % of women participate the all decisions in the family (Table 2).

Farm Size Group(da)	Decisions only about house works	House works + assurance of input	House works+ purchase of animal	Agree with all decisions
1-50	27.00	16.00	50.00	20.00
51-100	30.00	-	56.00	30.00
101-+	40.00	20.00	33.00	40.00
Farms average	26.18	9.44	40.40	23.80

Table 2. The ratio of attendance of women to the decisions (%)

Women's education is important for not only for her status but also for rural development and sustainability. Because, women who get good education, affect her husband and her children and she can also be very sensitive about the environment. Starting with the air, water and soil pollution, environmental problems that reach the vegetation and vanished of the animals and death of humans, society who faced with such these problems, concern about their future (Işikli et al., 1998). Especially, field of agriculture and animal being must be increased to provide the requirements and agricultural enterprises sustainable in economic way. In addition, women who generate potential force must be educated and made conscious of environmental issues. Because, women take place in production process also take place in consumption process. If agricultural innovations are narrated to the rural area and technical knowledge of technology usage is given to women, most of the environmental pollution will be solved. Because, if knowledge is given to men, it is only informed the men but not to make men conscious of knowledge. However, giving education to the women is helpful to educate the children and partner. But there was no information available on whether or how extension policies and project acknowledged or responded to women's agricultural and conservation groups in research area. Especially, undeveloped and highland areas where poverty level women live and they protect the land to get maximal efficiency, they give importance to variability of vegetable and animal product and they diligently claim these products. Between 2006-2009, intended for the women, within the agricultural spread practices, organic goods such as strawberry, tomato, broccoli production is internalized and working is continued. Also, while 11.78 % of farms are not in question, now they enforce as producer activities under sub-project (Table 3).

Farm Size Group(da)	Greenhouse	Milk dairying	Ewes	Fruit growing	Family grocery
1-50	17.00	37.00	17.00	40.00	27.00
51-100	20.00	33.00	15.00	60.00	38.00
101-+	-	28.00	20.00	56.00	53.00
Enterprise average.	11.78	28.08	14.28	42.80	31.18

Table 3. The activity areas of women enforced in the project extent (%)

Needs of the Rural Women

Women need to be informed as education, research, health, family planning, spread for the further generations, to provide them enough income and food secure. Women's had important needs which could be easily addressed if these needs were clearly understood by the Extension administrators. The most important needs were related to farm-tools, especially those used for soil conservation. Their need farm input such as fertilizers, certified seeds, pesticides, and planting materials. Other needs included farming inputs, assistance in acquiring agricultural loans, and regular Extension training. Especially, the Ministry of Agriculture had given-up on them, and women's were treated as if they were beyond help. If women's economic, social and environmental

conditions were be improved, extension administrators and implementers need to understand women’s needs, their work strategies, and the best way to reach them. In addition, there has been no research done on the needs or functioning of women’s autonomous farming and conservation groups in Konya.

Rural Women Participation in Extension Activities

Historically, women in Konya have been pivotal in agricultural production and have contributed immensely, individually or collectively, to environmental conservation work. Increased emphasis on cash cropping and male migration out of the rural areas has further accentuated the centrality of women in food production for local consumption.

Gaps between extension services and women producers have also been found to exist in village. Increasingly, women have come to rely on self-help groups to meet their needs. Most mountain village women have had only limited access to services and resources provided by the local state services.

Poor roads and farm credit is a major problem. Farmers were transporting their produce to the nearest market. These problems were supported by the state service. Farm input (strawberry seedling), packet, selling, loans, tools and cash problem were conducted in the project research area during 2006-2009. Female farmers participation in field-days and farm demonstrations was reported to be high compared to other activities. Extension service reported medium participation in village meeting, seminars and show attendance.

Activities	Degree of Participation					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Field days	0	5	10	20	15	50
Farm demonstration	0	0	15	15	10	40
Seminar	0	5	10	15	20	50
Shows	0	2	10	15	15	40

Note: 1: very low, 2: Low, 3: Medium, 4: High, 5: Very High

The majority of women have had agricultural based functions related to natural resources as a means of sustainability. This research area had drip irrigation system and marginal soils making it difficult for farmers to farm productively without effective Extension services. On the other hand women involvement in environmental conservation also did not receive meaningful support from extension. A extension programme aimed at raising production through delivery of extension services and credit cannot be effective if it fails to provide the inputs to active participants in the sectors. If women’s economic, social and environmental conditions were be improved, Extension administrators and implementers need to understand women’s needs, their work, strategies, and the best way to reach them.

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