

An Exploratory Study on the Role of Women in Agriculture in The Don Duong District, Lam Dong Vietnam

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ABSTRACT: Women play a significant role in Vietnam's development, particularly in agriculture. They have greatly contributed to rural economic growth and are actively engaged in agricultural production. Historically, women have managed the majority of agricultural output at the community level. However, their contributions have not received official recognition. This research aims to explore the potential causes of sex inequality in agriculture, examine the contributions of women, and highlight their involvement in agricultural activities in Don Duong District, Vietnam. Assessing women's roles is crucial to understanding the gender imbalance in agriculture at the local level and to investigate factors such as the influence of feudal ideologies that value men over women, gender discrimination, and societal awareness of gender equality. This study seeks to identify the causes of sex inequality in Don Duong District and assess its economic impact on the province. A qualitative approach was used, focusing on one-on-one interviews with selected women in the district. The findings revealed that women are the primary workforce in agriculture, spending more time on farms and earning more income than men. However, they face challenges in decision-making and land ownership due to traditional barriers, including cultural preference for men and persistent gender inequalities. Through this study, women in agriculture had the opportunity to express their concerns about sex inequality and offer input on strategies that could effectively address this issue and help them gain more recognition in society.

KEYWORDS: Sex inequality, Gender Discrimination, Social Awareness

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a cornerstone of Vietnam's economic growth. Presently, agriculture is the pillar of the economy of Vietnam (Anh, 2022), whose contribution is a strategic advantage for the country (General Statistics, 2023). The agriculture sector contributes 80.79% of the added value in the agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors (Trang, 2022). Moreover, agriculture continues to employ the largest share of the labor force, with 70% of workers engaged in agricultural activities, as of 2015 statistics. This sector has played a crucial role in poverty alleviation for numerous families by generating additional income through non-crop activities. Additionally, agriculture extensively makes use of natural resources like land, water, forests, and raw materials, with a substantial portion of these resources being redirected towards industrial and urban development (Hanh, 2023).

Vietnam is an agricultural country (Cuong, 2021), with an agricultural land area of 27,994,319 hectares, accounting for 87.4% of the total land in Vietnam (General Statistics Office, 2021). Meanwhile, the entire geographical size of the country is 33,134,400 hectares (Statistics on Land, 2021). Agricultural land continues to make up the largest portion of the total land area in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese people depend mainly on income from agriculture, and Vietnamese people mostly do farm, as shown in the report of the General Director of General Statistics Office. The overall production of agriculture was valued at a very high percentage of 96 % in 2015 and 96,29 % (Report of the Statistics of Vietnam, 2017), compared with the rate of forestry and fisheries. Despite challenges, agriculture continues to be a driving force behind Vietnam's economic growth.

Women play a significant role in the development of Vietnam, especially in agriculture. They have contributed greatly to rural economic growth and are actively engaged in agricultural production. Vietnamese women make up 50.1 % (Linh, 2022) of the country's population and 50.3% of the labor force of Vietnam (Nhung, 2015). The agricultural workforce plays an important role in production; they have a great role in creating material wealth, supplementing human resources, and contributing to the country's economic growth. Women participate in all economic, political, cultural, social, security, and defense sectors and increasingly express their position and role in society (Tin et al., 2015). In the conditions of the market economy in the current progress, the role of women is demonstrated in enhancing home economics and being the main force in agricultural production,

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determining the success of achievements in the cause of industrialization and modernization of agriculture and agribusiness in the village (Nhung, 2015).

The participation of women in economic activities is increasing; however, the contribution of women is not recorded in some way worthy of disproportionate to their position and role in the economy, in social relationships, and in family life (Duong, 2019). The thought of respecting men and women here still exists quite a lot (Nhan, 2017); women rarely participate in social work or at least in the use of resources in household economic development. In the market economy, women must bear a "heavy shoulders and two shoulders" burden, which means that women are tasked with a dual responsibility in their role as the individuals responsible for unpaid household activities, such as fulfilling the roles of wife and mother, and participating in contributing to and developing the family's economy, simultaneously, they must balance domestic family work and take the role of wife and mother when their time and health are limited (Mai, 2018 ; Linh, 2018, pp. give the page number). To try to do everything with good work requires effort and sacrifice.

Still, their role has not been properly recognized in family and society, and the benefits granted to women are unequal in comparison with men. Their contribution has not received official recognition, and they still struggle to overcome being marginalized and discriminated against in all areas dominated by men. Agriculture is no exception. According to (Thieng, 2017, p.), patriarchal instincts, customary barriers, gender stereotypes, and cultural ideas like "respecting men, disdaining women" all contribute to gender prejudice that still exists quite heavily in rural areas, and legal and ethical standards continue to challenge the role of women in agriculture, despite their involvement in the agricultural sector. It causes many problems for countries and significantly impacts women in many aspects of their lives due to gender inequalities.

II. LITERATURE AND THEORY

A. Literature

Recently, women's contribution to agriculture is a topic that interests many students and researchers, especially those from developing countries. Several factors have been found to indicate that women's contribution to agriculture is significant in agriculture. To provide more detail on the most significant contribution, the researcher will present the women's contribution to agriculture in detail.

One of the key discoveries in Parto's (2014) study was the demonstration that Ester Boserup, originally an agricultural scientist, is renowned for her theory on agriculture. Boserup's research provided solid empirical evidence highlighting the significant role women play in agriculture and industry. She emphasized the critical contributions of women to agricultural practices and rural development, showing that women have always been an essential part of agriculture, contributing in various aspects of its development.

Many researchers and students find that Vietnamese women contributing to agriculture plays a very important role (Son, 2017; Nguyen, 2019; Nguyet, 2019). This is reflected in the work and success achieved by women over the years. First, Vietnamese women are born in a country with an agricultural civilization based on wet rice cultivation and handicrafts, so Vietnamese women have become the main labor force. Women in the whole commune account for 51.7% of the total number of employees, and female workers account for 51.13% of the total number of employees in the commune (Duong, 2019). In agricultural production, men are the ones who perform heavy physical jobs such as spraying medicine in the plant and tillage which require physical strength and experience, while women are the ones who perform most of the other jobs such as harvesting the production, planting, fertilizing, removing the grass, the main to take care, the main to take care and selling the production (Linh, 2016).

Women play a major role in agricultural production as the person who regularly performs the work of caring for and reproducing labor power for cultivation, plowing, and tilling (Source). The participation rate of women is 46.67%, which is 1.43 times higher than that of men. For sowing and transplanting of rice, it is 63.33%, which is three times higher than that of men (Mai, 2018).

For other jobs, such as irrigation and spraying, women take on the main role, but unfortunately, they are still invisible workers. Despite working longer hours than men, women's domestic work is unpaid; men's contribution is evaluated by their income. In addition to their agricultural labor, women also take on the domestic chores of taking care of the family. Rural women have a particularly important role in the family, as well as being housewives. Women in agriculture play dual roles as income generators for their families and as individuals who contribute to the labor force while nurturing and educating future generations of the country. Despite their significant contributions, however, the importance of women's contributions in agriculture is often overlooked or undervalued.

Although women's contributions to agriculture and food production are undeniably significant, it is difficult to precisely measure the portion of production solely attributable to women. This challenge arises from the fact that agricultural work is

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primarily carried out within households, where various resources and inputs are shared, making it hard to attribute output solely to gender.

They are also treated unfairly not only in the situation is described as: Men do not allow women to enjoy inalienable rights such as their right to vote. Men have taken away everything from women their right to own property such as land and valuable objects, even the wages they earn (Lois, 2013). Men have taken up most of the good jobs, and women are only allowed to do a few works with little salary (Huong, 2015). Men have tried their best to find ways to destroy women's belief in their power, reducing self-esteem their own and turn them into people who just want to live a dependent life. Men have placed on women the responsibility of the nurturing of the family and on other things, men have the right to decide everything for their lives (Nguyen, 2019).

Men also treat women as servants whose primary role is to serve men themselves. Most feminists agree with Marxism that the world's ancient societies had a division between men and women (Yen, 2016) in it, women are the ones who hunt for all reproduction jobs in addition to production jobs and community work. Meanwhile, men only take charge in production and community work related to the power structure. But women are not appreciated for their roles or their contribution.

Not only making a great contribution to Vietnam's economy, the women in Vietnam will always remember the first president Ho Chi Minh who paid special attention and showed special care and affection towards women, treating them with warmth and sincerity, like a father, uncle, or elder brother and appreciate their roles in all areas of the social life and he always fought for the rights of women (Minh Duong, 2023). He always reminds us that, from the very beginning of the establishment of the communist party and the government of Vietnam, it must be clearly stated the policy of equality between men and women.

Our constitution has defined that policy by giving men and women equal opportunities in all phases of our life and it will never change, (Hoa, 2019). The initial two constitutions of Vietnam, established after the country's independence in 1946, explicitly affirmed that "Women are equal to men" (Duong, 2023). In 1959, the constitution was revised to more clearly define women's rights and responsibilities, stating that women in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are entitled to equal rights with men in political, economic, cultural, social, and family matters.

Additionally, women are guaranteed equal pay for equal work (Constitution No. 24, Chapter 3). But the reality is the women still do not enjoy those rights articulated in the constitution. They are still not heard, not respected by the men in the family and society, not heard in policy-making decisions, no rights to own land, and no access to education. "It's truly sad for women, the silent sacrifices, interests of women in rural areas are not recognized by national laws, policies, society, family or even when regulations exist within the legal system, they are not fully implemented in practice (General Recommendation, 2016).

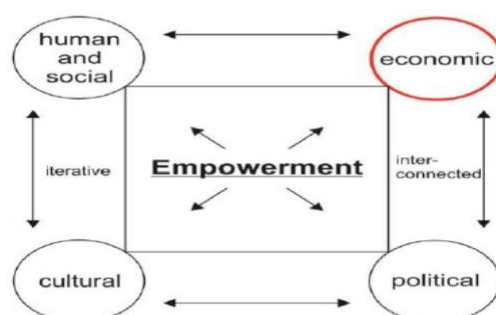
B. Theory

A. Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theoretical foundations used in previous investigations. The researcher will use the data gathered to conceptualize the current investigation and design a research plan.

Empowerment Theory

This study draws on the ideas of Luttrell et al. (2009), as adapted by (Ramón Eck, 2014), to help the researcher focus on elevating women's rights, needs, and welfare, particularly for individuals, groups, and communities that are socio-economically disadvantaged. It also aims to understand how individuals and communities gain control over their lives, access essential resources, and actively participate in decision-making processes. According to (Eck, 2014), in the male-dominated society of Bangladesh, the majority of women are confined within the "four walls" of their homes—a metaphor likened to a bird in a cage. Cultural and patriarchal practices, such as purdah, significantly limit their mobility and restrict their participation in economic and social activities. Their responsibilities are primarily centered around domestic tasks, including cooking, cleaning, childbearing, childrearing, and managing household affairs (UN, 2021). This context is why Ramón Eck highlights different types of empowerments, namely political, cultural, human, social, and economic empowerment, emphasizing that these forms are interconnected and iterative.



Source: (idea) Luttrell et al, 2009 Adapted by (layout) Ramón Eck, 2014

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There is widespread agreement among researchers in the field that the various dimensions of empowerment are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. For instance, progress in the public (political) sphere may be hindered by a lack of advancement in the human and social (private) sphere (Political empowerment of women and girls, 2024). Improved access to education does not always translate into better employment opportunities, as factors such as domestic violence can restrict women from engaging in the public or political sphere. Additionally, household responsibilities often prevent women from participating in paid work or political activities (Mai, 2019).

Empowerment is fundamentally about power—the power to make decisions about one's own possibilities and options and to shape them accordingly. It involves gaining control over one's life, developing self-confidence, and acquiring the skills and resources needed to participate fully in social, economic, and political processes. According to Luttrell et al. (2009), empowerment is not just about "power over" others but also includes "power to" (the capacity to make choices and take action), "power with" (collective power through collaboration and solidarity), and "power within" (self-awareness and self-confidence). This kind of power inspires individuals to achieve things they may not have believed themselves capable of. However, the concept of "power" can be contentious and even intimidating in the context of development policy and practice because it is open to varied interpretations.

Empowerment is a multifaceted process that can help address key societal issues, such as cultural, political, human, social, and economic factors, particularly in a developing country like Vietnam. By expanding people's agency, especially those who have historically been marginalized, empowerment can foster a more equitable society.

According to Kabeer, (2001) **Cultural Empowerment** involves enabling individuals and communities to maintain, celebrate, and shape their cultural identity. It is a transformative process that challenges dominant cultural narratives and allows people to redefine their relationship with their traditions, values, and societal roles. Cultural empowerment is particularly critical in societies where cultural norms and practices might marginalize certain groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, or lower-income communities.

In Vietnam, traditional cultural practices, particularly in rural and conservative communities, often impose strict gender roles (Thieng, 2017). Women, in many cases, are confined by cultural expectations related to domestic roles, family obligations, and limited mobility. Vung, (2020), found that Cultural norms such as the traditional role of women as caregivers, governed by patriarchy and influenced by Confucianism, limit women's ability to make choices that impact their lives beyond the household. These cultural norms can perpetuate social inequality, restrict opportunities for women's personal and professional development, and hinder their participation in broader societal, economic, and political spheres.

However, cultural empowerment offers a framework for breaking these limitations by allowing individuals, particularly women, to assert their rights to participate in, negotiate, and redefine cultural practices and norms. It is about creating spaces where marginalized groups can reshape their cultural identities and gain recognition for their contributions to society...

World Bank, (2012). Mention that political empowerment in Vietnam can lead to greater participation in decision-making processes, particularly for marginalized groups. By enabling individuals to influence policy and advocate for their rights, political empowerment helps address disparities in governance. In Vietnam, political empowerment can allow citizens, especially women and ethnic minorities, to demand better representation and engage more meaningfully in democratic processes.

Human empowerment relates to the development of individuals' skills, knowledge, and self-confidence. In Vietnam, where many rural communities lack access to education and training, human empowerment can significantly enhance the quality of life (Kieu, 2015). By improving access to education and skill-building programs, people are empowered to make better life decisions and improve their economic standing and social empowerment involves increasing individuals' ability to influence social structures and their participation in societal activities (Dai, 2019). In the Vietnamese context, social empowerment can help break down social barriers, such as those based on gender or class. Empowered individuals and groups are better able to challenge social norms that perpetuate inequality, such as discrimination or exclusion from social activities.

Economic empowerment is a critical component of development, particularly in Vietnam, where many women and rural communities face systemic barriers to financial independence (Nguyen, 2019). In its essence, economic empowerment is about equipping individuals with the skills, resources, and opportunities to make decisions that improve their financial stability and quality of life. This empowerment allows individuals, particularly women, to participate in the labor market, own property, control their income, and ultimately contribute to the broader economic development of their communities.

In Vietnam, as in many other developing countries, gendered economic disparities persist, particularly in rural areas. Women often have limited access to education, capital, and employment opportunities (Thu, 2017). Traditional gender roles, reinforced by cultural and societal expectations, confine women's activities largely to the domestic sphere, restricting their financial autonomy. According to Nguyen et al. (2019), a significant gap exists between men and women in terms of economic participation, with women primarily engaged in informal labor markets and agricultural work. These inequities often leave women

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with limited bargaining power, both in the household and in society at large.

However, economic empowerment provides women with the tools necessary to overcome these limitations. By gaining financial independence, women can contribute to household income, make decisions about expenditures, and enhance their own social and political standing. Economic empowerment also enables women to access essential resources, including credit, land, and education, and participate more fully in local and national economies.

The Role of Economic Empowerment in Women's Labor Force Participation

Economic empowerment is particularly crucial for improving women's participation in the workforce. In Vietnam, traditional gender roles have historically relegated women to the home, with their work primarily confined to household chores, childrearing, and small-scale agriculture. Despite these challenges, women in Vietnam have been making significant strides in increasing their participation in the formal labor market, especially in urban areas. The World Bank (2020) reports that women's labor force participation in Vietnam is rising, but they remain overrepresented in lower-paying, informal sectors and face significant barriers to career advancement.

Through economic empowerment, women gain the ability to make decisions regarding their careers and income-generating activities. Sen (1999) argues that access to economic resources is crucial for empowering individuals to make decisions that affect their lives. In the case of women in Vietnam, economic empowerment allows them to take part in income-generating activities outside the home, thereby improving their status within the family and community.

One example of economic empowerment in action is the rise of women in microfinance programs in Vietnam. Microfinance initiatives, which provide small loans to individuals with limited access to traditional banking services, have become a powerful tool for promoting women's economic independence. According to Kabeer (2001), access to financial services like microcredit enables women to start or expand businesses, increase household income, and secure greater financial independence. In rural Vietnam, microfinance programs have allowed women to take out loans to invest in agriculture, small businesses, or education, leading to greater economic stability and improved quality of life.

Access to Resources and Decision-Making Power

Another key aspect of economic empowerment is access to resources. In many rural areas in Vietnam, women face significant barriers to accessing land, credit, and other financial resources. Land ownership, in particular, is often a critical determinant of economic power. However, due to cultural norms and legal barriers, women in Vietnam often have limited access to land and property rights, which hinders their ability to accumulate wealth and make independent financial decisions.

Boserup (1970) argued that women's access to land and other productive resources is essential for economic development. In Vietnam, efforts to provide women with access to land, credit, and education have helped boost their economic empowerment. The Vietnam Women's Union (2015) launched various initiatives aimed at providing women with the necessary tools to engage in income-generating activities, such as providing training in business management and marketing, and promoting land rights for women. These programs have helped empower women to become financial decision-makers in their households and communities.

Furthermore, economic empowerment strengthens women's decision-making power, not just in economic matters but also in the political and social spheres. According to Rowlands (1997), economic power is intertwined with the ability to participate in decision-making processes. When women are economically empowered, they gain the confidence to assert their opinions, advocate for their rights, and influence community and political decision-making processes. This shift in power dynamics leads to increased gender equality and a more inclusive society.

Empowerment has the potential to address and mitigate key challenges in cultural, political, human, social, and economic spheres. In Vietnam, fostering empowerment, especially for women and marginalized groups, can lead to greater equality, improved well-being, and more inclusive participation in societal development.

B. Research Question /Objective

The researcher would like to know the significant role of women in agriculture in the Don Duong District.

1. What is the primary role of women in the field of agriculture?
2. What is the contribution of women in the agriculture field?
3. What is the main cause of sex inequality in agriculture?
4. How significant is the role of women in agriculture in contributing to the province's overall economy?

III. METHOD

A. Research design

This research used the qualitative approach using a phenomenological design through an in-depth interviews and content analysis. It is qualitative research because it expounded on the perspective of women in agriculture and gained an understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and experiences of the study. It provided insights to the problems and helped the researchers to access the thoughts and feelings of research participants for potential quantitative research. This study utilized an in-depth interview, visual and audiovisual materials and field notes. The researcher asked the authors of scholarly journals for letters of permission to use their survey questionnaires for study purposes. The researcher conducted a reliability and content validity which verified by the experts on their corresponding fields. Then, the researcher conducted a pre-test of the questionnaire and analyze and interpret the results of the pre-test survey with the assistance of the chosen statistician.

B. Participants

This study was conducted among all rural women who contribute to the economic development of their families in Don Duong District, particularly in the communes of LACLAM, PRÓ, LACXUAN, KADO, KADON, and TUTRA

An agricultural place where farming is the primary occupation or source of income. There will be 15 participants, with ages ranging from 30-60. They will be chosen purposive sampling method regardless of their economic status. In purposive sampling, there are no fixed guidelines for determining sample size in qualitative research. The ideal sample size depends on several factors, including the research questions, theoretical framework, study design, type of data collected, available resources, and time constraints. In this study, the researcher decided to base the sample size on the population of the selected locations. For instance, areas with larger populations, such as Pro, Lac Xuan, and Tutra, were assigned a sample size of three, while areas with smaller populations, such as Lac Lam, Da Ron, and Ka Do, were assigned a sample size of two.

C. Research instrument

The present researcher utilized the following instruments to generate the data needed.

1. Interview: This is a semi-structured conversation with selection to gather in-depth information and insights.
2. Audiovisual materials: This includes the photographs, and audio recordings that may be used to capture and analyze the field text of this research.
3. Field notes: This is written descriptions or reflections made by researcher during or after the interviews, or interactions with participants.

The questionnaire packet includes the following:

Request for an in-depth Interview Form. This is a request letter for the participants. It contained also the objectives and description of the study such as the time the interview took place and how it had to be done using video or audio recordings.

Informed Consent Form. This is a consent form to be signed by researcher and participants. This explains the agreement between the researcher and the participants in taking part of this study. Some principles and ethics that must be considered to participation in any research are stated here such as confidentiality on personal information about the participants, the voluntary participation, and the manner on how the interview will be conducted.

Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview Guide. This contains constructed questions used for the in-depth interview. The interview guide was checked by an expert for content validation to evaluate the relevance of the questions in connection with the topic.

D. Data gathering procedure

Before proceeding to the formal data gathering, appropriate and required communications were sent to the women farmers. After having their consent, the researcher conducted an interview in a place where it is convenient for them. The manner and ethics were reiterated to them before the start of the interview. They were informed that their participation is voluntary and their responses to the questionnaire remained anonymous and confidential. A questionnaire packet were given which included cover letter and informed consent. The interview was varied in length depending on the participant's interest and responsiveness to the questions. In-depth interviews were audio- taped or video-taped for transcription.

Then, the in-depth interview were transcribed. After transcribing it, the researcher invited competent persons with at least a master's degree to do the task of qualitative analysis using Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) methodology. The data gathered were subjected for analysis in order to determine the similarities and differences as the relationship of their responses to the study.

E. Data Analysis

On the whole, the present study was obtain the qualitative data based on in-depth interviews of the women farmers.

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For this study the data was gathered from transcribed protocols to be analyzed using content analysis. The consensual qualitative research (CQR) guidelines were used to determine the common themes or consistency in the responses of the participants. The following components in using CQR were considered: the formation of team of judges, one auditor, development of domains, core ideas, and cross-analyses in the data (Hill, Knox, Thompson, Williams, Hess & Ladany, 2005). The researcher invited a team of judges (at least three) to analyze the data to foster multiple perspectives. Aside from the team an auditor checked the work of the team and abate the results of the group. The judges formulated the domain that pertains to research questions (such as comfort level and competencies of counseling professionals regarding spiritual issues and interventions used to address these issues). The team will use consensus to construct their interpretation of the data and resolve differences if there are instances. After developing the domain, the team will formulate the core ideas of the study. They will sum them up according to its particular domain. For instance, all the findings that pertain to "gender equality", will have a concise synopsis. The team will try to set aside their biases in explicating the data by making few inferences so that they captured what the respondent has reported.

A cross analysis also was done, at this part the independent external auditor will review the work of the team and give feedback on each category. The team discussed the feedback provided by the auditor and later will make a consensus adjustment on the modifications. All cases will be analyzed individually and will be subjected to cross- analyses in order to determine the uniqueness of their responses, the similarities and differences. After the cross-analyses, a stability checking was done, to check the stability of the core ideas or categories. Finally, the CQR's team interpretations of the transcribed interview were returned to the participants for validation of the responses made.

IV. RESULTS

As the result This chapter highlights the significant contributions of women in agriculture, emphasizing their roles as both laborers and skilled managers. Women's participation not only enhances food production but also strengthens rural economies and improves household incomes. Despite these contributions, sex inequality persists, with societal norms often favoring men and limiting women's access to resources and decision-making opportunities. Addressing these disparities is crucial for empowering women and optimizing their roles in agriculture. Recognizing the importance of women in this sector is essential for promoting sustainable development and economic growth, benefiting families and communities alike.

Transitioning to the next chapter, a deeper discussion of these findings will be done. This is done to explore the implications of sex inequality, the role of women in agriculture, and the necessary steps to foster a more equitable environment for women.

V. DISCUSSION

Firstly, the women's contributions to agriculture. This examines the diverse and pivotal roles women play in agricultural activities in Don Duong District. It highlights their impact on productivity, income generation, and community well-being, emphasizing how their contributions extend beyond traditional expectations.

The critical role women play in agricultural work in rural Vietnam, emphasizing their involvement in nearly all aspects of farming, from soil preparation to harvesting. Despite traditionally male-dominated tasks like plowing and pesticide spraying, women have taken on these responsibilities due to various factors, including their husbands' absence, poor health, or disinterest in farm work. The narrative provides a stark contrast between the heavy workload shouldered by women and the minimal contribution of men, with some women expressing frustration and exhaustion from bearing the burden alone. However, there is also a sentiment among some those men, as the pillars of the family, should handle more physically demanding tasks to ease the burden on women. Overall, the passage illustrates the indispensable yet often overlooked role of women in agricultural production, highlighting their resilience and the heavy demands placed on them in both farming and household duties.

Secondly, the challenges and barriers. This study explored the systemic and societal barriers that hinder women's full participation and advancement in the agricultural sector. This includes issues related to land ownership, access to resources, and prevailing gender norms that affect women's ability to influence decision-making and benefit from their labor.

The struggle for sex equality in agriculture is deeply rooted in historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors, making it a complex issue that demands multifaceted solutions. Sex inequality in agriculture is not just about unequal access to resources but involves entrenched societal attitudes and systemic barriers that have long marginalized women.

This study highlights the ongoing struggle for sex equality in agriculture, where women, despite their crucial role, are still marginalized and deprived of the opportunities to fully participate in decision-making and land ownership. Applying feminist theory to address these inequalities requires a concerted effort to change societal attitudes, promote gender-sensitive policies, and empower women through legal and economic reforms. Only by dismantling these long-standing barriers can women achieve the respect and recognition they deserve, enabling them to contribute more effectively to the development of their families and

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communities.

The ongoing struggle for sex equality in agriculture is a multifaceted issue that involves deeply rooted cultural, social, and economic barriers that prevent women from fully participating in key aspects of agricultural life. Despite their essential contributions to agricultural production, women often find themselves marginalized in areas that are crucial for their empowerment and development, particularly in decision-making and land ownership.

Lastly, the economic and social implications. This study assesses how women's involvement in agriculture influences both their personal economic conditions and the broader provincial economy. It evaluates the role of women's income in improving household welfare, promoting sustainable economic development, and advancing gender equality.

Women's participation in the workforce not only enhances the financial conditions of their families but also plays a key role in driving socio-economic development, fostering GDP growth, and promoting gender equality. Their income and economic independence are foundational elements in building a prosperous and sustainable society, and their role in agriculture is increasingly recognized as vital to both family welfare and national development.

The study shows that women in agriculture are not just contributing to their families' livelihoods; they are playing a pivotal role in promoting the overall economic growth of their provinces. Many women shared that the income they earn is essential in improving their family's quality of life, indicating that their financial independence is a key driver in reducing poverty and promoting economic stability in rural areas.

This economic contribution is not limited to supplementing family income. Women's participation in the workforce contributes to the nation's comprehensive economic development. In earning their own income, women reduce the economic burden on their households, allowing families to invest more in critical areas like education and healthcare. These investments lead to improved quality of life and, ultimately, promote social progress.

A significant finding from the research is that women in agriculture are often not just contributors but also primary breadwinners in their households. In some cases, women earn higher incomes than their husbands, reflecting a shift in traditional economic roles. This shift challenges the conventional notion of men as the primary earners and highlights women's capabilities as skilled laborers and effective managers.

For instance, some women reported that they handle all household expenses, as their income surpasses that of their husbands. This change in dynamics is particularly evident in cases where women take on additional work outside the home or when they manage both household responsibilities and agricultural investments. These women are not just supporting their families financially but are also driving sustainable economic development in their communities.

In summary by examining these themes, the discussion seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities surrounding women's roles in agriculture in Don Duong District. It also aims to contribute to the broader discourse on sex equality and development in rural contexts, offering insights that can inform future research, policymaking, and community initiatives.

Through a critical analysis of the findings, this chapter endeavors to bridge the gap between research and practice, highlighting both the progress made and the challenges that remain in achieving sex equality in agriculture.

VI. CONCLUSION

The exploratory study on the role of women in agriculture in Don Duong District, Vietnam, provides valuable insights into the significant yet often overlooked contributions of women to agricultural production and local economic development. The research highlights that women are not only integral to agricultural activities but also play a crucial role in enhancing household welfare and promoting regional economic growth.

Despite their essential contributions, women face persistent gender-based challenges that limit their full participation in agriculture. These challenges are rooted in historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors, and addressing them requires a multifaceted approach. By implementing gender-sensitive policies, advocating for legal reforms, and fostering societal attitude changes, it is possible to dismantle the barriers that have long marginalized women in agriculture.

The findings underscore the importance of empowering women through capacity building, financial support, and community-based networks. Women's economic independence and active participation in agriculture are critical for achieving sustainable development and sex equality in rural areas. Their contributions not only improve their families' quality of life but also drive broader socio-economic progress.

This study serves as a foundation for future research and policy initiatives aimed at enhancing women's roles in agriculture and addressing gender disparities. It highlights the need for continued efforts to bridge the gap between research and practice, ensuring that women's invaluable contributions are recognized and supported for the benefit of their families, communities, and the nation.

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Based on the discussion of this study on the role of women in agriculture in Don Duong District, Vietnam, the following recommendations are proposed by the researcher to address the challenges identified and enhance the positive impact of women in agriculture:

1. **Promote Gender-Sensitive Policies** -To develop and implement policies that specifically address the gender disparities in agriculture. This includes creating regulations that ensure equal access to land ownership, agricultural resources, and decision-making processes. Gender-sensitive policies should also focus on addressing the systemic barriers that hinder women's advancement in the sector.
2. **Enhance Legal Frameworks** – To advocate for legal reforms that guarantee women's rights to land ownership and inheritance. Strengthening legal protections will empower women to invest in and benefit from their agricultural activities, thus promoting their economic independence and security.
3. **Support Capacity Building and Training** – To invest in training programs that enhance women's skills in agricultural practices, management, and leadership. Providing women with access to modern farming techniques, financial management, and business skills will enable them to be more effective contributors to agricultural production and decision-making.
4. **Foster Societal Attitude Change** - To conduct awareness campaigns and community education programs to challenge and change traditional gender norms that marginalize women in agriculture. Promoting positive narratives about women's roles and contributions can help shift societal attitudes and foster greater gender equality.
5. **Community-Based Support Networks** – To establish support networks and cooperatives that empower women in agriculture. These networks can provide women with resources, information, and collective bargaining power, helping them overcome challenges and improve their economic prospects.
6. **Future Research** – To continue conduct research and collect data on women's roles in agriculture to gain a deeper understanding of their contributions and challenges. Data-driven insights can inform policy-making and program development, helping to address gender inequalities more effectively. This approach will not only benefit Don Duong District, Vietnam, but also other regions or countries, improving the role of women in agriculture more broadly.

5.3 Directions for Future Research

The future study on the role of women in agriculture holds significant potential to deepen our understanding of their contributions to the economic development of a province. By delving further into this topic, researchers can explore how women's participation in agricultural activities influences the broader economy and what factors shape their roles and opportunities.

One promising area for deeper investigation is the interplay between cultural and historical factors in defining women's roles in agriculture. Cultural norms, traditions, and societal expectations often dictate the extent to which women can engage in agricultural labor, decision-making, and resource ownership. Similarly, historical patterns of land use, inheritance practices, and gendered labor divisions continue to shape the current status of women in agricultural communities. Analyzing these dimensions can provide valuable insights into how deeply ingrained systems impact women's participation and highlight areas for policy intervention.

Another critical avenue for future research is the use of mixed-methods approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of women's roles. Quantitative methods can help measure women's economic contributions, such as their share in agricultural output or household income. Meanwhile, qualitative methods can uncover the lived experiences of women, shedding light on barriers they face, such as unequal access to resources, limited representation in leadership roles, and systemic discrimination. By combining these approaches, researchers can present a more holistic picture of women's impact and challenges in agriculture.

Furthermore, future studies can extend beyond immediate agricultural practices to examine women's roles in value-added activities, such as food processing, marketing, and entrepreneurship. These activities often remain underexplored yet are crucial for enhancing agricultural productivity and economic growth at the provincial level.

In conclusion, future research on women in agriculture should aim to unpack the multifaceted influences of culture, history, and systemic structures while adopting mixed- methods approaches to provide nuanced insights. Such studies can pave the way for evidence-based policies that empower women and maximize their contributions to provincial economies.

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