

# Challenges Confronted by Women Engaging in Agribusiness in Marketing and Management Activities: A Study Focused on Manmunai West DS Division

Sasitharan C.

Department of Social Sciences, Eastern University, Sri Lanka  
sasisasitharan1@gmail.com

## **Introduction**

Agriculture is the Backbone of many developing countries in the world. Women account for more than half of the work force by participating in various activities, either directly or indirectly (Doss 2013). Sri Lanka is historically well-known as an agricultural country. In the study area, comparatively, apart from paddy cultivation, animal husbandry, women's active participation is seen much in the agri-business sector. Home-garden cultivation, Fruit-crop growing, selling vegetables of various kinds, selling assorted grains , sub-food products based on grains , selling curd, thus find women engage in various and assorted agri-business activities in the study area.

## **Justification for the Research**

In many parts of the world, indeed almost every corner of the world, women's participation and engagement is found to be considerable in the fields of agriculture and agri-business. Yet, these aspects of the women are not received adequate attention and assessment. Rural development cannot be imagined without the active and committed participation of the women. Additionally, the problems and challenges confronted by women engaging in agri-business in the study area is grossly over looked and ignored. Compounding the situation is powerless, and voice-less nature of women. In view of the above true nature of the women, this study seems timely and justified (FAO 2013).

## **Research Problem**

These women are largely less formally educated, lack even the basic experience in administration, handling finance, management skills, lack of organizing skills. More they lack in adequate starting capital, resources, proper guidance, lack of knowledge and experience in organizing complete agri-business. Thus, it is very imperative to carry out a fact-finding and needs assessment survey to provide quality and quantity assistance.

Women, belonging to marginalized region, who faced such crises war, poverty, natural disaster now undeniably, face various problems relating to the agribusiness activities. They lack necessary training, experience, knowledge, appropriate marketing opportunity, lack of social support. Briefly, identifying the dimension of the root causes, challenges and obstacles and finding the construction alternatives is the research problem (Doss 2011).

## **Objectives of the Study**

### **General Objective**

To identify the role and challenges experienced by women engaging agri-business activities.

### **Specific Objectives**

To assess the level and extent of participation women in the agri- business sector

To identify the main challenges, obstacles confronted by the women

To find out the means and ways of promoting the agri-business activities in the future

### **Literature Review**

Various Researchers have undertaken researches on the basis of different perspectives and levels combining Gender component in agri-business. Annable 1986; Ruth 1994; Beneria 1981; Doss 2002;Lugman &Ashraf 2004; Anriquez 2010 the studies of the above named are apt to be pointed out.

In the case of Sri Lanka, both Kalansooriya & Chandrakumara (2009) have studied women's role in house hold in rural Sri Lanka. Further, Seelanthan (2013) has extensively studied participation of family women in Agricultural production based on Jaffna region. At the same time both Rajamanthre & Pinnawala (2012) have also studied in this connection. They focused on rural women's involvement in purchase decision making with regard to and usage of house hold and technology by rural women in Agriculture. However, this study is focused on nature of challenges of women who engage in agri-business in their occupational activities.

### **Methodology**

The required basic data were collected directly at the community level. About 70 women were included in the research process. Purposive sample system was employed. Interview methods, Key Informant Interview, Focused Group Discussions, Case studies etc were the main data collection methods used. Primary data thus collected were analysed in a matrix analysis system and analytical strategy, by using NVIVO-10 qualitative data analysis software.

### **Results and Discussion**

On the basis of collected and analyzed data, the following findings were reached.

The particular women remain lacking basic training, skills to develop and promote their occupational activities

They do not have adequate and appropriate marketing opportunities and organizational support

They encounter various setbacks and problems due, climate change, insects, natural impacts

There is less encouragement and inducement at family and community levels Because of the lack of facility, they waste much energy and time.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Though women engage in agri-business equal to men, assessment and inducement for the women found meager. It is very essential and necessary that in the future, State, Agriculture sector Organizations, and the society show and provide potential help and moral support for the women. In order to solve this problem, following Recommendations are presented.

There women should be provided with regular and continual proper trainings

Adequate and constructive marketing facilities should be provided to these women to develop their agri-business

Constructive measures should be taken to enable these women to become well organized and well- performing group

Further new knowledge and technical training should be made available  
Create facilities and make less –cumber some the loan schemes  
Provided extensity agricultural suggestions.

## References

- [1] Annabel, R 1986, *Women and the environment*, Zed books Ltd, London.
- [2] Anriquez,G 2010, Demystifying the Agriculture Feminization myth and the Gender Burden. Background paper prepared for the state of Food and Agriculture.
- [3] Beneriea.L 1981, ‘Conceptualizing the Labour Force: The Underestimation of Women’s Economic Activities’ *Journal of Development Studies*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 10-28.
- [4] Doss,Cheryl 2011, The role of women in Agriculture , ESA, Working Paper no.10-12, Agricultural Development Economics Division, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- [5] Doss et al. 2013, Gender ineulaities in ownership and control of land in Africa, IFPRI.
- [6] FAO 2013, The Gender and Equity Implications on Land Access and Labour and Income – Generating Opportunities. A case study of selected Investments in Zambia.
- [7] Rajamanthire,KRNS & Pinnawala,MR 2012, Transformative Effect of Technology on Rural women in Agriculture in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka , Annual Academic Sessions, Open University of Sri Lanka,2011.
- [8] Seelananthan,A 2013, ‘Participation of Family-women in Agricultural production : A case study of Jaffna District’, *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, available at : [www.liste.org/Journals/index.php/JEDS/article/download/7226/7285](http://www.liste.org/Journals/index.php/JEDS/article/download/7226/7285) (accessed on 02.02.2016)