



STUDY OF GENDER AND ITS IMPORTANCE ON AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK

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Abstract

The research mainly aimed at identifying the concept of gender and its importance in agricultural extension work. The research dealt with several axes, including the concept of gender and development, international attention to gender issues and encouraging women's participation, the role of agricultural extension in developing rural women and the importance of gender analysis in agricultural extension work. The research adopted on the desk study approach, which is based on the literature, previous studies and research on gender, development and agricultural extension. The research has found that it needs to distinguish between the concept of sex and gender, as gender focuses on the social meaning of male and female, and refers to the social roles of both men and women within society and it differs from one society to another. As for sex, it refers to the biological differences between man and woman and they are permanent differences that do not change because we are born with them. The researchers also reached a set of results, the most important of which is the necessity of having an interest in the concept of gender within development activities including extension activities in order to provide it to the targeted people in the correct manner. Thus, the participation of both men and women in rural development processes must be analyzed and the necessity of having statistics on women besides that of man's statistics in the extension work program area, that is, the role of each of them and the important different activities that they carry out and the responsibilities distributed within the family. As well as, the restrictions under which men and women work in order to develop an appropriate strategy for each of them, and increase their participation in rural development in order to reduce the gender gap in the provided extension activities. Therefore, it needs to direct efforts to promote qualitative awareness among members of society by indicating the role of women and its importance in rural development and the need to increase activities directed to them.

Keywords: Gender, Agricultural Extension, rural women

Introduction

Successful rural development ensures the participation of both men and women in an equal manner; it also ensures that they obtain their benefits. Therefore, the gender type and the development must be access to a comprehensive intellectual framework and methodology for the development plans. Furthermore, the balanced nature of the relationship between women and men, in addition, the integration of their social roles leads to the success of development efforts (Moses, 2003). The participation of men and women in development programs becomes an effective means of implementing these programs and developing an awareness of the importance of developing their community. However, rural women represent considerable energy, where plays multiple and prominent roles in addition to the social and economic responsibilities, looking after her family, home management and socialization. As well as, the agricultural activities such as agriculture, animal rearing, and poultry, and the contribution in the rural and domestic industries to improve the family incomes, besides other roles that represented in preserving the environment. Therefore, the many roles played by rural women, whether outside or inside the home make her an important and effective element in the development process. Perhaps one of the things that did not highlight the role of rural women in the development was the lack of quantitative and valuable appreciation of their work performance in rural society. Moreover, the attention was focused on a man from the part of planners and officials and neglected rural women's efforts, especially in the developing countries to become one of the least beneficiary groups of development programs, as there is still gender discrimination and bias on the side of man. (Al-Kaabari quoting Mansour, 2001). Therefore, neglecting the role of rural women in the development was a waste of the human energies of society

that needs. It was necessary to take care of, improve the performance of her role, awareness, training and raising her efficiency, provide an equal opportunity with the man, and provide her with the necessary development services to be an effective component of society. Furthermore, what needs to be emphasized was that the concern for rural women and her role in development does not mean not interested about men and their roles that play in society, where the right that women obtain is not at the expense of men's rights, but as a complement to her. (Haikal quoted from Tikla, 2007). Although rural women's contributions to economic and social life had increased, greater promotion of women's participation in the development process was still needed, through the development of programs by developmental institutions and organizations, which the agricultural extension is considered one of these institutions that seek to develop the rural women and improve her performance. As well as, increase her contribution to various agricultural processes and her socioeconomic development. In order to provide better extension services and deliver the appropriate message to the targeted people, and choose the appropriate strategy for them. However, it was necessary to know the roles of the rural family "qualitative analysis" that required the availability of quantitative and qualitative information on the various activities carried out by men and women. This analysis means dividing the work that related to gender, as well as the responsibilities distributed within the family, and studying the area of the extension program work, what are the restrictions and problems within man, and women's work. Consequently, it can be observed the importance of studying gender in the extension work, including the role of both men and women in society, which requires studies and research on such subjects in order to clarify the importance of the rural women's role in rural development. This work complements the role of man and does not marginalize her and take

advantage of her capabilities and energy in the development process and provide data by gender. In this regard, the main research objective was identify the concept of gender and its importance in agricultural extension work. Finally, research objectives can be summarized to identify the concept of gender and its role in the development and identify the importance of gender analysis in extension work.

Material and Method

The researcher adopted the desk study approach, which is based on the literature, previous studies and research on gender, development, agricultural extension and Reports about rural women.

Result and Discussion

1. First: Identify the concept of gender and its role in the development

(a) The Concept of Gender

This concept appeared in the eighties and take the shape through the gender theory, which considered a relatively modern concept, and when this concept is mentioned, another concept close to it comes to mind, which is the concept of sex, so it was necessary to clarify and distinguish between these two concepts. The term gender refers to describing socially specific characteristics, while for sex, it refers to the biologically determined properties, which are the natural biological differences between males and females that were differences by which humans are born and cannot be changed. As for gender, it represents the social relationships that peoples make, and it becomes a reality after a period of time, noting that these differences vary according to time and place because they are human-made and the human being is affected by the environment and acts accordingly (Al-Kaabari, 2001). (Joseph, 1992) mentioned that the term sex describes the natural differences in social behavior, while for gender, it is a term for sociologists describing differences in social behavior and this is an important difference or distinction to clarify the common confusion. This confusion supposes that the social differences were caused by natural or physical differences, and there was a clear fact that the physical or natural differences between males and females are not the explanation for the observed differences in behavior and social roles. Moreover, the concept of gender refers to the social roles of women and men and the appropriate concepts for each of them, which is determined according to the culture of society where the biological differences between men and women were seen as the basis for dividing the burdens and roles between men and women. However, the analyzing studies on the different cultures showed that this division came through society itself more than it came from the reality of biological differences between men and women. The society with its economic, social and cultural institutions, distributes roles whether it is appropriate or inappropriate, so the roles of man and women have differed from society to another and from time to another. (Al-Imam, 2009). Furthermore, (Shukri *et al.*, 2001) pointed out that the concept of gender is concerned with the differences between the roles of men and women that are socially formed through socialization and then are historically variable. Whereas the concept of sex is related to the natural biological aspect and it is not subject to cultural determinants and is not subject to change. Historian John Scott has defined gender as a structural variable in social

relations based on the differences between the two sexes and represents the first nucleus informing specific strength relationships. It is worth noting that gender roles are divided according to the prevailing cultural and social values in society, as they differ from one society to another and from a social class to another, and it can change from time to another within the same society because we are not born with it and it is human-made. As for sex roles, they are divided according to the biological differences between men and women, and they are natural differences that humans born with them, and they are permanent and unchanging. (National Planning Institute, 2002).

From the above, it can distinguish between the concepts of sex and gender and the difference between them, where the gender focuses on the social meaning of male and female and refers to the social roles of both men and women within society. It may also represent the social relationships that society identifies, and sometimes gender represents behavioral differences, as the term gender varies according to the circumstances and the nature of society and changes from time to another. While for the sex concept, it indicates the natural biological differences between men and women, and they are permanent differences that do not change because we are born with them.

(b) Gender and development

Human is the developmental axis, the tool, and approach for the development to achieve it. Anyhow, the development programs aim to improve the economic and social level by creating new job opportunities for the society member's women and men, it also seeks to develop their ability, so that each of them bears their own responsibility for the development plan in particular and their society in general. (Zayed *et al.*, 2010). The issue of women's participation in the development has today constituted a major and serious trend within the framework of development theories in general, and through the influence of many intellectual and scientific tributaries, as confirmed by research and experience. The concept of women's role in development has evolved to take a new theoretical and methodological form, which is (gender and development). (Ismail, quoted from Shaheen and Zainab, 1998). The gender and development approach aims to ensure equitable distribution of resources, opportunities and benefits among the groups benefiting from project activities. This approach helps development project planners in identifying the differences between the roles and responsibilities of women and men, where this approach based on discovering and analyzing the difference in the work types that performed by both men and women in certain social, cultural and economic circumstances (Subhi and Al-Sharif, 2005). This approach has emerged as a reaction to women's marginal in development, while gender, type and development proceedings attempt to (incorporate gender awareness and its capabilities in the mainstream of development), it encourages the efficiency along with opportunities to improve the equitable distribution between them in development policies, programs and projects (Abu Hattab, 2002). However, it can be said that women's development programs that described as good, are those that rely on successful qualitative analyzes, which taking into consideration the differences between the two sexes because it achieves not only good technical design for development projects but also a good economic and social design for projects. Anywhere, the successful

development planer when designing projects would set a gender difference, it is preferable that the project design reflects a balance between males and females according to the available resources and the method application, in addition to the distribution of labor and project benefits. Scientists believe that if planners, politicians, and decision-makers continue to implement the development programs that do not take into consideration the women's roles and responsibilities, and the difficulties faced. Therefore, successful development is not achieved, where the lack of awareness of the differences between males and females when designing, development projects may be more expensive and have negative impacts on society (Rayhan, 2001). (Al-Imam, 2009) mentioned that this approach is based on three axes, including Firstly, the society that consists of men and women who are able to keep its survival. Secondly, Socialization differs between men and women, jobs and tasks also differ, and because men are more empowered than women are, this has led men to take control of women's roles. Finally, the development process has a different impact on both men and women, so this requires that each have an opinion on identifying problems and proposing solutions, as the ultimate objective is the well-being of society. Moreover, this approach also emphasized the appreciation of the two sex's efforts in building the society and the impact of the development programs and projects on both women and men and their contribution in these projects. As well as, the need to achieve the gender equity in participation and control of resources, also dedicating all available efforts and resources to reduce inequalities, increase women's participation in development and enable her socially, economically and politically to be an active component in society and participate in its construction. (Al-Imam, 2009). Furthermore, (Farah, 2000) showed that the disregarding of the gender component in many projects has led to the failure of many development programs.

From the above, there should be an interest in the concept of gender within development activities and the inclusion of (men and women) in those activities helps to educate and train them to face problems and solve them, where this participation may be through hard working and efforts. Finally, these activities must be linked to their needs and the realization of material and moral benefits, since the rural women contribute significantly to economic life in rural society, rural women must be integrated and involved in the rural development process in order to increase her ability to define her needs and enhance her self-confidence. In addition, to provide the rural woman with new knowledge, awareness increasing, the opportunity to define her wishes, identify her reality and the problems that face, and find the appropriate solutions to improve the economic and social level of her through the development programs.

(c) International Interest in Gender Issues and Encouraging Women's Participation

The interest of international organizations in integrating the women into the development process came as an expression of the international interest in the role of women and their participation in the development, particularly in the developing world countries. The United Nations attention to women's issues has evolved to reflect societal change conditions and their impact on women's status negatively and positively, the 1970s and 1980s have seen great interest in

women's issues, where the United Nations in 1975 considered an international year for women. The period 1975-1985 was also considered a decade for women and the United Nations directed its efforts to improve the women's conditions and promote her to participate in social development and establishing the equality between her and man on all issues of society. (Abu al-Majd, 1998). The Beijing conference in 1995 aimed at empowering women and one of its most important recommendations were protecting the rights of working women, removing legal obstacles and traditional practices that prevent her from obtaining equal opportunities with man with regard to social security benefits and the provision of health and safety guarantee, and encourage training and literacy programs. As well as, rural women's health care and setting programs aimed at enhancing the participation of men and women together in work and household tasks, caring for the children and stirring public opinion towards this trend. Additionally, one of the development objectives in the United Nations Declaration for the third millennium is to achieving equality between women and men and supporting women's needs in issues related to finding job opportunities for youth in poor areas (UN, 2002). The United Nations Women's Development Fund (UNIFEM) was mentioned five main parameters for measuring gender empowerment: Firstly, economic participation (it refers to the number of women in the labor force and the wage that received from wage for the parallel work done by men). Secondly, economic opportunities: which includes the opportunities for women to enter the labor market, and the political empowerment that includes the participation of women in decision-making positions. As well as, access to education and health and welfare (Al-Qatat, 2006). A report issued by the Central Statistical Organization indicated that development of rural women is through ensuring her access to productive resources, land, finance, technology, training, and markets, and her full and equal participation in the development and not only as a beneficiary but also as an equal partner with others. (Ministry of Planning - Central Statistical Organization, 2016). Furthermore, the report also indicated that the rate of participation of rural women in the economic activity increased by approximately 2%, which affected their participation in the labor market, as shown in Figures (2 and 1).

The international interest in gender issues was evident that has been reflected through the various conferences on women, in addition, to supporting their participation in development and the roles they play alongside men. As well as, achieving the equality between men and women in various fields in order to achieve integrated rural development.

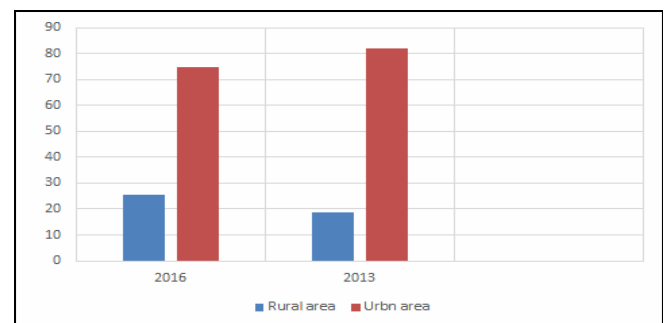
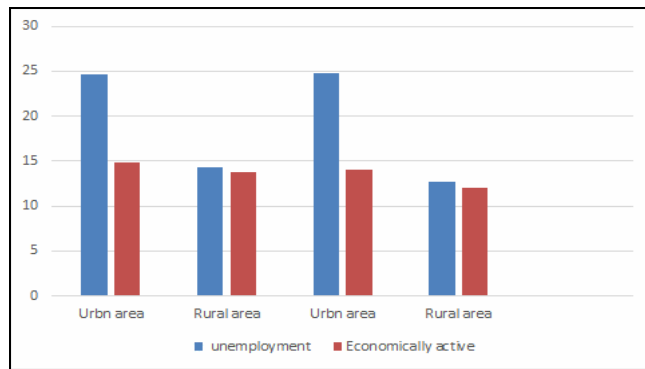


Fig. 1 : The relative distribution of working women aged 15 years and over by environment for the years 2013 and 2016



Economic activity and unemployment rate for rural women by governorate and environment for the years 2014 and 2016

Second: Identify the importance of gender analysis in extension work

(a) The Role of Agricultural Extension in the Development of Rural Women

Extension work is one of the educational systems that care about rural women and treats them as one of its main areas, through implementing an important behavioral change desired in their information, skills, and trends to confirm their important role in society-wide changes (Al-Deeb, 2002). Due to the importance of the role of rural women, it is necessary to intensify the educational and training programs provided by the agricultural extension in various agricultural, economic, social and health fields. Likewise, provide them with the knowledge and skills to perform their roles and responsibilities with merit and effectiveness (Fahmy, 2003). The proportion of women has constituted nearly half, with the percentage of women in urban areas reaching 70% and in the rural areas 30%, meaning that rural women constitute about a third of women in Iraq, according to Table 1).

Table 1 : Number and percentage of females according to the provinces and environment for the year 2015

Provinces	Urban area	%	Rural area	%	Total
Naynawa	1070442	61	696614	39	391767056
Kirkuk	569985	74	198879	26	768864
Diyala	388841	50	395482	50	50784323
Anbar	417098	50	416915	50	834013
Baghdad	3404194	88	476413	12	3880607
Babil	480454	49	508518	51	988972
Karbala	392231	67	192788	33	585019
Wasit	398355	60	262808	40	661163
Salahuddin	346059	45	418059	55	764118
Najaf	510863	72	200046	28	710909
Al-Qadisiyah	356136	57	263932	43	620068
Muthanna	176563	45	215588	55	392151
Dhi Qar	650380	64	360380	36	1010760
Maysan	398248	74	142759	26	541007
Basra	1138257	81	264485	19	1402742
Erbil	740271	83	149865	17	890136
Dohuk	463581	74	161233	26	624814
Sulaymaniyah	889593	85	157826	15	1047419
Total	12791551	70	5482590	30	18274141

Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, 2016

Explained Yasin (2011) that the contribution of women to the workforce in rural areas was higher than that in urban areas because of economic activity in rural areas depends on the work of women. As well as, the women in the countryside do work related to agricultural production in their homes, which is socially acceptable, which requires the provision of extension services that support the multiple roles of rural women in rural society. Moreover, (Rimawi *et al.*, 1995) stated that rural women play key roles in the life of the rural family, which requires education and extension activities to raise their efficiency and enhance their ability to play each role. The following areas of education included:

1- Economic activities that are related to its role as a productive workforce and include several activities, including production activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry, beekeeping. As well as, the development of fieldwork for rural women within the framework of production programs that related to the family farm.

- 2- Training women in the areas of small rural and agricultural industries inside and outside the home, which depend on local resources such as carpet making, knitting, embroidery, and sewing.
- 3- Extension activities in maternal and childcare, family planning and family health care, as well as the extension activities in the field of family nutrition and home management.

It is certainly worth noting that the agricultural extension is a comprehensive training educational work that seeks to serve the rural family, and works to make changes for rural women begin to change her knowledge, information, and skills, in order to raise its economic and social level. As a result of her essential role in agriculture and rural development as an active partner alongside men in various fields, it requires the preparation of programs to guide them to deal with various fields of agriculture, productivity, domestic and awareness in the fields of nutrition and health care. Finally, the success of these programs must be based on the needs, desires and interests of rural women that compatible with their environment and situation conditions.

(b) The Importance of Gender Analysis in Extension

The fair achieving of economic and social development requires identifying the needs of society, through gender analysis for directing development efforts to the men and women who need them and use them optimally. (Al-Kaabari, 2001) has outlined the importance of gender analysis as follows:-

- 1- The idea of gender analysis is to overcome the unwitting bias shown by planners and entrepreneurs towards men at the expense of women.
- 2- The important element of gender analysis is the participation of targeted men and women in development projects in order to increase their control and resources management. It is also useful in identifying, planning, implementing and pursuing projects and ensuring the participation of men and women in them.
- 3- Focuses on recognizing the ability of the targets to identify their specific needs, solve their problems themselves, and benefit from their potential.
- 4- One of the factors that encouraged the use of gender is that the benefits and interests of any society are not evenly distributed between men and women, where injustice is always the share of women.
- 5- The common idea about that gender analysis challenges traditions and culture in the sense that it leads to the loss of society's historical roots and culture is a misconception. These changes are adopted for society to cope with rapid changes and achieve the highest rates of well-being and growth, It also focuses on protecting the positive aspects of culture and traditions related to the roles of both men and women and excludes negative aspects.
- 6- The idea of gender analysis provides an analytical framework for identifying the needs of society and how these needs are needed, in order to guide development efforts to those who need them.

The extension services are one of the development approach aimed at educating and convince the rural people about the possibility and how to improve their living conditions and develop their lives with their own efforts, by wisely using the available natural resources (Fahmy, 2003). Agricultural extension is concerned with the human element, which they consider as the basis of development. Anywhere, the preparing process and developing its capabilities by providing this element with all that is new in agriculture by helping him to apply it and relying on his own activity and his active participation in rural agricultural activities. As well as, respecting his experiences and opinions, gaining his trust and convincing him to change, develop and modernize, is one of the things that agricultural extension is very interested in (Kishta, 2012). It is important to refer to the role of rural women in the development of their society and the participation they care about with men to promote the situation of the small family, which is the nucleus of largely rural society. To provide better extension services and to deliver the right message to the targets, both men and women, and to choose the appropriate technology for each. It is necessary to know the roles of the rural family (Gender Analysis) and this requires the availability of quantitative and qualitative information on the analysis of the role, i.e. the division of work related to the type prevailing in the programs area. Research has indicated that improving women's access to agricultural extension services It should

begin with an analysis of the participation of both men and women in agricultural production processes through two dimensions: their respective roles in agricultural production as well as in the family (Al-Farhani, 1998). The goal of the extension programs is to give rural women the information and skills needed to raise the efficiency of their performance of many and varied works, the extension workers must-have information, data and statistics on the situation of rural women and their role in agricultural and food production. Moreover, they are essential to the process of developing policies and programs for the development of rural society, and to be divided into women and men and therefore to understand the role they play in the home. in addition to the field and society and then develop solutions to the problems they face and plan policies, programs, and projects for women in particular, which work to develop their competence and ability in all their work (Kazem, and Abu Tahoun, 2003). Some studies and research have indicated that extension activities focus on adult males and on agricultural activities dominated by a male workforce and neglecting the agricultural activities of rural women. Such as vegetable and fruit crops, animal welfare, domestic and environmental industries, as well as the weak programs for productive rural women, which require the preparation of trained agricultural instructors to work with rural women. Therefore, rural women need programs specifically aimed at women to help them to perform their various household work. As well as, programs for agricultural activities either in the field or at home, and training programs that help them to use modern technology and technologies and simple equipment that facilitates the performance of its various works which saves them time and effort. In addition to improving the product qualitatively and increase quantitatively to benefit her and her family to improve income and economic situation. (Kazem and Abu Tahoun, 2003). Moreover, (Yunus, 2005) although noted there was an extension work, it is aimed at men while the role of extension e is to communicate information to the rural family (Man, woman and youth) as an integrated production unit, Accordingly, the extension system neglected the role played by rural women and there is no activity directed at them. (Al-Jubouri, 2006) pointed out that there was a great need for extension among rural women in the field of domestic economy and agricultural activity. Where there is a great need for small agricultural extension projects in the agricultural and domestic fields, especially in the manufacture of agricultural products (jam production, juice production and pickles), sewing clothes and rearing poultry to produce eggs and meat. (Al-Taie and Iskander, 2014) pointed out that although there are extension and training activities for rural women, they are described as few in number and fields. As well as, it is not commensurate with the number of rural women and the important roles they play in agriculture or domestic affairs, and their need for knowledge, skills and trends to improve their performance in those fields. While (Abdul Maksoud, 2002) confirmed that there was a qualitative gap in guidance activities caused by the existence of specific gaps in education, research, policies and guidance programs. In addition to the customs, traditions, social values and the many burdens that lie with rural women that limit their participation in extension activities or decision-making and policymaking. Therefore, rural women have not received enough attention to meet their extension needs such as farms and their participation in

extension activities has remained minimal in most Arab countries (Shaban: 2007).

Finally, it can be summarized from above that the basis of gender analysis is to identify the needs of both men and women, and their roles in the rural community and the development of appropriate development programs for each of them in order to ensure the success of development programs and achieve their goals.

Research Recommendation

- 1- The need to analyze gender in extension work i.e. know the roles of both men and women in the rural community in order to provide appropriate activities and extension services for each.
- 2- the effectiveness increasing of the agricultural extension, which requires spreading the qualitative awareness among the members of society by showing the important role of rural women besides men in various fields of agricultural work and in rural development. As well as, the directing of programs and projects in accordance with their respective needs.
- 3- The need to have statistics on women in addition to the statistics of men in the area of the extension work program and the most important activities that they carry out and the responsibilities distributed within the family. As well as, the restrictions under which man and women work in order to develop an appropriate strategy for each of them, and increase their participation in rural development in order to reduce the gender gap in the provided extension activities.
- 4- The need to increase extension activities for rural women and encourage women's participation in them, because the activities directed at them are minimal compared to the services provided to men.

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