Agency and time poverty: Linking decision-making powers and leisure time of male and female farmers of Central India

Vijayalaxmi D. Khedab and Vijesh V. Krishnab

Background

- Women represent 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries and India 30% (FAO 2011).
- In literature excess workload is termed as “Time poverty” (Vemireddy and Pingali, 2021; Seymour et al., 2020).
- Mixed answers from available literatures on women excess workload and decision-making.

Material and Methods

- Household survey conducted during July-September 2019 in 18 villages in Madhya Pradesh (Figure 1).
- 649 individuals (husband and wife) belonging to 347 (420) farm households.
- Decision-making scale (Figure 2) was constructed considering the level of involvement in food crop production, cash crop production, cattle raising, non-farm work, wage-salary employment, minor and major household expenditure.
- Multivariate regression: Productive, reproductive and leisure time as dependent variables and decision-making scale is the key independent variable.

Results

- Women faces tradeoff between agency and leisure time
- Balance between empowerment and wellbeing is crucial for women overall growth and achieving gender equality in all sphere of life

Discussion and Conclusions

- Significant gender differences in the total number of work hours, patterns of time-use, and the power to make decisions within the household.
- Irrespective of their higher workload, women’s involvement in decision-making is limited.
- Observe a trade-off between leisure time for women and their involvement in decision-making.
- Our paper concludes that the agency in decision-making for women in the study area comes at a cost of leisure time, unlike in the case of men.

References


---

a Innovative Methods and Metrics for Agriculture and Nutrition Actions (IMMANA) fellow, India
b Sustainable Agri-Food System (SAS) Program, International Maize, and Wheat Improvement Center, India