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## Intra-household gendered division of labour and time-use patterns: Implications for farm outcome and well-being in rural Ethiopia

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### Abstract

The Ethiopian economy and the livelihood of its population heavily rely on small-scale, traditional, and rain-fed agricultural endeavours. However, agriculture is more than just an economic activity in Ethiopia; it is a blend of socio-cultural aspects that shape farming practices. Retrogressive gender norms, for instance, delineate activities along gender lines. Notably, the word ‘farmer’ is linked to the male gender, while women are treated as servants of ‘real farmers’. This cultural marginalisation is particularly prevalent in rural areas with limited infrastructure and educational facilities, affecting both farm practices and individual well-being. Therefore, investigating intra-household gender relations in terms of labour division and sharing of household responsibilities is crucial for rural sustainability, as emphasised in the 2030 Development Agenda (SDG5: Target 5.4). To explore these gender dynamics, a mixed-methods survey was conducted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Employed multistage random sampling to survey 400 farmers through face-to-face interviews using structured questionnaires, supplemented by six group discussions with eight participants each. Then the data analysis adopted a convergent mixed approach, triangulating both databases descriptively through a side-by-side comparison. The findings underscored that the restriction of tasks by gender, wage gap by gender, drudgery and associated illness, exclusion of women from traditional cooperatives, and religious restriction to work significantly affect farm activities and individual well-being through hindering potential labour force and disproportionately burdening women. Owing to women’s household chores, they are also excluded from extension activities, thereby affecting the implementation of improved farm techniques. The regression analysis also reveals that factors such as receiving gender training, having elderly dependents, and longer marital duration positively affect farm outcomes, while having young children and housework time exert a negative impact. However, variables such as family size, farm size, education, leadership roles, and owning a radio are not statistically significant factors for farm outcome. In conclusion, this study advocates for policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality, challenging traditional gender norms, and providing access to education and resources to foster a more equitable and productive agricultural sector in Ethiopia.

**Keywords:** Ethiopia, farm practices, intra-household gender relation, time-use pattern