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PERCEPTION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN FOGERA WOREDA, AMHARA REGION, ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Gender is a key analytic category for understanding global economic processes and gender mainstreaming is the core strategy to eliminate gender inequalities. Despite the increasing appreciation of gender and gender mainstreaming which is decisive for women and men equal participation in development, the concept of gender mainstreaming is not always understood in the same fashion. Perception of gender mainstreaming by various community members in the agriculture sector is not known. This study was designed to heave light on the perception gender concern in Agricultural sector which include workers and farmers. Two stage sampling procedure was employed to select 4 Peasant Associations (PA's) out of 27 PA's in the Woreda and 140 sample households from these 4 PA's using simple random sampling techniques. In addition, 22 Agricultural and Rural Development workers were selected by using simple random sampling methods irrespective of sex. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were described, interpreted and appreciated. Likert type scales were developed to measure both types of perceptual statements. The findings indicated that lack of clear ideas on the concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming among Agricultural and Rural Development workers. There was a significant difference between farmers and Agricultural and Rural Development workers regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming, moderately female farmers have higher degree of perception than male farmers in rural areas. Relatively female workers have higher degree of perception than male workers in Agricultural and Rural Development workers. Agricultural and rural development workers and farmers in general should be exposed to intensive gender sensitization and training on improving outreach to female farmers.

Keywords: Gender equality, Participation, Perception, Agriculture and rural development workers, Male headed households, Female headed households, Likert type scales, gender analysis.

Contribution/ Originality

- This study contributes in the existing literature to fill the gap of the current state of knowledge of the perception of gender mainstreaming in agricultural sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

A great deal of human behavior is not the result of individual preferences. Rather, it is governed by institutional rules, norms and conventions that have powerful material effects on people's lives [1]. Gender mainstreaming was recognized as a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995.

Agricultural productivity may be constrained or enhanced by the interaction between policy and the gender division of labor and control over productive resources [2]. Therefore, gender mainstreaming in agriculture being the core area of national interest, strategic researches are formulated to suggest changes in the structure and functioning of different development organization for gender mainstreaming [3]. Gender needs to be mainstreamed in agricultural policy, research, extension and training by developing skills in gender analysis. The gender issues need to be addressed [3].

Perception is what our senses feed to our consciousness. But sometimes our minds do not grasp everything our senses feed us, only because we were not paying attention, or because we do not have enough prior knowledge to make sense of our perceptions [4]. Training and awareness-building for decision-makers on gender sensitive are the fundamental issue to change mentalities and raise collective awareness. Moreover, even among persons who are aware of and open to these questions, a great need is felt for explanations on and clarification of the concept and also for training on the methods and means for moving on from deliberations to action [5].

Gender inequality often manifests itself in the form of differential access to resources and opportunities [6]. The accumulated empirical evidence demonstrates the centrality of gender equality for equitable and sustainable development and poverty reduction [7]. This call for the incorporation of gender in the formulation of policies at the macro and sectoral levels, expenditure allocations as well as monitoring and evaluation [8].

Gender mainstreaming is the core strategy to eliminate gender inequalities, which in turn helps to ensure sustainable development in a given country [9]. The perception of an individual towards any strategy, policy, approach, process, program and project exerts a significant influence upon his participations in the activity. The strategy like gender mainstreaming cannot be taken up successfully without assuring participation of the government and nongovernmental sectors/organization, and the community members in general. Experiences have shown that the person having favorable perception towards an object reflects a cumulative effect in terms of favorable reactions. In social research, perception of a person or group towards social or psychological object is of prime importance.

Currently, there is rich and extensive documentation and literature that deal with gender issues. There is no doubt that gender is on the national agenda. By and large the success or failure of gender in agricultural sector depends largely on the perception of gender mainstreaming by agricultural and rural development office workers, as well as community members (male and female farmers). And to what extent gender is perceived at a grassroots' level,

particularly in government organizations are important questions that need further investigation through research.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Gender inequality is among the structural inequalities that wear away human development [10]. Social perceptions are built up over time and are entrenched deeply in values and norms. Cultural tradition plays a significant role in the responsibilities of women and men in society. For a long time the point of view of a large number of men looked down on women as the weaker sex. Today the status of women has been raised to have equal rights with men in national society, but this fact has still not been perceived widely by men yet. Some men still believe that a woman's role is in the kitchen and if a woman has a higher position than a man, then that man has a low status amongst his peers [11].

One challenge faced in mainstreaming gender is that many people do not yet understand gender issues in the agriculture sector. As a provincial officer in a workshop shared, "We do not understand exactly what gender mainstreaming is. We have high respect for women in our families, but still continually hear this same message about women's work" [11].

Considerable efforts were made through several initiatives and undertakings for the implementation of gender mainstreaming at various levels and at different places, in terms of raising awareness, generating political will and training. But the concept of gender mainstreaming is not always understood in the same fashion. Depending on the nature of the responsibilities held: although the concept as a whole is properly understood by persons in charge of equal opportunities, by persons whose duties include the formulation of employment policies at national central level (or regional level in certain countries with highly decentralized political structures) and particularly by persons who have been directly exposed to Community-level problems in this area, other persons still often have only vague ideas and do not really distinguish the concept from the more general issue of progress towards equality at work. Sometimes the concept is misunderstood and regarded as being the same as positive discrimination [5].

Despite the increasing appreciation of gender mainstreaming which is decisive for women and men equal participation in development, there is inappropriate perception of the term gender and currently there is no study concerning perception of gender in agricultural sectors.

There is a need for locally specific information regarding perception of gender in the agricultural sector for implementing different programs that address the specific needs of both men and women as farmers, in Fogera Woreda, to fill the research gap.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives are:

1. To assess the perception of gender concern at agricultural and rural development office and at farmer level.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Description of the Study Area

Fogera District is located in the northern part of the country especially lying between 11°44' and 12°03' N latitude and between 37° 25' and 37° 58' E longitude in the Amhara National Regional State in South Gonder Zone, which is one of the Woredas in the region. The Woreda center is Woreta, which is situated at south of 42 kilometers from the capital of the zone Debretabore and 55 kilometers from the regional capital city Bahir Dar in the North East direction. The district comprises of 27 Kebeles (lower administrative units) with an area of 1124.14 square km or 117,405 hectares.

FDREPPC [12] indicated that the total population size of the woreda is about 203,000 people, out of which 104,000 and 99,000 are male and female, respectively.

2.2. Sampling Technique

The study employed a two-stage random sampling technique. In the first stage sampling, from the whole peasant associations (PA's) in the Woreda four PA's were selected by using simple random sampling technique. In the second stage sampling, 140 respondents were selected by using simple random sampling method from among the PA's, by considering the objectives of the study, and representativeness of the sample.

Then sampling the household heads in each PA's was stratified into Female headed households (FHH) and Male headed households (MHH) in which 70 MHH, 28 FHH (purposive inclusion of at least 20% FHH, in the sample) and 42 females from male headed households. In addition to the above respondents, 22 Agriculture and Rural Development workers were selected by using simple random sampling methods irrespective of sex.

2.3. Data Type and Data Sources

Data collected for this research were quantitative and qualitative in nature. Hence, both primary and secondary data sources were used. The primary data sources were from male headed households, female headed households and married women or women in male headed households, and Agricultural and Rural Development workers. The secondary data sources were from strategic plan of agricultural and rural development office, prepared annual plan and report of Agricultural and Rural Development office.

2.4. Methods of Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through personal interviews from farmers. Questionnaires were used for Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development office workers. The respondents were interviewed using a pre-tested interview schedule and questionnaires which contained measurement tools of perceptual items.

For face validity of the interview schedule and questionnaires, the researcher has made all the necessary precautions. For content validity a panel of three experts drawn from Bahir Dar

University, Women Affairs Bureau, and Office of Agriculture and Rural Development of Fogera Woreda evaluated the questionnaires and interview schedule.

2.5. Methods of Data Analysis

Following the completion of the data collection, the data were coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 16) computer program for analysis.

2.5.1. Perception Measurement-Likert Scale

Likert scale is widely used to measure in behavioral research for developing a perception scale. This method helps the researcher in the development of the right perception scale. The scale was constructed through the following steps:

A large number of items were collected, selected and distributed among the social scientists, to comment whether the statements are capable of measuring the perception of farmers and Agricultural and Rural Development Workers (ARDO) on gender. The statements were then screened, modified, revised and edited in accordance with the feedback.

Twelve items were developed to test respondents' perception of gender and gender mainstreaming. These items were distributed among the social scientists, to comment whether the statements are capable of measuring the perception of farmers and Agricultural and Rural Development workers /ARDO/ on gender and gender mainstreaming.

Reliability analysis was undertaken for all statements to see the degree of scale reliability of each perception statements and to determine a potential item which influences respondents' perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming. The alpha (α) level of all statements is 0.574. All items with a value of greater than 0.574 were dropped as they are not reliable to estimate respondents' perception.

From the total twelve statements, four statements were found with alpha value of greater than 0.574. Hence, these four statements were dropped and the remaining eight reliable statements were used to interview and analyze respondents' perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming.

The type of reliability analysis was item score total correlation matrix(r) and [Cronbach \[13\]](#) Cronbach's Alpha (α),

The formula for Cronbach's Alpha (α), was

$$\text{Alpha } (\alpha) = \frac{k}{k-1} \left[1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k s_i^2}{s_p^2} \right]$$

Where

α =the coefficient of reliability of cronbach

K=number of item in scale

$\sum_{i=1}^k s_i^2$ =the sum of the variance of each item.

s_p^2 = the variance of each score

This was measured using Likert scale. The measurement was done between Agricultural and Rural Development office workers and farmers, between male and female farmers, and finally between male and female Agricultural and Rural Development workers.

Perception scale was constructed with five (5) points response categories that is (1) -Totally disagree (2) - Partly disagree (3)-Neither agree nor disagree (indifferent) (4) - Partly agree (5) - Totally agree. The respondents were asked to react to each of the statement of scale in terms of their own agreement or disagreement with the statement. After score were assigned to each statement a total perception was computed for each subject by simply adding the score earned by each individual on each item.

Finally, by summing up the mean value of each item, the perception was coded with positive and negative values towards the perception object. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, percentages and frequency. Mean comparison methods (t-test and z-test) were also used to explain the perception of respondents towards each object.

Descriptive tools were complemented by qualitative analytical methods (mainly for those data acquired through the participatory/ qualitative methods) like interpretation and explanation of various opinions, views and concepts of the statements.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Perception of Gender Concern at Agricultural and Rural Development Workers and Farmers

Perception in this study was defined as a complex process by which individuals attach meanings to incoming stimuli. Agricultural and Rural Development workers and farmers who perceive the incidence and consequences of gender/gender mainstreaming as convenient to his/her work was likely to adopt and extend these practices than those who do not have such perception.

3.1.1. Perception of Farmers and Agricultural Workers toward Gender and Gender Mainstreaming

The evidenced responses were counted and converted into mean scores for each perceptual statement and were accorded rank accordingly. The rank correlations were calculated between the ranks accorded by the respondents with their respect to perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming; t - test was applied to see the significance of variation. The total respondents were farmers 140 and ARDO workers 22. To get an overview of the degree of perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming the farmers and ARDO workers are grouped into three categories namely: 1. Less favorable (below 17), 2. Favorable (17 to 27) and 3. More favorable (above 27). The groups were formed on the basis of calculated mean score and standard deviation of the overall perception score obtained by the farmers and ARDO workers as a whole. The distribution of respondents in each group under both the category of respondents is given in Table 1.

It is evident that just about half of the respondents 81(50%) were reported from the category of favorable perception. Whereas 47(29.1%) respondents were placed in more favorable while 34(20.9%) could be placed in less favorable perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming. This revealed that most farmers and ARDO workers were in the middle perception of gender and gender mainstreaming.

It is interesting to note that equal number 50 percent of ARDO workers and farmers were reported in the medium perception group. It was further noted that 25.7 percent farmers and 50 percent ARDO worker respondents fell in the category of more favorable perception, while 24.3 percent of farmer respondents found in the category of less favorable perception toward gender and gender mainstreaming. An observation of data further indicates that ARDO worker respondents had comparatively higher positive degree of perception toward gender and gender mainstreaming than farmers.

Table-1. Distribution of sample respondents (ARDO workers and farmer’s) on the basis of their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming

Degree of perception	Farmers(140)		Workers(22)		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less favorable	34	24.3			34	20.9
Favorable	70	50	11	50	81	50
More favorable	36	25.7	11	50	47	29.1
Total	140	100	22	100	162	100

Source: own survey result, 2010 F=frequency %=percentage

Table 2 visualized the perception of farmers and ARDO workers towards gender and gender mainstreaming. It was perceptible from the data that, knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming was important for the two sexes in order to implement gender equality. Further, the two groups reflect their positive agreement towards the statement the necessity of knowledge of gender and gender mainstreaming for the two sexes.

The statement on gender mainstreaming was important for gender equality had positive agreement by the two categories. The reflection of this positive agreement might be, the respondent determined that the strategy gender mainstreaming have acceptable process and activities to confirm gender equality and registered important contribution in access to and control over resources and the implementation of affirmative action.

It was remarkable to note that both farmers and ARDO workers had disagreement with the statement that women and men had equal right in decisions about agricultural extension activities. This disagreement was noticeable since the participation of women in extension planning, training, demonstration was very minimal.

Table 3 revealed that the calculated t value (4.5) was significant at 5 percent level and hence, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between farmers and ARDO worker respondents regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming.

3.1.2. Perception of Gender and Gender Mainstreaming Among Women and Men Farmers

The researcher's next discussion laid on the perception between women farmer respondents and men farmer respondents on gender and gender mainstreaming. The evidenced responses were counted and converted into mean scores for each perceptual statements and were ranked accordingly. Z- test was applied to see the significance of variation. To get an overview of the degree of perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming the respondents were grouped in to three categories namely: 1. Less favorable (below 17), 2. Favorable (17 to 27) and 3. More favorable (above 27).

The groups were formed on the basis of calculated mean score and standard deviation of the overall perception score obtained by the farmers as a whole. The distribution of respondents in each group under both category of respondents is given in Table 4.

Table-2. Distribution of sample respondents per rating of gender and gender mainstreaming

No	Items developed	Farmers(140)		ARDO workers(22)		Total	
		mean	rank	mean	rank	mean	rank
1	Knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming is important for women and men.	4.0	1	4.3	1	4.15	1
2	Gender mainstreaming is important for gender equality.	2.78	3	4.2	2	3.49	3
3	Gender inequality is one of the means of poverty	2.1	6	4.3	1	3.2	4
4	Women and men have to participate equally in every aspect of development activity	2.0	7	1.5	7	1.75	8
5	The implementation of gender mainstreaming in agricultural extension is the responsibility of government	2.2	5	3.9	3	3.05	6
6	Gender division of labor at household activity should be eliminated.	3.4	2	3.8	4	3.6	2
7	Women and men have equal right in decisions about agricultural extension activities.	2.2	5	1.86	6	2.03	7
8	Gender differences should exist in terms of availability and use a new technology	2.6	4	3.54	5	3.07	5

Source: own survey result, 2010

Table-31. Difference between farmers and ARDO workers regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming

Perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming	Farmers(140)		ARDO workers(22)		t value	Sig
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
Perception of farmers and ARDO workers	23.0	4.0	27.1	4.4	4.5	**

\bar{x} =mean SD=standard deviation, **, statistically significant at 5% probability level.

Source: own survey result, 2010

As it could be observed from the data in Table 4, 50 percent of the respondents were placed in the category of favorable perception, whereas virtually 25.7 percent located in the category of more favorable and 24.3 percent found to be in the class of less favorable perception on gender and gender mainstreaming. This revealed that the two groups were in the middle perception of gender and gender mainstreaming.

It is crucial to point out that 32.9 percent of female and 18.7 percent of male farmer respondents reported in more favorable perception. It was also observed that 41.4 percent of female and 58.5 percent of male farmer respondents located in the group of favorable perception while 25.7 percent of female and 22.8 percent of male farmers were located in the category of less favorable perception on gender and gender mainstreaming.

From the data it was possible to conclude that comparatively female farmers have higher degree of perception than male farmers in rural areas in the study woreda. While male farmers were felt in the middle category more than female farmers.

Table-4. Distribution of sample respondents on the basis of their perception on gender and gender mainstreaming

Degree of perception	Female farmers(70)		Male farmers(70)		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less favorable	18	25.7	16	22.8	34	24.3
Favorable	29	41.4	41	58.5	70	50
More favorable	23	32.9	13	18.7	36	25.7
Total	70	100	70	100	140	100

Source: own survey result, 2010 F=frequency %=percentage

Table 5 depicted that women and men farmers have similar and strong agreement on the importance of the knowledge of gender and gender mainstreaming. On the contrary the two groups disagree that gender inequality is the means of poverty. This reflection might be the result of lack of awareness for the respondents how gender inequality can be a cause of poverty.

The item women and men have to participate equally in every aspect of development activity, female and male farmers responded negatively. This reflection might be the expectation that women have low self-confidence, mostly as a result of a low level of education and a lack of experience. Gender biases and cultural constraints hinder women not only to develop their experiences in public life but also to occupy public decision-making positions.

It was important to illustrate that the two categories had strong agreement in the statement gender division of labor at household level must be eliminated. This reflection might be farmers have got awareness about gender division of labor. But the statement women and men have equal right in decisions about agricultural activities, they pointed out a different response. Females' farmers did not reflect agreement and it might be the existing cultural background prevents them to participate equally in decision of agricultural activities.

Table-5. Distribution of sample respondents (male and female farmer’s respondents) on the basis of their perception per rating of gender and gender mainstreaming

No	Items developed	Male farmers(70)		Female farmers(70)		Total	
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
1	Knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming is important for women and men	3.7	1	3.9	1	3.8	1
2	Gender mainstreaming is important for gender equality.	2.8	3	2.81	4	2.8	4
3	Gender inequality is one of the means of poverty	2.1	6	1.9	7	2.0	7
4	Women and men have to participate equally in every aspect of development activity	2.0	7	1.8	8	1.9	8
5	The implementation of gender mainstreaming in agricultural extension is the responsibility of government	2.5	5	2.4	6	2.45	6
6	Gender division of labor at household activity should be eliminated.	3.5	2	3.05	3	3.27	2
7	Women and men have equal right in decisions about agricultural extension activities.	2.8	3	3.3	2	3.05	3
8	Gender differences should exist in terms of availability and use a new technology	2.6	4	2.54	5	2.57	5

Source: own survey result, 2010

Table 6 revealed the calculated Z value (1.0) was non significant, hence it was concluded that there was no a significance difference between female and male farmer respondents regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming.

Table-6. Difference between female and male farmers regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming

Perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming	Male farmers(70)		Female farmers(70)		Z - value	sig
Perception of female and male farmers	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
	21.8	5.4	22.8	5.9	1.0	NS

\bar{x} =mean SD=standard deviation, NS-statistically not significant at 5% probability level

Source: own survey result, 2010

3.1.3. Perception of Male and Female Agricultural and Rural Development Workers on Gender and Gender Mainstreaming

Pertaining to the perception of female ARDO workers and male ARDO workers on gender and gender mainstreaming the results are presented underneath. The evidenced responses were counted and converted into mean scores for each perceptual item and were ranked accordingly. t-

test was applied to see the significance of variation. To get an overview of the degree of perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming ARDO workers were grouped into three categories namely:

1. Less favorable (below 23);
2. Favorable (23 to 31)
- and 3. More favorable (above 31).

The groups were formed on the basis of calculated mean score and standard deviation of the overall perception score obtained by the workers as a whole. The distribution of respondents in each group under both categories of respondents is given in Table 7.

It was appealing to make a note from the data in Table 7 that 18.2 percent of respondents were reported from the category of favorable perception. Whereas 59.1 percent of respondents located in the group of more favorable category while 22.7 percent fell in the class of less favorable perception on gender and gender mainstreaming. It was promising to see that moderately more than 50 percent of respondent had higher favorable perception towards to gender and gender mainstreaming.

The table also revealed that 81.82 percent of female and 36.4 percent of male ARDO workers located in the category of more favorable perception. Whereas 9.09 percent of female and 36.4 percent of male ARDO workers reported from the category of less favorable perception, while 9.09 percent of female and 27.2 percent of male ARDO workers could be found in the group of favorable perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming. From the data it was possible to conclude that comparatively female workers have higher degree of favorableness in perception than male workers in ARDO in the Woreda.

Table-7. Distribution of sample respondents (male and female ARDO workers respondent) on the basis of their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming

Degree of perception	Female ARDO workers		Male ARDO workers		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less favorable	1	9.09	4	36.4	5	22.7
Favorable	1	9.09	3	27.2	4	18.2
More favorable	9	81.82	4	36.4	13	59.1
Total	11	100	11	100	22	100

Source: own survey result, 2010 F=frequency %=percentage

Table 8 divulged that ARDO workers reflect strong agreement in the item knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming was important for the two sexes; the reflection might be from the understanding that it was important to aware about gender and gender mainstreaming in order to implement gender and gender mainstreaming. Correspondingly ARDO workers expressed their perception in a strong agreement that gender inequality was one of the means of poverty and Women and men have to participate equally in every aspect of development activity this reflection implies that by implementing gender equality some aspect of poverty might be decreased. The ARDO workers have good information about the consequences of gender inequality.

Gender mainstreaming is important for gender equality: in this statement male and female agricultural and rural development workers reflect a strong agreement that gender mainstreaming was important to confirm gender equality at every aspect of development. The response of this might be there were some improvements in the organization to implement some elements of gender mainstreaming such as affirmative action.

Female and male Agricultural and Rural Development workers strongly suggest their agreement that government was/ is responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in agricultural extension, this reflection might originate from the workers understanding that gender mainstreaming involve political commitments, then if government was committed to implement, the other stakeholders would follow. Likewise it was interesting to note that the two groups (women and men ARDO workers) strongly agreed in the statement women and men farmers had equal right in decisions about agricultural extension activities. This reflection might be from the understanding that women and men farmers were equally affected by agricultural extension activities; therefore the decisions on agricultural extension activities were prime importance.

Table 9, revealed that the calculated t-test value (1.71) was non-significant. Hence, it was concluded that there was no a significance difference between female and male ARDO worker respondents regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming.

Table-8. Distribution of sample respondents (female and male ARDO workers) per rating of gender and gender mainstreaming

No	Items developed	Female workers'(11)		Male workers(11)		Total(22)	
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
1	Knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming is important for women and men.	4.0	1	3.90	1	3.95	1
2	Gender mainstreaming is important for gender equality.	3.2	3	2.8	5	3.0	6
3	Gender inequality is one of the means of poverty	4.0	1	3.9	1	3.95	1
4	Women and men have to participate equally in every aspect of development activity	3.0	5	3.1	4	3.05	4
5	The implementation of gender mainstreaming in agricultural extension is the responsibility of government.	3.8	2	3.9	1	3.85	2
6	Gender division of labor at household activity should be eliminated.	3.1	4	3.8	2	3.45	3
7	Women and men have equal right in decisions about agricultural extension activities.	3.1	4	3.3	3	3.2	5
8	gender differences should exist in terms of availability and use a new technology	2.9	6	2.8	5	2.85	7

Source: own survey result, 2010

Table-9. Paired difference between female and male ARDO workers regarding their perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming

Perception towards gender and gender mainstreaming	Female workers(11)		Male workers(11)		t-test	sig
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
Perception of female and male ARDO workers	28.6	3.8	25.7	4.7	1.71	NS

NS, statistically not significant at 5% probability level, \bar{X} =mean SD=standard deviation

Source: own survey result, 2010.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1. Conclusion

The Ethiopian government is a signatory to various international policies to implement gender equality and has developed national policies on women and enshrined development strategies with the intention of gender equality.

Understanding people's perception on gender issue is a key step towards addressing gender inequalities. By and large, the success or failure of gender mainstreaming strategy in agricultural sector depends largely on the perception of farmers and Agricultural and Rural Development workers. In view of this an observation of data between farmers and Agricultural and Rural Development workers exposed that ARDO workers had comparatively higher positive degree of perception toward gender and gender mainstreaming than farmers, moderately female farmers have higher degree of perception than male farmers in rural areas in the study Woreda. And finally relatively female workers have higher degree of perception than male workers in ARDO in the woreda.

4.2. Recommendation

It is important to focus on the goal of gender equality and not simply to identify women as a "special group" or included by a general statement, but discover what is required for more actively promoting gender equality in the agricultural sector .

Expose all extension officers and development agents to gender sensitization and mainstreaming strategies, which should be supported by comprehensive practical training as well as monitoring their performance for adequate outreach to women farmers.

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