

Research Article**CHANGED GENDER ROLES AND RURAL AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM****D. Devkota* and K. N. Pyakuryal**

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture sector has been experiencing rapid changes throughout the world. One of the most significant changes that has been observed is change in gender roles in the sector that can have significant implications in agriculture development. A study was conducted in Khairahani VDC of Chitwan district during 2007-2010 to examine changed gender roles across the generations and ethnicity in rural agricultural system. Tharus and non-Tharus (Brahmin/Chhetri) were selected to compare changed role of men and women across the distinctly set two generations (young and old). A reconnaissance survey was done to help determine sample households. Accordingly, 150 Tharu households and 181 non-Tharu households were purposively identified and used in the study by following a standard questionnaire survey. The total of 331 households and 662 respondents representing from both ethnic groups were interviewed. Change is not a single path or pattern, but depends on many factors, including how generation varies in pursuing ideas, and their relations with other components of the society. This could apply in the case of gender role, as revealed from this study. Change gender role and rural agricultural system was taken interdependent in terms of consequences of such change in gender relation. Much of the concerns were for the lack of youth in agricultural occupation due to possibility of departing from this field. Labour crisis was strongly felt during peak season for agricultural works, possibly also due to youth migration to the international labour market. Change in labour management for agricultural activities is the recent trend, might be due to higher level of educational attainment of the family members. This suggests the need to consider such changes to adjust with appropriate planning and execution of the related development activities so that gender issues would be rightly addressed in decision, participation and implementation process for rural agricultural development.

Key Words: Role change, generation, ethnicity, rural agriculture, labor crisis**INTRODUCTION**

'Gender' refers to socially constructed relations between women and men in a particular society (Eagly, 1987; FAO, 1997). Gender roles refer to how male and female should act, think and feel according to norms and traditions in a certain society. Roles are reflected in the tasks and responsibilities; expectation of men and women, and identities associated with being male or female in a certain society (Yorburg, 1973; Sanders, 1977). Earlier studies reflected that roles played by an individual in the households, or in the community were found changing (Giddens, 1971; Moore, 1987; Devkota and Pyakuryal, 2006; Chhetri, 2007). However, extent of such change in gender roles, particularly in relation to the agricultural activities in the context of rural Nepal has not been studied well whereas there is a strong relationship between gender and agricultural activities in the developing countries (Bajracharya, 1994; Engle, 1997; Devkota and Pyakuryal, 2006).

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This paper attempts to examine changed gender roles across the generations (old and young) and ethnicity in rural agricultural system of Nepal. Two ethnic groups namely Tharus and non-Tharus (Brahmin/Chhetri) were selected to compare changed roles of gender across the distinctly set two generations. Thus the main aim of this study was to compare and analyze changed gender roles in relation to agriculture across the generations and selected ethnic groups. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection in the Khairahani district of Chitwan, Nepal using household survey, focus group discussion and case study. This paper seeks to answer the following questions in relation to changes of gender role in rural agriculture:

- a. Whether or not there have been changes in gender roles in agriculture sector in rural Nepal and how it differs between ethnicity and generation?
- b. What could be the possible driving forces of such changes?

RESEARCH METHODS

This study followed household survey questionnaire and use of Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and case study. Khairahani VDC of Chitwan district was purposively selected for this study. The reason of selecting such VDC was due to the availability of two distinct ethnic groups in a VDC to compare the extent of changed gender roles across the generations and ethnicity. Those ethnic groups identified for the study were Tharu, and non-Tharu (Brahmin and Chhetri). Tharu ethnic group is taken as the aborigine of Chitwan district which has long historical background to pursue the knowledge on changed gender scenario, whereas among non-Tharu: Brahmin and Chhetri were the dominating ethnic group available in the study VDC. Indeed they are the migratory population with distinct access and control over the land resources. They are comparatively early adopter of innovations and are pioneer in most of the agricultural and associated activities. Moreover, they are the dominating group among non-Tharu ethnic groups resided in the study site. Since the objective of this study was to compare changed gender role across the generations (old and young generations) it was necessary to identify the study sites where such requirements would be satisfied. In this study old generation people were defined as those 50 years and above and the young generation was defined as those between the age group of 25 to 49 years during the time of study.

On the basis of findings of reconnaissance survey, ward 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 of Khairahani VDC were identified as these wards had more households that could cover the required sample size of both ethnic groups. Total pool of households from those selected wards were 2354, among them, 150 Tharu households and 181 non-Tharu households were randomly identified and used in the study. Two generation respondents were identified based on age category. Rational for selecting population of 25-49 years, and 50 years and older was to collect information on changed role (if any) of the adults and elderly population and its consequences to household and rural agriculture system. Similarly, those categories of landholding i.e. household with having at least 10 kathha and more was to see gender involvement in different types of agricultural activities considering typical farming situation as in Chitwan, 10 kathha is considered minimum land holding to survive based on agriculture. Likewise, joint families were selected for the study. Respondents for household survey were thus selected purposively from the respective strata of the reconnaissance survey.

FINDINGS

Gender roles in agriculture

Involvement of men and women with respect to cereal and cash crop cultivation were recorded across the generation and ethnicity by using a questionnaire for household survey. Major cereal crops included for this study were rice, maize and wheat. Similarly, cash crop included-oilseed and pulse crop. Substantial gender role variation was noted across the generation and ethnic groups for most of the crop and production along with the marketing related activities.

Gender roles in rice production across the generation of Tharus and non-Tharus were studied focusing to the rice cultivation practices as well as post harvest and marketing related activities. Furthermore, the main activities under rice cultivation practices included transplanting, weeding and harvesting. On the other hand, post harvest activities were covered as threshing, winnowing and storage of rice. Similarly, marketing related activities mainly focused were determining market place, decisions on amount of produce to sell, and money kept from rice selling. Findings on gender roles for crops and vegetables production in the past were not distinct to either male or female, or joint domination, whereas it was in most cases reported as labour intensive works thus the role of women was comparatively highlighted for such activities. Findings of this study, however, clearly evident that gender roles on crops and vegetables related activities are visibly changing. In the past, most of those activities remained the case of either male dominating, such as heavy work-related to land preparation, irrigation management, pesticide use and marketing whereas some activities such as planting, nursery management, harvesting and post harvest activities were more in favor of female dominating domain now a days. However, present study findings clearly provided information towards the joint involvement of male and female members for most of those activities, as defined above with some exception, such as keeping money from the selling of farm produce, which is still women's dominated task. Nevertheless, the message from the involvement of male and female in crop and vegetable related activities as evident from this study is clear: male and female member of the household have started to work jointly even to those activities that were considered drudgery and heavy labour demanding (data not presented).

Perception towards influence of changed gender roles in agriculture

It was perceived that changing gender roles influences rural agriculture as reported by more than three-fourths of the respondents in all categories, including overall responses; irrespective of ethnicity, whereas ~ 10% of the respondents in all categories were not sure about their response regarding such influences to the agriculture in regards to the changing gender roles (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents' perception about influence of changed gender roles in rural agriculture (Percent respondent responded)

Influence of changed gender roles in rural agriculture	Tharu(n=300)		Non-Tharu (n=362)		Overall (n=662)	
	<u>Generation</u>					
	Old (n=150)	Young (n=150)	Old (n=181)	Young (n=181)	Old (n=331)	Young (n=331)
Yes, has realized	78.0	74.0	84.5	86.2	81.6	80.7
No influence	4.7	8.0	5.0	8.3	4.8	8.2
Has not realized the influence of changed gender roles in agriculture	17.3	18.0	10.5	5.5	13.6	11.2

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Respondents responded that they have well realized about such changes which is also reflected in the FGD that people are more dynamic in adopting their roles in the household which could be a part of departure from traditional system and practice of a new paradigm.

Experiences of labour crisis in agriculture

Information in the Table (2) describes crisis situation in agriculture as responded by Tharus and non-Tharus, and also in terms of overall responses of both generations reflecting labour availability. It was evident that both old and young Tharu respondents had experienced labour crisis especially during the peak season of labour demanding as responded by about half of the respondents (Table 2). Both of these respondents' categories also felt labour crisis during other than peak season, often for agricultural work, as reported by about one-third of the respondents. Similar trend in response of labour crisis was also reported by non-Tharu respondents. Indeed, nearly similar proportion of the respondents also reported that labour crisis is felt regularly at the present day possibly due to unskilled youth migration to the international labour market. This clearly exemplify that gender role can be shifted at household level if existing scenario of gender division is questioned. For example, in the absence of male member, female are compelled to do rest of their traditionally assigned duties and responsibilities in spite of their role and concern.

Table 2. Experiences of labour crisis in agriculture across the generation and ethnicity (Percent respondents responded)

Experiences of labour crisis	Tharu (n=300)		Non-Tharu (n=362)		Overall (n=662)	
	<u>Generation</u>					
	Old (n=150)	Young (n=150)	Old (n=181)	Young (n=181)	Old (n=331)	Young (n=331)
During peak season only	44.6	37.4	33.2	31.5	38.4	34.2
Other than peak season	53.4	60.6	64.6	67.9	59.5	64.6
No experiences of labour crisis	2.0	2.0	2.2	0.6	2.1	1.2

Source: Field Survey, 2007

In overall response of all categories, the trend of labour crisis by both Tharu and non-Tharu respondents reflected the similar pattern. Labour management was one of the important aspects in agriculture as about two-fifths of the respondents felt labor crisis during peak season (Table 2). Peak season was defined by respondents considering summer and rainy season work focusing to the rice crop, and winter season works for wheat and legumes. In this study peak labour demanding time/season was considered for sowing and harvesting (Table 2). Labor crisis is strictly a matter of division of labor, but not about changes in labor role. However, when either male or female member migrates, the remaining members, either male or female are compelled to do the household works what so ever in line with household labor adjustment in spite of their traditionally assigned job and function.

Opinion about change in labour use pattern

Respondents overwhelmingly realized that labour management practice has been changing as reported by both categories of Tharu as well as non-Tharu respondents and also according to the overall response of both ethnic groups (Table 3). This clearly indicated changing scenario in household labour management for agricultural works in Chitwan district at the present context. However, the negligible proportion of the respondents of all categories had reported their opinion towards constant scenario of labour use pattern since they have practiced agriculture in their life (Table 3).

Table 3. Opinion about change in labour use pattern across the generations and ethnicity (Percent respondents responded)

Change in labour use pattern	Tharu (n=300)		Non-Tharu (n=362)		Overall (n=662)	
	<u>Generation</u>					
	Old (n=150)	Young (n=150)	Old (n=181)	Young (n=181)	Old (n=331)	Young (n=331)
Yes, there are visible changes in labor use pattern	98.6	95.3	99.4	98.3	99.1	97.0
No, there is constant labour use pattern since I have involved in agriculture	0.7	4.7	0.6	1.1	0.6	2.7
This is difficult to answer	0.7	NA	NA	0.6	0.3	0.3

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Possible Reasons for changing labour use pattern

More than 50% Tharu respondents, both young and old age category reported that such change in labour management for agricultural activities is mainly due to better education of the family members as level of education attainment at present compared to the past is quite high (Table 4). It is a common belief that educated persons should try to keep away from agriculture as it is related with drudgery and does not provide fancy way of living (Uni-voice from Focus Group Discussion, 2007). Along with this, about one-fifth of the Tharu respondents also realized that change in labour

use management pattern is also due to migration of youth to the foreign country necessitating the change in traditionally adopted system of labour management (Table 4). Both young and old non-Tharu respondents also reported their views towards high level of educational attainment coupled with change in occupation should be the possible reasons for changing labour use pattern in rural agriculture (Table 4).

Table 4. Reasoning of change in labour use pattern across the generations and ethnicity (Percent respondent responded)

Possible reasons of change in labour use pattern	Tharu (n=291)		Non-Tharu (n=358)		Overall (n=649)	
	Generation					
	Old (n=148)	Young (n=143)	Old (n=180)	Young (n=178)	Old (n=328)	Young (n=321)
Increased in educational attainment resulting seasonal labour crisis	5.4	10.5	11.1	16.9	8.5	14.0
Changed in occupation by young generation from agriculture to lucrative job	4.7	11.2	11.1	7.9	8.2	9.4
Educational attainment and change in occupation	52.0	47.5	28.4	31.5	39.1	38.6
Migration of youth to overseas for lucrative jobs	18.2	18.9	13.3	10.1	15.5	14.0
Educated youth shift occupation; migrated to cities/ international labour	19.7	11.2	36.1	33.0	28.7	23.4
Don't know the reason	NA	0.7	NA	0.6	NA	0.6

Source: Field Survey, 2007

However, such response was felt by only about one-third of the non-Tharu respondents. This pattern of response was quite visible in the case of overall responses where about one-third of the respondents realized higher level of education attainment as the prime reason of such changes in labour management practices. Likewise, ~ one-tenth of the respondents in all category and age group also reported that effect of migration to the international market as one of the reasons for change in labour management practice in the rural agricultural system (Table 4).

Migration and gender role change

Respondent's perception on migration and gender role change and the influential areas due to such changed role of gender have been presented in Table (5). Accordingly, it is well revealed that most of the statements posed to learn their responses had received similar responses ($P>0.05$) by both young and old generation suggesting conformity on the responses (Table 5). For example, both generations agreed that changing gender role is related with migration of youth because adjustment for new role is necessary as youth migrate to cities and overseas (Table 5). Likewise, both category of respondents also thought that it is more profitable to change in roles considering more benefit to

change in traditionally assigned gender roles as men and women can get job outside the country. Changed role was also thought important to adjust with the situation as husband would take care of family due to unskilled labour migration of wife, whereas wife would responsible in all affairs due to absence of husband for migration; still the response by the young and old generation did not agree ($P < 0.01$) to the concept of getting absolute profit by adjusting with the changed gender roles (Table 5).

Table 5. Respondents' level of perception towards migration and gender role change across the generation

Perception towards migration and gender role change	Respondents (n=565)	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Z score	Asymp. Significance
(a) Adjustment for new role is necessary as youth migrates	Old (n=272)	273.39	74362	37234	-1.686	NS
	Young (n=293)	291.92	85533			
(b) It is more profitable due to change in traditionally assigned gender roles as men and women can get job outside the country	Old (n=272)	273.30	74336	37208	-1.606	NS
	Young (n=293)	292.01	85558			
(c) Changed gender roles is more profitable, thus need of role adjustment at present	Old (n=272)	267.65	72801	35673	-2.602	**
	Young (n=293)	297.25	87093			
(d) Husband take care of family due to labour migration of wife	Old (n=272)	289.46	78732	38092	-1.096	NS
	Young (n=293)	277.01	81163			
(e) Wife is responsible in all affairs due to absence of husband	Old (n=272)	284.84	77476	39348	-0.361	NS
	Young (n=293)	281.29	82419			

Note: NS denotes non significant, ** $P < 0.01$, respectively.

Source: Field Survey, 2007

It was quite different perception from ethnic group's response when they had to consider their views on migration and gender role change. In contrast to the perception of young and old generation in relation of migration and gender role change, which was quite similar for most of the statements (Table 5), but in majority of the statements, response of Tharu and non-Tharu ethnic groups differed (Table 6). For example, non-Tharu did not easily accept the fact that men and women now- a- day easily travel abroad due to need of adjusting in their traditionally assigned roles. Young non-Tharu respondents also did not strongly agree such changes in roles (in case it happens) are profitable. However, one important role change and adjustments with the situation that both Tharu and non-Tharu agreed that husband take care of family if unskilled labour migration of wife is happened (Table 6). These all responses, provided logic that at least people from young generation

are inclined towards adjusting with traditionally assigned roles of men and women, whereas most of such roles are reflective in terms of role adjustments to tackle with the situation. From the broader perspectives of the household labour management, with its relation to the impact in rural agriculture role adjustment is inclined towards changing and situational as followed by the young generation (Table 6).

Table 6. Respondents' level of perception towards migration and gender roles change across the ethnicity

Perception on migration and gender role change	Respondents (n=565)	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann Whitney U	Z score	Asymp. Significance
(a) Adjustment for new role is necessary as youth migrates	Tharu (n=242)	248.11	60042	30639	-5.499	***
	Non-Tharu (n=323)	309.14	99853			
(b) It is more profitable due to change in traditionally assigned gender roles as men and women can get job outside the country	Tharu (n=242)	233.44	56493	27090	-7.368	***
	Non-Tharu (n=323)	320.13	103402			
(c) Changed gender role is more profitable, thus need of role adjustment at present	Tharu (n=242)	240.23	58134	28731	-6.515	***
	Non-Tharu (n=323)	315.05	101760			
(d) Husband take care of family due to labour migration of wife	Tharu (n=242)	296.66	71791	35778	-2.082	NS
	Non-Tharu (n=323)	272.77	88104			
(e) Wife is responsible in all affairs due to absence of husband	Tharu (n=242)	301.59	72984	34585	-3.284	***
	Non-Tharu (n=323)	269.07	86911			

Note: NS denotes non significant, and *** $P < 0.001$, respectively.

Source: Field Survey, 2007

The aggregate response of Tharus and non-Tharus of both age category respondents were found agreed on the linkage of migration and gender role change. Accordingly, agreement of the respondents reported about 80% response in overall towards higher degree of such change in gender roles that linked with migration of family members, with the response of about 20% for moderate change of gender role due to migration (Table 7).

Table 7. Respondents' perception on migration and gender role change across the ethnicity and generation (Percent respondent responded)

Respondents' perception on migration and gender role change	Frequency	Percentage
Little change	2	0.4
Moderate change	105	18.6
Higher change	458	81.1
Total		

Groupings of aggregate value of 5 variables: Little change=5-7; Moderate change =8-11; Higher change =12-15

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Majority of the respondents (four-fifths) had their view as positive linkage of migration and change in gender roles, with the strong linkage of such change as reported by young generation respondents. In relation to the above findings it is argued that migration of people from rural to urban and/or international has considered as an important driving force for changing gender roles in the Nepalese rural context. Migration, especially of healthy youth results in fewer men/women being available in rural areas for agricultural work which is a common phenomenon in the rural settings of Nepal (Seddon et al., 1998; Adhikari, et al., 2011). The shortage of young labour within the household is often cited as a constraint on agricultural productivity (Doss Cheryl, 2001 Maharjan, 2010; Tamang et al., 2014), resulting to the poor productivity, whereas this situation often supports the concept of change in gender role with a higher degrees of flexibility. Thus findings from this study have supported the concept of change in gender roles mainly due to migration of youth that could equally develop an understanding about their present role.

DISCUSSION

The study findings clearly envisaged changes in gender role across the generation and ethnicity in most of the crop production and vegetable production activities. Moreover, gender roles for crops and vegetables production in the past were not distinct to either male or female or joint domination, whereas it was in most cases reported as labour intensive works thus the role of women was comparatively highlighted for such activities. The present study clearly supported the fact that gender roles in crops and vegetables related activities are visibly changing across the generation perhaps due to social change (Devkota, 2010). In the past, most of those activities remained as either male dominating, such as heavy work-related to land preparation, irrigation management, pesticide use and marketing, whereas some activities such as planting, nursery management, harvesting and post harvest activities were more in favor of female dominating domain. However, present study findings clearly provided evidence of joint involvement of male and female for most of those activities defined above with some exception, such as keeping money from the selling of farm produce, which is still women's dominated task. Nevertheless, young people are more towards joint involvement in most of the crop and vegetable production related activities even to those activities that were

considered drudgery and heavy labour demanding (Devkota, 2010). These findings supported the visible change in gender roles across the generation as well as ethnic groups that are more specific in nature and are associated with the livelihood support system of the people. Shifting gender role from either male or female dominating to joint involvement indicates that a kind of change in gender situation is prevailing in the rural agricultural practices. There could be several driving forces behind such changes which could have negative as well as positive consequences that need further study to pinpoint the fact which is beyond the scope of this study.

One of the major driving forces of change in gender roles in the present context of rural agrarian society is youth migration (Bhadra, 2007; Maharjan, 2010; Tamang et al., 2014). At the present day, regardless of caste/ethnicity, social and economic status, youths are leaving farming and moving towards off-farm opportunities either within the country or fleeing overseas even as unskilled labor. The level of youth interest in education and working in subsistence agriculture continues to drive high rates of youth migration (Personal Communication during FGD, 2007). Moreover, there is lack of employment opportunities available locally that provide rapid returns to youth and the capacity to rapidly acquire modern consumer items and a way of life not dependent on high risk of low return from agriculture (Adhikari et al., 2011; Kollmair, 2011). Social change and social mobility are pressurizing youth migration (Adhikari et al., 2011). There are considerable changes in local power dynamics, and this continues to be a strong driver to continue migration amongst the youngsters regardless of caste/ethnicity and economic status. Social pressure is another strong driving force for youth migration.

Changed gender roles in agricultural activities from generation as well as ethnicity perspective could be envisaged in relation to the gender theories. It is possible mainly because gender roles are socially and culturally defined prescriptions and beliefs about the behavior and emotions of both male and female (Goverman and Gurung, 2001). A change in gender perception has been described by several theorists (Buss, 1995: evolutionary theory; Bem, 1983: gender schema theory; Eagly, 1987: social role theory). 'Gender schema theory' focuses on the role of cognitive organization in addition to socialization. This theory postulates that cultural phenomena are learned as society define the roles of male and female and then internalize these knowledge as a gender schema. Such schema is used latter to organize subsequent experiences of gender roles. Eventually, self perception would be incorporated into gender schema and developed the traits and behavior that they think appropriate. Eagly's 'social role theory' further explored the issues of whether female and male behavior differs (Eagly, 1987). Social role theory moreover, treats gender roles as a dynamic aspect of culture that changes in response to alterations of the typical work and family roles of the sexes (Eagly, 1987). Gender roles are rooted in the division of labor and gender hierarchy implies that these roles should change if these features of social structure changes. Findings from this study also clearly revealed the position of changes in gender role in agriculture as revealed by majority of the respondents, say for example in the case of response on labour crisis-that there was a strong feeling about change in labour use pattern by the respondents of both generations and ethnic groups especially for other than peak season labour use and management (Table 2).

Changed gender roles and rural agricultural system was taken interdependent by most of the respondents' regardless of ethnicity and generations. Much of the concerns were for the lack of youth

in agricultural occupation due to possibility of departing from this field (Personal Communication during FGD, 2007). At the present day, labour crisis is felt regularly all over the Nepal perhaps due to unskilled youth migration to the international labour market (Seddon et al., 1998; Adhikari, et al., 2011). The number of Nepali workers leaving home for foreign employment is increasing every year. An official figure shows that a total of 527,814 Nepali men and women left the country in a single year (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2014). This study finding further revealed that there was a serious crisis on peak season labour, which might also hike the production cost in one hand, and resultant low level of productivity on the other, mainly due to availability of less number of labour for required cultivation practices and simultaneously due to lack of mechanization, especially in the rural areas. In deed influence of changed gender roles in rural agriculture was strongly felt by the respondents of both generations and ethnic groups and also in overall response (Table 1).

A change in gender perception has been found related with variation in role performance, for example, that comes over the generations. In this study as well gender roles greatly varied as per the generation when comparing the time dimension in experiences (data not presented). Moore (1987) had postulated the causes of such changes reflecting as – change out of flexibilities in the system; changed due to role succession and role performances; and change due to socialization of the new generation. Among these causes the successive changes in roles are likely to be varied on the basis of strength, vitality, ability, intelligence as well as experiences of an actor. We believe that change in gender roles as found in this study should have similar logic of change as continued phenomenon related to flexibilities of system and role performances (Moore, 1987).

Socialization of the new generation has been also provoking a source of change for example, in gender roles. It is because for any society change is necessary and is inevitable to adjust in the given situation and that several roles could be well transferred to the new generation, with new dimension (Giddens, 1984). These arguments support the concept of flexibility in roles that any member of the family (male or female) performs would indeed remained changed to adjust with the changing values, perception and societal modernity. Thus, as we found in this study, most of the gender roles that old generation respondents experienced in the past have now changed from either male or female alone dominating to the jointly done activities at present (data not presented), also as envisaged by the young generation respondents (Tables 2, 3) has enough evidences of gender related change theories.

We feel that changed in gender roles over the time period in the agricultural activities as envisaged from this study (Tables 1-3) is a continued process waived into the social structure of possession and action. Such changes, as Giddens explained related to the social patterns of social relations that exist with changes over time (Giddens, 1984). Moreover, societal rules and resources could work as determinants of such changes depending on the nature of society as Giddens has postulated that action as social practices ordered across space and time (Giddens, 1984). "Changes also arise due to the transposability of rules: they can be "applied to a wide and not fully predictable range of cases outside the context in which they were initially learned." Likewise, as postulated by Marx, change is also possible due to the unpredictability of resource accumulation (Rizer, 2000).

Based on the findings of this study, it can be suggested that change in gender roles for agricultural activities are part and parcel of the continued action of the society to adjust with what

is in general available in the society which is difficult to control by an individual, but could be adjusted to suit with the rules and practices that are structured in the society. Thus it is important to consider such changes in gender role and should take it accordingly while considering gender sensitive planning and development action in agricultural activities.

CONCLUSION

Change is not a single path or pattern, but depends on many factors, including how generation varies in pursuing ideas, and their relations with other components of the society. It was equally revealed that much of the concerns were for the lack of youth in agricultural occupation due to possibility of departing from this field. Labour crisis was strongly realized during peak season for agricultural works, possibly also due to youth migration to the international labour market. Change in labour management for agricultural activities is the recent trend, might be due to higher level of educational attainment of the family members and lack of labour. This suggests the need to consider such changes to adjust with appropriate planning and execution of the related development activities so that gender issues would be rightly addressed in decision, participation and implementation process for rural agricultural development.

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