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Gender Inequality In Food Security At Household Level In Mahamayanagar District of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract: Women face different forms of discrimination in whole life. These discrimination and lower levels of education, both are affected the agricultural productivity and food security. At the household level food security is defined as access to food that is adequate in terms of quality, quantity, safety and cultural acceptability for all household members. Women are typically responsible for food preparation and thus are crucial to the dietary diversity of their households. Traditionally they eat last and least throughout their lives when pregnant and lactating and get to eat sufficient food only every alternate day. If we find malnourished children in a household, it would be appropriate to assume that the food security situation for the entire family is dismal. Inequalities in access to and control of assets have severe consequences for women's ability to provide food, health care themselves, their husband and their children, especially their female children. The present paper an attempt has been made to measure Gender inequality in terms of food security in the rural areas of Mahamayanagar District. Study is based on primary survey of 14 sampled villages of Mahamayanagar district, 2011. The main objectives of the present paper are: To evaluate the gender differential in dietary pattern of study area, to explore the gender inequality in food security. Data has been analyzed with the help of simple percentage method. The study reveals that women have less access of food than the man in terms of food security. In the sequence the highest gender disparity in food security is registered in village Pipal Gawan of Sikandra Rao block.

Keywords: *Gender discrimination, Dietary diversity, Food security, Health*.

I. INTRODUCTION

Food is essential for life and it is one of the human basic needs. Everyone has the right to access at all times to safe and nutritious food with dignity (Ekanayake, et al., 2003). A recent report of the world food and agricultural organization (FAO) has revealed that more than 500 million people of the world suffer from hunger and starvation, while 30 to 40 percent of the people in the developed world suffer from over eating and overweight. Food security refers to the availability of food and one's access to it. A household is considered food-secure when its occupants do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Commonly used definition of food security come from the UN'S food and agriculture organization (FAO) "Food security exists when all people, at all time, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". Food security not only requires an adequate supply of food but also entails availability, access, and utilization by all-men and women of all ages, ethnicities, religious, and socio-economic levels. Gender-based inequalities all along the production chain "from farm to plate" impede the attainment of food and nutritional security. Women are typically responsible for food preparation and thus are crucial to the dietary diversity of their households. Women are generally responsible for selecting food purchased to complement staple foods and to balance the household's diet. A food consumption method does not provide a full assessment of the food security because they fail to take into account the vulnerability and sustainability elements of food security. Women face different forms of discrimination, however, some forms of discrimination can be easily captured in surveys; smaller, or poorer quality, plots are easily identifiable, as are lower levels of education, and both are likely to affect agricultural productivity and food security**.**

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Chattarjee, (1989) women are members of the households in which they acquire, cook, serve consume and store food and their nutritional profile is also part of the household's nutritional profile. However, what sets these dimensions apart and makes them particularly interesting is the apparent contradiction that while women are in a commanding position, over the household resources that determine individual nutrition, they are themselves quite malnourished, often more so

than other family members. Kennedy et al. (1992) found that the proportion of income controlled by women has a positive influence on household caloric intake. Although discrimination of women is acknowledged in the literature, little rigorous work has been done that attempts to disentangle the various forms of discrimination women face with a focus on their impact on food security. Women face different forms of discrimination, however, some forms of discrimination can be easily captured in surveys; smaller, or poorer quality, plots are easily identifiable, as are lower levels of education, and both are likely to affect agricultural productivity and food security**.** In an individual case study, Basu (1993) drawing on field data from India and a review of literature on household allocation of food in South Asia, where anti-female discrimination is believed to be widespread, found no evidence that girls are discriminated against in feeding. Similarly, he noted that while 56% of illiterate women suffer from anemia, the percentage declines to 40% in the case of the women who have completed at least high school. Ansari et al. (2006) studied the child's gender and household food insecurity in urban squatter settlements in Pakistan. The study found that female children were nearly three times more likely to be stunted than male children. Girls were also discriminated in consumption of qualitative food.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives behind this study are to evaluate the gender differential in dietary pattern of study area. It also explores the gender inequality in food security in terms of availability, accessibility, stability and utilization**.**

IV. STUDY AREA

Mahamayanagar is one of the important districts of Western Uttar Pradesh. It is a newly created district which came into being on 3rd May 1997. Prior to its formation, its major part was Hathras tehsil of Aligarh District. It was created by assimilating parts of Agra, Aligarh and Mathura districts. It is located between 27º15' to 27º45' North latitudes and 77º51' to 78º33' East longitudes. The economy of Mahamayanagar District is depends much on agriculture and industries. Paddy, Arhar and Mong are major crops during kharif, while wheat, mustard field pea and potato are commonly grown in Rabi season. Sugarcane is major cash crops of the district. The major crops which are cultivated in the district are Jowar, Bajra, Pulses and Potato.

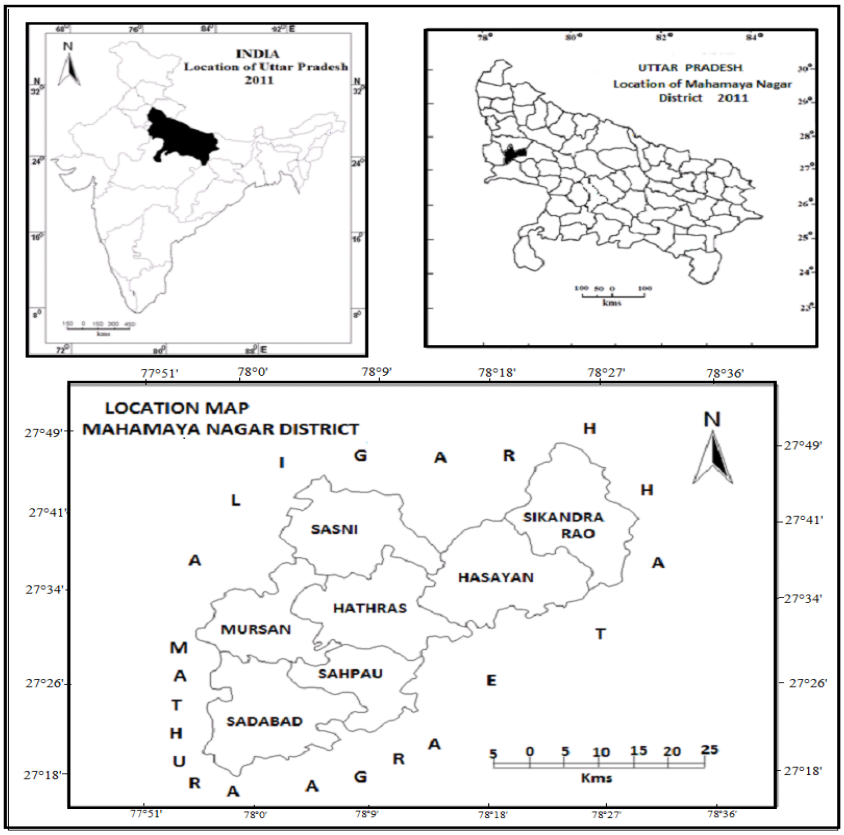

Figure 1

V. METHODOLOGY

The present study is mainly based on primary source of data that has been collected by researcher through field survey. The data were obtained with the help of random sampling method, covering 30 household in each of the 14 selected villages. Total 420 household were surveyed from 7 blocks of Mahamayanagar district. The household have been sampled on the basis of stratified sampling considering the socio-economic background of the respondent (Cast, religion, income, landholding, education levels, etc.). On the basis of simple percentage gender inequality in food security measured in the study area. The selection of suitable indicators for measuring gender inequality is the crux of methodology; therefore the important selected indicators for the study are level of education attainment, the rate of employment, occupation structure, per capita caloric intake, per capita income, health condition etc.

VI. Food Availability

This dimension of food availability addresses supply side of the food security and expects sufficient quantities of quality food from domestic agriculture production or any other means. At household level, whether available quantity of food is enough to secure the family members is important. In the present study, 'how many males and females of a particular village are secure in terms of food' is considered as parameter for food availability, and then gender disparity is analysed.

Table: 1

Gender Disparity in Food Availability in Sampled Villages of Mahamayanagar District, 2011

Villages	Food Availability in Male	Food Availability in Female	Gender Disparity in Food Availability
Bardwari	**56.6**	**49.4**	**7.1**
Bilara	**56.8**	**52.1**	**4.7**
Darsana	**65.0**	**56.2**	**8.8**
Dwarikapur	**54.2**	**45.2**	**9.0**
Fatepur Bajhera	**56.4**	**49.4**	**7.0**
Jauinayatpur	**53.3**	**37.7**	**15.6**
Kanjauli	**57.3**	**52.4**	**4.8**
Lodhai	**61.7**	**55.4**	**6.2**
Mahmoodpur	**53.3**	**38.0**	**15.3**
Mohabbatpura	**55.4**	**49.4**	**6.0**
Pharauli	**53.3**	**38.8**	**14.5**
Pipal Gawan	**51.5**	**34.8**	**16.7**
Salempur	**54.7**	**47.1**	**7.7**
Sokhana	**55.0**	**49.0**	**6.0**
AVERAGE	**56.0**	**46.8**	**9.26**

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey by Researcher.

The study reveals that on an average, 56 percent males of Mahmayanagar district were secured in terms of food availability, whereas, only 46.8 percent of Females were secured (Table 1). It shows a gender disparity of 9.26 percent. Among males, maximum population of Darsana village was secured in terms of food availability (65%) and minimum from Pipal Gawan (51.5%). Similarly, maximum population of female from Darsana village was secured (56.2%), whereas, minimum females from Pipal Gawan village (34.8%) were secured in terms of food availability. Disparity level in food availability was high in Pipal Gawan (16.7%) and low in Bilara village (4.7%). Furthermore, disparity level of food availability was classified into three categories; Low, Medium and High. In villages of Jauinayatpur, Mahmoodpur, Pharauli and Pipal Gawan, disparity level of food availability was high. Dwarikapur and Darsana were the villages where disparity in food availability was of medium level. Contrary to this, level of disparity in food availability was low in Bardwari, Bilara, Fatepur, Bajhera, Kanjauli, Lodhai, Mohabbatpura, Salempur and Sokhana.

Food Accessibility

Access to food has been regarded to be the most important factor determining food security. A household's access to food depends on its own production of food and the food it can acquire through sale of labour power or commodities produced by it. Food access addresses whether the households or individuals have enough resources to acquire appropriate quantity of quality foods. In the present study, 'Total workers', 'Main workers' and 'Food preference in serving of food' were considered as indicators to evaluate the accessibility of food in villages of Mahamayanagar district.

The study reveals that on an average, 59.17 percent males of Mahmayanagar district were secured in terms of food accessibility, whereas, only 22.78 percent of females were secured (Table 2), that shows a gender disparity of 36.38 percent. Among males, maximum members of Kanjauli village were secured in terms of food accessibility (72.3%) and minimum from Bardwari (52.53%). Similarly, maximum population of female from Mahmoodpur village was secured (33.43%), whereas, minimum females from Bardwari village (10.1%) were secured in terms of food accessibility. Disparity level in food accessibility was high in Mahmoodpur (62.2%) and low in Bardwari village (19.37%).

Table: 2

Gender Disparity in Food Accessibility in Sampled Villages of Mahamayanagar District, 2011

Villages	Food Accessibility in Male	Food Accessibility in Female	Gender Disparity in Food Accessibility
Bardwari	**52.53**	**24.17**	**28.36**
Bilara	**65.2**	**18.13**	**47.07**
Darsana	**59.27**	**21.3**	**37.97**
Dwarikapur	**52.7**	**27.97**	**24.73**
Fatepur Bajhera	**52.63**	**29.93**	**22.7**
Jauinayatpur	**59.93**	**26.97**	**32.96**
Kanjauli	**72.3**	**10.1**	**62.2**
Lodhai	**65.5**	**12.43**	**53.07**
Mahmoodpur	**52.8**	**33.43**	**19.37**
Mohabbatpura	**64.47**	**19.9**	**44.57**
Pharauli	**54.37**	**25.77**	**28.6**
Pipal Gawan	**57.5**	**25.3**	**32.2**
Salempur	**59.23**	**20.83**	**38.4**
Sokhana	**59.93**	**22.73**	**37.2**
Average	**59.17**	**22.78**	**36.38**

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey by Researcher.

Furthermore, disparity level of food accessibility was classified into three categories; Low, Medium and High. In villages of Mahmoodpur, Dwarikapur, Pharauli, Pipal Gawan, Bardwari, Jauinayatpur and Fatepur Bajhera, disparity level of food accessibility was high. Sokhana, Darsana, Salempur, Mohabbatpura and Bilara were the villages where disparity in food accessibility was of medium level. Contrary to this, level of disparity in food accessibility was low in Kanjauli and Lodhai.

Food Utilization

Food utilization is one of the most important dimensions of food security. Food utilization deals with the absorption of food in the body, safe drinking water, medical and health care facilities, sanitation etc. If the food is not properly utilized in the body, then it is not contributing to food security. Therefore, security is not only achieved by ensuring food availability or food accessibility but also towards indicators contributing to food utilization which directly affect the capacity of body to absorb food, and turn consumption of food in to nutrition. Body Mass Index (BMI) and 'Percentage of Healthy Population among Male and Female' present in the district of Mahamayanagar were used as indicators to measure food utilization among sampled population.

Table 3 shows the status of food utilization in males and females of Mahamayanagar district. The results revealed that on an average 71.32 percent of male population of Mahamayanagar district was secured in terms of 'food utilization', whereas, 66.65 percent of females were secured in terms of 'food utilization'. It shows an average gender disparity of 4.67 percent. Kanjauli was the village where security in terms of food utilization was maximum (74.13%) and minimum in Bardwari village (68.46%).

Table: 3

Gender Disparity in Food Utilization in Sampled Villages of Mahamayanagar District, 2011

Village	Food Utilization in Male	Food Utilization in Female	Gender Disparity in Food Utilization
Bardwari	**69.29**	**66.58**	**2.71**
Bilara	**70.45**	**67.63**	**2.82**
Darsana Mufatpur	**72.58**	**67.2**	**5.38**
Dwarikapur	**73.75**	**63.92**	**9.83**
Fatepur Bajhera	**71.37**	**68.28**	**3.09**
Jauinayatpur	**70.05**	**65.34**	**4.71**

Kanjuali	**74.13**	**68.22**	**5.91**
Lodhai	**70.59**	**66.58**	**4.01**
Mahmoodpur	**73.16**	**70.44**	**2.72**
Mohabbatpura	**71.85**	**66.3**	**5.55**
Pharauli	**69.83**	**65.44**	**4.39**
Pipal Gawan	**68.46**	**60.82**	**7.64**
Salempur	**69.38**	**65.38**	**4**
Sokhana	**73.57**	**70.97**	**2.6**
Average	**71.32**	**66.65**	**4.67**

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey by Researcher.

On the other hand maximum population of female from Sokhana village was secured (70.97%), whereas, minimum females from Bardwari village (66.58%) were secured in terms of food utilization. Disparity level in food utilization was high in Sokhana (9.83%) and low in Bardwari village (2.6%). Furthermore, disparity level of food utilization was classified into three categories of Low, Medium and High. In the villages of Bardwari, Bilara Darsana Mufatpur, Dwarikapur, Fatepur Bajhera, Jauinayatpur, Kanjuali, Lodhai and Mahmoodpur, disparity level of food utilization was high. Mohabbatpura, Pharauli and Pipal Gawan were the villages where disparity in food utilization was of medium level. Contrary to this, level of disparity in food utilization was low in Salempur and Sokhana.

Food Stability

The fourth dimension of food security is the food stability, which refers to have of other three dimensions in the study area (availability, accessibility and utilisation) over time. A person can't be considered food secure until there is stability of availability, accessibility and utilisation. In the present study, 'sharing of income from Livestock among male and female has been used in order to investigate the condition of food stability in the study area.

Table 4 reveals that on an average 71.14 percent males were secure in terms of food stability, whereas, 28.86 percent female were secured in terms of food stability. It shows a gender disparity of 42.27 percent. Among males, Darsana Mufatpur reported to be having maximum security in terms of food stability (76.7%), whereas, Pipal Gawan was having minimum (65.9%). Contrary to this, females of Pipal Gawan were considered to be more secured (34.1%) than females of Darsana village (23.3%). Maximum gender disparity in food stability was seen in Darsana Mufatpur village (of 53.4%), whereas, minimum in Pipal Gawan (31.8%).

Gender disparity in 'food stability' was further classified into three categories of low, medium and high. In villages of Jauinayatpur, Salempur, Dwarikapur, Mahmoodpur, Pharauli and Pipal Gawan low level of disparity was seen, whereas, it was medium in Fatepur Bajhera, Bilara, Mohabbatpura, Sokhana and high in Kanjauli, Bardwari, Darsana and Lodhai villages.

Table: 4

Gender Disparity in Food Stability in Sampled Villages of Mahamayanagar District, 2011

Villages	Food Stability in Male	Food Stability in Female	Gender Disparity in Food Stability
Bardwari	**74.2**	**25.8**	**48.4**
Bilara	**72.2**	**27.8**	**44.4**
Darsana Mufatpur	**76.7**	**23.3**	**53.4**
Dwarikapur	**68.9**	**31.1**	**37.8**
Fatepur Bajhera	**71.7**	**28.3**	**43.4**
Jauinayatpur	**67.8**	**32.2**	**35.6**
Kanjuali	**75**	**25**	**50**
Lodhai	**75.8**	**24.2**	**51.6**
Mahmoodpur	**68.2**	**31.8**	**36.4**
Mohabbatpura	**71.1**	**28.9**	**42.2**
Pharauli	**68.5**	**31.5**	**37**
Pipal Gawan	**65.9**	**34.1**	**31.8**
Salempur	**69.3**	**30.7**	**38.6**
Sokhana	**70.6**	**29.4**	**41.2**
Average	**71.14**	**28.86**	**42.27**

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey by Researcher.

VII.CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of overall analysis of the study the following important conclusions may be drawn regarding the gender inequality in food security. The study reveals that on an average, 56 percent males and 46.8

percent of females where secured in terms of food availability, showing a gender disparity of 9.26 percent in the district. As far as food accessibility is concerned 59.1 percent of males and only 22.78 percent of females were found secure. Thus there is wide gender gap of 36.38 percent in the food accessibility. It was mainly due to the lower female work participation rate and their meager income. The study shows that on an average 71.32 percent of male population of Mahamayanagar district was secured in terms of 'food utilization', whereas, 66.65 percent of females were secured in terms of 'food utilization'. It shows an average gender disparity of 4.67 percent. A person can't be considered food secure until there is stability of availability, accessibility and utilisation. The study highlights that on an average 71.14 percent males were secure in terms of food stability, whereas, 28.86 percent female were secured in terms of food stability. It shows a gender disparity of 42.27 percent.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

The problem of food insecurity among women in the study area may be minimized by change in the additional attitude as regards the serving of the food in the family. They should serve and consume food along with their family members. The differential treatment in serving of quality food to the son and daughter should be given up. Women are largely involved in various works especially at household chores, animal husbandry, farming etc however their work is under recognized. There for women should get a due share of the income of their household. The education and health facilities should provided in the rural women which in turn will improve food security.

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