

Centre of Land Management and Land Tenure

Gender Differentials in Land Ownership and their Impact on Household Food Security: A Comparative Study of the Northern and Brong Ahafo Regions of Ghana

Master's Thesis by Namikat Nelson Duut

Problem Statement and Objective

Systematic differences in property rights over land between men and women contribute to structural inequality and to poverty. This is influenced by the inheritance systems. The lack of ownership of land by women retards development and contributes to poverty and food security. Gender differentials in rights to land are, however, poorly documented and feature in few statistic. The objective is therefore to determine the differentials in male/female land ownership in matrilineal and patrilineal farming communities and how these impact on household food security.

Research Questions

- To what extent do the customary practices in the ownership and allocation of land influence access to land and contribute to gender differentials in land use?
- How does gendered differential in land ownership affect the acquisition of capital, credit and income level or contribute to poverty?

Hypotheses

1. The limited rights over land results in insufficient access to land which again leads to higher food insecurity.
2. Although there are differences concerning access to land between patrilineal and matrilineal societies, both tenure systems are disadvantageous to women.

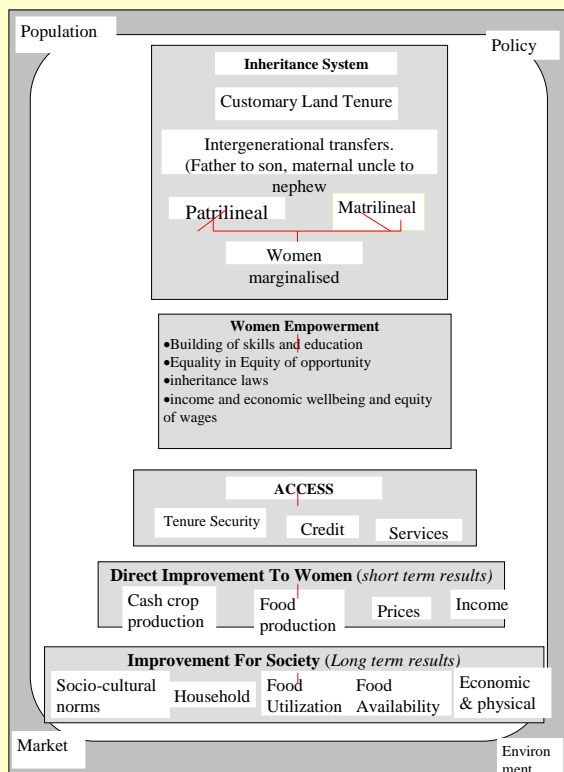
Theories, Models, Concepts

- Evolutionary model of property rights theories and food security
- Land Tenure Institutions and Equity
- Sara Longwe Empowerment Framework

Methodology

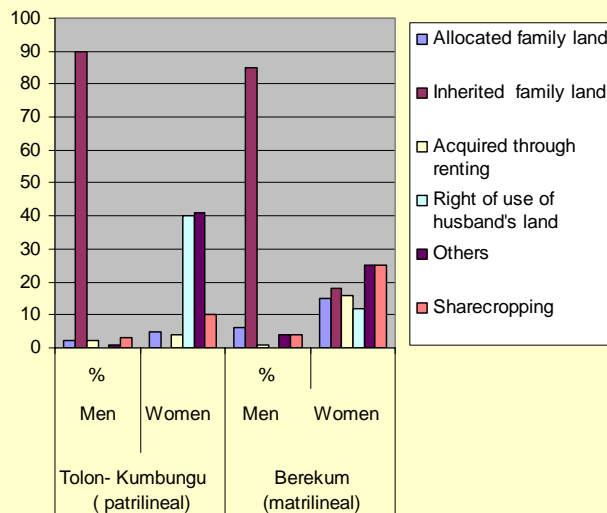
- Qualitative and quantitative approach
- Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews
- Textual analysis, SPSS

Conceptual Framework: Linking Gender, Land tenure and household food Security

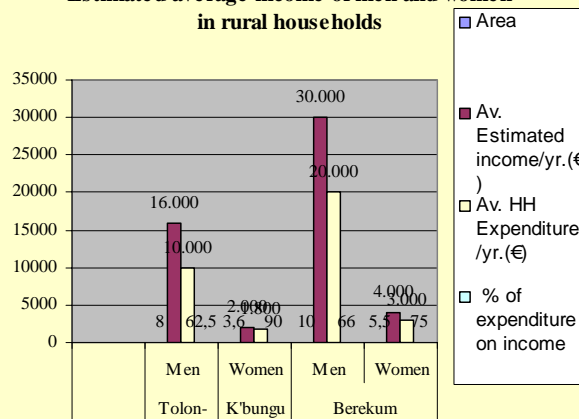


Major Findings

Distribution of land under different land tenure regimes by gender



Estimated average income of men and women in rural households



Conclusions

1. There are differences in women's rights to land under patrilineal and matrilineal systems, in both cases, however, women have lesser disposal rights in land than men.
2. Women's land rights under both matrilineal and patrilineal are determined by marital status, length of marriage and religion.
3. Men get higher incomes than women but contribute lower to household up keep as compared to women.

Recommendations

Customary law, due to its marginalisation of women as secondary rights holders should be reformed to give more tenure security to women.

There should be constitutional commitment to gender equity as a fundamental principle.

Representation of women in local land administrative bodies.