Adaptation Capacity of Women to Climate Change in the Alpine region with a focus on pastoral farms.

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Introduction

- Grew up on diary farm in Salzburg, Austria

- University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria

- Master Programme: Natural Resource Management & Ecological Engineering
  - focus on human and socio-economic dimension

- Master Thesis: *The adaptive capacity of women farmers in agricultural communities: a case study on women dairy farmers in the mountainous regions of Tyrol, Austria*
Motivation & Research Background

- Anthropogenic climate change and gender disparities disproportionately affect vulnerable groups the most. (IPCC, 2023)

- Adaptive Capacity (AC) refers to a system or community's ability to adjust and cope with the impacts of climate change. (IPCC, 2023)

- Participation of women plays a crucial role in enhancing group performance in context of agriculture. (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2014)
Objectives of the Research

- What factors influence the adaptive capacity of female farmers active in diary milk production in the mountain areas of Tyrol related to cultural, social and human capital?

- Challenges and Limitations
- Opportunities
- Climate Change Risk Perception and Exposure
- Social Environment and Working Conditions

Adaptive Capacity
Community Capital Framework

Interviews
22 female farmers
3 industry experts
Case Study Region - Tyrol, Austria

- 9569 farms in extreme mountainous locations
- **Dairy production and livestock farming** are most important agricultural sectors
- **Small-scale farming:** Tyrolean dairy farm keeps an average of 15 dairy cows (BML, 2022)
- 17% of farms are officially managed by women compared to 33% Austrian average (2021) (Oedl-Wieser & Schmitt, 2017)
Findings

Limiting Factors:

- Gender Social Norms
- Farm ownership & Identity
- Lack of Representation
- Lack of Involvement in Formal Institutions
- Time constraints & Multiple Burdens
Gender Social Norms

- Work distribution
- Role Models
- Decisions Making Power
- Farm Succession
- Distribution of Capital Assets

“[...] that's the big issue we have in the female farmers' organisation, actually we want to change the role model, but it can't be changed, or it's very difficult, because that's how we live it on the farm. That the woman is responsible for the nutrition, for the guest and for the flowers and for these things. The man is responsible for the rest”. (IP_16)
Farm ownership & Identity

- Farm ownership
- Agricultural Know-How
- Representation of Farm
- Identification with caregiving responsibilities

“I did not agree. I wanted to stay organic. [...] It’s very simple. I don’t own it, he owns everything and I can’t oppose it.” (IP_4)

“And then we had to go to events where the milk processors presented themselves. And there were almost only men from the farms who went there and listened to them. As a woman, I was one of the only ones who sat in there.” (IP_19).
Lack of Female Representation & Lack of Involvement in Formal Institutions

- Lack of Political Female Representation
- Lack of Women in Official Gathering
  - Low bridging social capital
- Female Farmer Organizations
  - High bonding social capital

"You have an incredibly hard time if you don’t have a second or third woman in the group. If you are the only woman in a basic negotiation and have to get involved [...]. If I am honest [...] I also send my husband sometimes [...]" (IP_16).

"Political representation is very, very traditional. [...] there needs to be a lot more women power. [...] women who succeed [in the election] are the ones who are very much in line with the traditional patterns. And not those who dare to think in a new way. So I find political representation in the Farmers’ Union more difficult than the situation on the farms themselves.” (IP_2)
Time constraints & Multiple Burdens

- Domestic work
- Childcare
- Care of the Elderly
- Administrative Tasks
- Income diversification

“It interests me more than I can do in the end because there is often **not enough time**.” (IP_15)

“I say especially in agriculture we are extremely nerve-racked. **Every commitment or anything you take on in addition it is hardly manageable.**” (IP_2).
Role of Agrotourism & Direct Marketing

- Additional income
- Self-efficacy
- Empowerment
- Social network

“
What has been a big thing for me now is that the rental business is working great. I’ve had such good success [...] that it has brought me a lot. Also, for me as a value at the farm, the fact that what I’m doing really brings in a lot of money for us.”

(IP_15)
Conclusion & Recommendations

- Social & Structural Challenge
- Further Research

- Awareness Raising & Support Female Role Models & Female Representation
- Challenging entrenched Gender Norms
- Invest in Human & Social Capital
- Promoting equitable Access to Key Resources → Framework Conditions
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Time for Questions.
References


