

Article

Gendered Resource Access and Utilisation in Swedish Family Farming

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Abstract: Gendered relations in resource access and farming are two important intersecting themes of gender studies in a northern rural context. However, conventional analysis and perceptions of the economy conceal the contribution of women within families, in businesses and in the labor market. This article demonstrate the significance of capital to farming women’s engagement with agriculture using a Swedish case study, based on descriptive analyses of data from the Federation of Swedish Farmers. To disclose the embodiment of family farming, gendered control of land, business activities and farm incomes is analyzed. On this empirical basis, we argue for reconstitution of farm-related entrepreneurial research, rural development policies and rural gender studies from a new material feminist approach. Access to resources, typically land, together with social forces and embodied experiences constitute the basis of strategic focus and agency. We demonstrate that acknowledgement of access to resources in the research process and in the understanding of social relations, resistance and situated knowledge are essential.

Keywords: land; economy; materiality; material feminism; agriculture; entrepreneurship

1. Introduction

During recent decades, rural areas have been affected and reshaped by economic change and incorporated into the global economy, and the agricultural sector has been restructured through growing commercialization and capitalization [1]. Difficulties in maintaining small and medium farm

enterprises have resulted in increased farm diversification and rural entrepreneurship. Various strategies, such as engaging in off-farm labor, specialization of farm production, adopting new production methods and integrating new business activities, have been developed to increase profitability [2–4]. The role of women in developing new income-generating activities, especially of a non-agricultural nature, is of significant value [5,6]. To contribute to the survival of the family farm, women more often engage in off-farm labor than men [2,7,8]. With its demand for products, services and food processing, family farming has to a great extent been the backbone of the Swedish rural economy [9].

However, despite the central role of women in the rural economy, their economic activities and situations are often neglected in the conventional concept of the economy. In an attempt to theoretically question the conventional understanding and use, feminist researchers have raised the need to re-read the concept of the economy in a more active and dynamic way [10,11]. In the field of rural gender studies, a renewed understanding of the economy has been emphasized, for example by Shortall [11]. It has been suggested that inclusion of research on/by women's business activities and agency in a rural context can provide a vital means to reconceptualize the economy from a material feminist standpoint. The economic processes and material relations should be understood through analyses of the gendered distribution of resources [12]—in this case the access to land—and its geographical, spatial and economic differences, linking the materialized conditions to the various types and number of business activities and their ability to provide income for the household. Social, cultural and material relations are produced in specific localities and are interlinked with their geographical, spatial, political and historical positions, especially in agricultural practices and rural relations. Research on female entrepreneurship and access to resources, mainly in the form of land, contributes to the understanding of women's position in the rural economy and the family farming.

By analyzing survey data collected by the Federation of Swedish Farmers, the issue of material relations in family farming will be examined and the significance of capital to farming women's engagement with agriculture will be explored. The study is based on the premise that place matters [1], that the gendered processes of farming, commodification and entrepreneurial activities are situated [13–16], and that the gendered economy of Swedish rural areas deserves specific attention. Generally, Sweden is regarded as a homogeneous society with common spatial, historical and political relations. However, in terms of climate, vegetation and topography, its conditions vary largely. Along with its two northern neighbors, Sweden is one of Europe's least densely populated countries. The Swedish landscape is dominated by productive forest land, which covers 55% of the total land area [17], while agricultural land accounts for 7.6% of the total area. Based on the latter value, Sweden and Finland clearly constitute an exception within the European Union, placing them in a clear last place in comparisons with other member states. At the other end of the range, agricultural land accounts for more than 60% of the total area in countries such as the UK, Denmark and Ireland [18]. Due to the low productivity and location of land in its northern parts, Sweden has, on average, some of the least expensive agricultural land in the European Union [19]. Due to a large diversity, the production and spatial conditions of southern parts of Sweden are more similar to the conditions of central Europe than those of the northern parts. Given the variety of land quality across different parts of the country, land prices in the most fertile southern regions are more than 12-fold higher than in the north. The low average prices, limited amount and increasing demand for agricultural land, together

with the impact of the area-based subsidy, have resulted in a steady increase in land prices and differentiation of various regions in Sweden [19,20]. To date, contexts similar to the Swedish case have received limited attention in sociological agrarian research and rural gender studies [21,22].

In comparison with other Western countries, Sweden is often seen as a role model in the progress of gender equality. However, the political efforts to promote equality in rural areas have had small effects [23,24]. In this context, the Swedish case contributes to the understanding of materiality in a set of specific spatial conditions, localities, ideologies and relations. The combination of the general political context of equality, regulations and the small amount of agricultural land, together with the diverse productive and spatial conditions within the contextual frame [25], means that the Swedish case provides a fruitful base for the study of gendered material relations and emphasizes the importance of its situated reproduction in Swedish agrarian ideologies.

This contribution constitutes a part in the process of understanding how material relations reproduce the gendered positions and practices—the materiality—of women in Swedish agriculture. The examination of the complex interrelationships of material, resources gender and localities are initiated through the theoretical framework of a new material feminist ontology [26], with the aim of contributing to the theoretical development of rural gender studies.

2. Theory

From the early 1990s, arguments have been made for the incorporation of gender into the political economy of agriculture [27] and the integration of the political economy into gender studies [11]. In the past, the narrow understanding of the economy has only been able to cover a limited share of economic activities and relations, for example, omitting non-wage labor [28]. A “new” material feminist ontology offers ways of looking at land ownership and access to resources constituted by focusing on the materialities of bodies, things and spaces [26,29]. It establishes a radical break with both universalism and dualism, emphasizing the insight that “*matter and meaning are not separate entities*” [29]. Understanding the materiality of social relations—the physical being—in the intra-acting economic and embodied processes is a central part of the new conceptualization of political economy. In a material feminist methodology, subjects are constituted through experience, which means that individuals, men and women, are shaped and situated by social and material experiences, perceived through the socialized body [26,30,31]. The situated and embodied subjects of men and women are the basis of agency; decision-making, actions and value systems. Women often take greater responsibility for the family and household duties and are perceived as being less professional and less successful entrepreneurs than men [32,33]. Men and women choose to engage in and develop different new business activities, both within the existing farm enterprise [34–36] and in off-farm enterprises [8,37].

Previous research shows that men’s and women’s motives and choices of business activities differ, with women generally starting their businesses on a small scale, taking smaller risks and investing less start-up capital than men [38–40]. The difference between male and female entrepreneurs becomes larger if they are married with dependent children [33]. Lack of access to resources, family responsibilities and other duties are the main reasons for the situation [32,39,41]. The entrepreneurship of women in rural areas has received some attention in research during the past decade [5,35,42,43]. In

this field, Bock [5] underlines the need to avoid evaluating and measuring the success of women's entrepreneurship using the behavioral norms of men. However, this does not mean that the economic, material basis of the entrepreneurship should be neglected based on norm-changing pretenses. Economic processes and access to resources need to be taken into account in order to understand the activities, challenges and obstacles in women's everyday life [44]. Various studies have demonstrated the relationship between earning potential and the autonomy of women [36,45,46], emphasizing the significance of socio-economic differentiation and the politics of redistribution in rural social life [12].

Agrarian Social Relations

The family farm is one of the most long-lasting ideological and historical institutions in the Western world. Despite technical and industrial developments, the family farm continues to be the primary production unit within the agrarian sector [47–50]. Friedmann [47] emphasizes that combined labor processes and property relations are specific to the family enterprise in capitalist economies. Studies on different forms of capitalist exploitation have drawn attention to the importance of property relations, especially in relation to inheritance. The unequal access to, and control of, land contributes to the social division of family farming and rural areas [48,51,52]. The gendered relations of land ownership are articulated in the co-constitutiveness of matter and meaning, making the male farmer the subject of land and the farm [52,13]. Shortall [52] argues that property provides easier access to other core resources of farming and that access to knowledge, organizational resources, customs, social practices and political power is connected to land ownership. In order to conduct farming activities, it is vital to have access to land, but property is not equally accessible to all, since land is a limited resource that most farmers acquire through inheritance.

Goodman and Redclift [48] emphasize the tendency of capitalist development in agriculture to undermine the significance of land in production. The production of animals “on concrete” and plants in glasshouses, even in laboratories, has changed the use of land [47,50,53]. However, the advances and innovations in land-saving and productivity-enhancing technologies, such as hybrid seeds and plants, have not been able to decrease the importance of land and it remains an essential resource in farming [48,54]. In Sweden, a small amount of land is acquired through the market, but this is a more costly way to enter farming. According to official statistics, about 0.5% of the total agricultural and arable land is available for sale annually on the open market [20,55], indicating that land ownership is still a matter of family. In most countries in the European Union, the agricultural area sold has been fairly stable on a low level during the last 15 years, with Finland, the Netherlands and the UK as more dynamic exceptions [19]. The numbers of sales, as well as the land prices, are increasing, but the total amount of agricultural and arable land sold on the open market is decreasing each year [20]. In 2005, 85% of the traded plots in Sweden were smaller than 10 ha. Since small plots are normally bought to enlarge holdings, this increase partly illustrates the structural change in the sector [19].

The role that kinship has in family farming, both in the labor process and in property relations, is rooted in a complex web of blood and feelings, social and material relations [14,56]. The dual materiality of kinship and property creates a fundamental link that is reproduced by the transfer of material resources within families [22,52,56–58]. Friedman argues that the family is patriarchal and that the family enterprise is “*a battleground over patriarchy, where property is immediately at*

stake” [14]. Conflict over property is no small matter in a capitalist society. Land in most of Western Europe is transferred within families, in a rather closed system [6,22,59,60]. The patrilineal transfer of land and property, usually from father to son, is regulated in farming by customs, traditions and legislations. Although laws and regulations, in Sweden and most of Western Europe, support equal inheritance between sons and daughters [22,59,61], the strong gendered traditions result in women less frequently inheriting land and taking over the farm business. The most common entry route for women into farming is through marriage [46,59].

3. Material, Case and Methodology

In Sweden, agriculture and forestry employ only a small proportion of the population, but constitutes a good fifth of the total numbers of enterprises [62,48]. The majority of these 207,800 businesses are involved in forestry while agriculture is carried out by about 72,600 businesses. The majority of those own a maximum of 20 hectares of arable land. However, the average farm size is 36.5 ha and 44% of the total area of arable land is controlled by businesses with more than 100 ha. These contrasting figures reflect the general and regional stratification of the sector in terms of production conditions, distance to urban centers, soil quality and demand for land from other sectors, which affect productivity, profitability and development of land prices in various parts of Sweden [19,20]. The main income-producing agricultural activities are dairy (25%–30%) and cereal production (15%–20%) [63]. Yet, the future strength of the rural economy is associated with its ability to introduce new, non-agricultural businesses and activities [64]

The Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) organizes about 170,000 individual members. Not all members are farmers, as the organization also admits people living in rural areas, but a large proportion of Swedish farmers are members. The LRF carries out a survey of its members on an annual basis to investigate on-going business activities and future plans. In the survey, the respondents are asked to specify whether a man, a woman, or a man and woman are considered to be the operations manager/s of the farm. The economic importance of farming to the household and information on the total area of arable land and forest land is also included in the survey. In the present study, the LRF survey data for 2009 have been reworked and statistically analyzed by the authors using SPSS, and based on a gender perspective. Approximately 100,000 households (main members) nationwide received the questionnaire through postal mail, addressed to both partners, with a response rate of 67% (67,218 respondents). Respondents who were not active agricultural farmers and did not provide full information on the questions of interest for this study (i.e., on the gender of the operations manager and the division of income sources in relation to the farm) were excluded. The data used in the analysis consisted of 13,770 observations from the whole country and the number of observations corresponded to more than half the total number of commercial farmers according to the threshold of the Farm Accountancy Data Network (about 27,000 farms). The data are thus likely to be representative of Sweden as a whole. Of those, 8,631 of the farms are to some extent engaged in forestry. The use of data from LRF brings some limitation in the control of the research process but the survey and the research approach also offer possibilities for longitudinal studies for future research. Although, there are small doubts about the quality of the observations due to the level of detail. In cross-tabulations, chi-squared tests were used to test variations between different categories, while differences between

means and proportions were examined using a *t* test. In the analysis, the data were supported by official statistics if necessary.

In relation to arable land, forestry should be considered a special case in the analysis, since most forest owners do not carry out timber harvesting themselves, but hire contractors. Thus, in most cases, forest income is based on income from capital, not from labor. Therefore, forestry often constitutes an additional income to other non-agricultural businesses and wage labor [60].

4. Results

Men dominated the operations management of the farms in our data, reflecting official statistics [65]. In all, 62% of the responding businesses were managed by a man and only 8.5% by a woman, while 29.5% were managed jointly by men and women. Given that this joint management consists of one man and one woman and single management is one man or one woman, 29% of the total number of farm managers were women and 71% were men. The definition of operation manager and business owner has been shown to differ, which contributed to the uncertainty regarding the category “both a man and a woman” in the data. Geographically, the representation of farms managed by a woman or a man differed in different regions. The area of Stockholm was the smallest region by count, but had the largest share of farms operated by one woman (16.7%). The most southerly region of Sweden had the highest representation of male-managed farms (64.8%). The proportion of farms managed jointly showed smaller regional differences. The average farmer was according to our data engaged in 3.8 different business activities on the farm.

4.1. Gendered Access to Land

According to the results, 6% of the total area of forest land owned by the respondents was controlled by a female manager, as well as 4% of arable land. Male managers controlled more than 68% of both forestry and arable land, while about 26% of the land was managed jointly. The average land area of farms with a male operations manager was 36 ha arable land and 78 ha forest. On average, women managed 15 ha arable land and 52 ha forest. The analysis also showed that the average area of arable land on farms with a male manager was significantly larger than that on farms with a female manager ($p < 0.05$), but there was no significant difference in the average area of forest land. To understand the difference, the diversity of business activities in the data needs to be taken into account, as well as the slight difference in forest and arable land ownership. Despite this, analyses show that there was a positive correlation between the gender of the operations manager and control over land, with a significant difference for arable land, underlining the gendered access to land ($p < 0.05$).

Due to the large geographical differences and varying growing conditions, the spatial aspects of access to land are important in the Swedish case, especially in relation to productive arable land. The relationship between average area of arable land owned and the gender of the operations manager in different parts of Sweden proved to be consistent. However, in northern Sweden (Norrland), the average arable area on farms with a male manager was 1.6-fold larger than on farms with a female manager, whereas in southern Sweden it was 2.5-fold larger.

Productivity and demand were taken into account to calculate the average value of arable land on farms owned by men and women in different regions of Sweden in the light of geographical

differences. Based on official statistics on average land prices in different regions [20], the average holding of a female manager had an estimated value of 754,000 SEK (about €33,800), while that of a male manager amount had a value of 1,900,000 SEK (about €111,100). This clearly illustrates the unequal distribution of resources and value between farms operated by a man or a woman, with the average arable land holding of a farm managed by a man being worth 2.5 times more than that on a farm managed by a woman.

4.2. Difference in Types of Activities in Relation to Land

On average, the business activities in which the proportion of women as operations manager was largest, had the smallest areas of cultivated arable land, which underlines the material relationship between the business activities with the highest proportions of men and women. The proportion of men within oilseed production was 5.9-fold higher than the proportion of women, while the proportion of women within health, including green care and rehabilitation, was 7.5-fold higher than the proportion of men (Table 1). The four business activities with the highest proportion of men and women had at least a three-fold difference in activity, which was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) (Table 1).

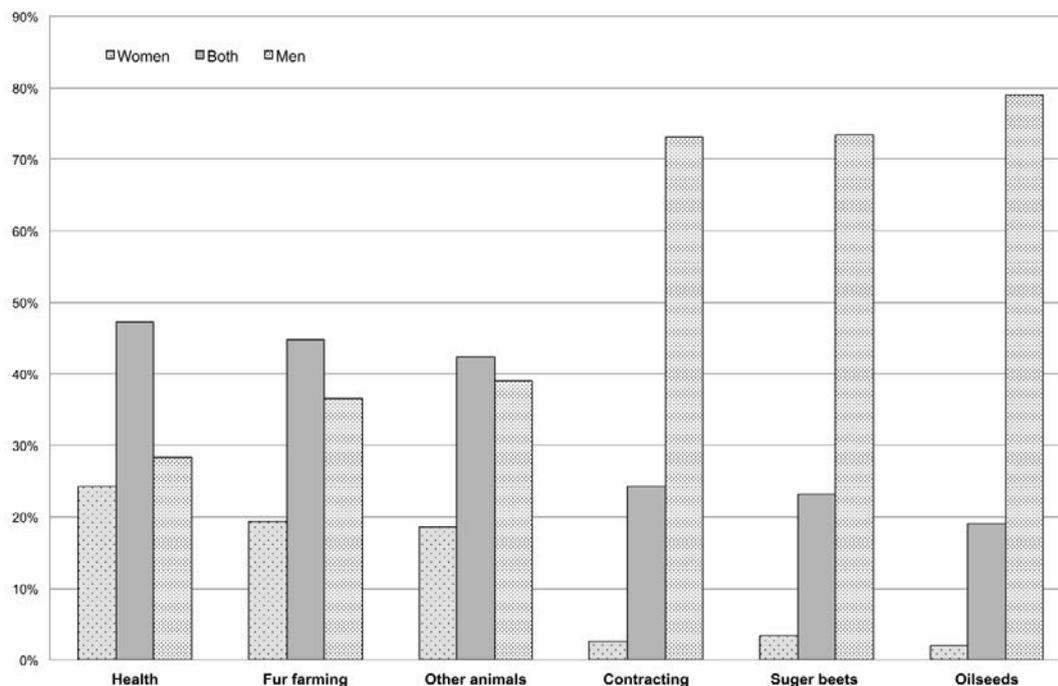
Table 1. The four business activities with the highest proportion of men and women (% of total), sorted by difference within each gender, with those dominated by men in the upper part of the table and those dominated by women in the lower part.

Business Activity	Women	Men	Difference
Oilseeds	2.3 _a	13.5 _b	5.9×
Wood processing	1.0 _a	4.9 _b	4.9×
Contracting	7.7 _a	29.7 _b	3.9×
Cereals	14.7 _a	43.8 _b	3×
Health	1.5 _a	0.2 _b	7.5×
Fur farming	1.1 _a	0.3 _b	3.7×
Other animals	2.7 _a	0.8 _b	3.4×
Horses	26.0 _a	7.9 _b	3.3×

Note: Values within rows and table parts with different subscripts are significantly different ($p < 0.05$) in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript were not included in the test. Tests assumed equal variances.

Female operations managers were most frequent in the categories health (24%), fur farming (19%) and other animals (19%) (Figure 1). Generally, these three categories are all manual, labor-intensive business activities and are linked to the experiences of care work. On the other hand, men were most dominant in the primary production and services concerning oilseeds (79%), sugar beet (73%) and contracting (73%), which are three business activities with a high technological level of mechanization. The group of joint managers followed the variations in the group of female managers, as the business activities with a high proportion of female managers also had a high proportion of joint management. This reflects the strong imbalance in these activities. Only 2% of responding farms with oilseed production had a sole woman as operations manager.

Figure 1. The three business activities with the highest representation of women and men as operations manager.



However, there was also a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the average number of business activities in which female and male managers were engaged. On average, the number of activities on farms with a female operations manager was 2.9, while the number for farms with a male operations manager was 3.8. The farms where both a man and a woman were involved in the management had the highest average number of activities: 4.0. The additive effect of a woman seems to be insignificant based on these figures, but due to lack of more detailed information at the household level, this cannot be stated categorically.

4.3. The Farm as a Source of Household Income

Around 9% of farms managed by a woman provided the main income for the household. The corresponding figure for farms managed by a man was 19%. In all, 56% of the farms managed by men and 72% of those managed by women had another main source of income to the household than the farm. The differences are significant ($p < 0.05$), with a higher proportion of women managed farms dependent on other sources of income and a higher proportion of men managed farms that provide the main, or at least half, of the household income. This emphasizes the economic differences within farming and the relations between various gendered business activities and their ability to provide income. Corresponding to the official statistics [63], milk production was the business activity by far most associated with the farm as the main source of income. Around 64% of the farms engaged in dairy and nearly 47% of those engaged in pork production lived off the farm income. Only 3% of farms with a dairy or pork enterprise had a woman as operations manager, while about 65% of those farms were managed by a man. On the other hand, more than 60% of farms breeding geese, ducks, turkeys, sheep and lambs, as well as conducting forestry, had another main source of income to the

household than farming. Equal proportions of the farms engaged in the enterprises listed were managed jointly or by a man, while around 16% had a woman as operations manager.

About 25% of the farms that provided the main income for the household were located in western Sweden and, together with the adjacent regions in the south and south-east, they comprised nearly 64% of the farms in this category. The Stockholm region had the largest share of farms that were dependent on other sources of income for the household. The average number of business activities per farm was highest in east-central Sweden (4.25 activities per farm), and lowest in the north (~3 activities per farm). The average number of business activities on farms dependent on other sources of income for the household was also ~3. The farms that were able to provide income had an average of 5.37 activities per farm. There was a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) between the number of business activities and the main source of income to the household.

4.4. Relationship between Household Income and Access to Land

The respondents adopted various strategies to adapt to the economic conditions of farming and lack of profitability. Less than 20% of the responding households had most or all their income from farming, emphasizing the importance of the economy in research examining both income and time. Our data revealed a positive correlation between average land area, both forest and arable, and the household's ability to live off the income from farming—with a significant difference between the three categories of the main source of income for the household (the farm, 50/50 and other) and the average arable and forest land ($p < 0.05$). The area of arable land can be interpreted as a measure of the size of the farm, but the general relationship between arable land and economic status of the farm remains. The farm was reported to be the main source of income for less than 20% of the households that responded to the survey. An equal combination of farm income and off-farm income occurred on almost 24% of the farms, most likely in the setting of off-farm wage labor by a member of the farm household. In all, 59% of the households could not make a living from their farm and therefore had another main source of income. There was also a positive correlation between the size of the arable land and the number of types of business activities on the farm ($p < 0.01$). Farms with a maximum of 5 ha had less than three types of business activities, while farms with more than 300 ha of arable land had on average 7.4.

5. Discussion

The Swedish case presented underlines the co-constitutiveness of arable land and farming. The issue has been discussed for decades and has been shown in previous studies from other countries to provide essential access to core areas of farming, e.g., subsidies, credits and business networks [48,51,52]. Property relations also have internal effects for the social relations of the family farm [27,56,57,66], something that should be further investigated in the data based on our respondents' definitions of operations manager. The Swedish context, with its common political relations, history and regulations, provides a suitable case to study the different material processes and relations under various conditions [25]. The purpose of our empirical analysis was not to provide a complete understanding of women's businesses, but to raise the issue of the materiality of farming through the economic conditions and structural obstacles in the specific context of Sweden. The present case study

also contributes to the dismantling of individual choices by showing their social and material basis and effects—gender, resources and engagement in different business activities do matter and go beyond the “*matter of language or some other form of cultural representation*” [31].

The positive correlation between the number of business activities and the farm’s ability to provide income for the household clearly underlines the gendered aspects of diversification. Despite the positive view on female farm-related entrepreneurship in the rural sector [6,67,68], women encounter many obstacles and problems in setting up their businesses. Supporting previous research [13,58], the empirical data in this study indicate that less access to land is a major obstacle on various levels, which reproduces the exclusion of female farmers seen in rural development policies and programs [69–71]. Reinforcing the body politics of farming [72], the gendered difference in landholding decreases women’s chances of receiving government subsidies and access to credits—a intra-relation that already today is documented in Sweden [62,73].

In the intersection between expanding demands for organic food and products [54], increasing feed prices and growing capitalization of farm production [21,74], the importance of access to land has received renewed attention. The Swedish case sheds light on the gendered aspects of diversification and autonomy in a globalized market. Ploeg [75] emphasizes that the strategy to increase autonomy through broadening and diversification of production in the process of decreasing the dependency on financial and industrial capital, “*materializes in a reconstitution of the resource base of the farm*”. Despite the focus on entrepreneurial skills and the role of farmers’ wives [5] in efforts to rediscover forgotten resources of the farm, the bases of autonomy and diversification are materialized in the access of resources that can be “reconstituted”. The importance of land as a basic resource in diversification can be seen both in our analysis and in other studies [21,75]. Owing to the increased market demand for agricultural products together with the areal subsidies granted through CAP, prices for agricultural land continue to increase according to the mechanisms identified by Ricardo; margins of production are capitalized into higher land value. In a country such as Sweden with average low land prices, the impact of the areal subsidy is higher [19], adding to the gendered stratification of land value. In this context, the issue of access to land becomes even more significant as the effects of unequal distribution expand. The majority of land is still transferred within the family, either through sale or inheritance, emphasizing the increased land value “at stake” [14]. Socio-economic differentiation and the politics of redistribution are, based on this, still highly significant in social life in general and in farming in particular [12]. New relations are being materially reconstructed in the reorientation of farm production to enlarge the value added and reconstitution of the farm. We argue that these materialized processes and new relations call for enhanced attention to the issues of distribution of resources in rural gender studies. Not at least in relation to inheritance and land transfer practices, this development calls for amplified attention to the processes and relations of the household from a new material feminist approach.

6. Conclusions

Our results demonstrate the importance of acknowledging material relations in the rural context and provide the basis for further inquiries on the subject. Without incorporating the material basis of the action in the analysis, the study of choices, strategies and agency in family farming and rural

entrepreneurship is to some extent inadequate. However, as the Swedish case emphasizes the reproduction of material relations on a regional level, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods are vital to acknowledging women's experiences of economic processes and to the development of an extensive understanding of the economy and intra-action and embodiment of materiality at various levels and spheres [47,76]. In the process of re-reading the concept of the farm economy from a new material feminist standpoint, relations and value-producing activities at the household level must in the future be included in the understanding of diverse experiences. The Swedish case illustrates how the concentration of value, on individual farms and in regions, reproduces and materializes the gendered material relations and how the gendered gap in land access shifts in relation to various locations within the context. The Swedish case thereby highlights the significance and emphasizes the connection between different economic, spatial and local conditions and the gendered material relations of family farming.

As the results presented here and official statistics [65] show, the Swedish farming sector is dominated by male farm managers. In research on rural entrepreneurship in general [77], this is reflected as is a strong ideological connection between the male body and management in the agriculture sector. The presented differences in arable land between farms operated by men and women confirm the gendered relation of accessibility to land reported in previous research from other contexts [13,15,16,58]. The present analysis revealed correlations between access to arable land, the farm's ability to provide income for the household and various business activities. The matter of income in relation to women's independence and socio-economic differentiation has been well documented in research [12]. The findings provide a better understanding of the economic processes and material relations in rural entrepreneurship, while also confirming the results of previous studies on the importance of access to land for the economic conditions and strategic focus of rural businesses [47,48,52]. The high proportion of farms dependent on other income sources outside farming highlights the continuing central position of part-time farming in the agrarian structure of Sweden [21].

Based on our study of Swedish family farming, we argue for reconstitution of farm-related entrepreneurial research, rural development policies and rural gender studies from a new material feminist approach. Our results emphasize the importance and intra-action of access to resources—typically land—and spatiality as the basis for strategic focus and agency. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge the significance of access to resources in the research process and in the understanding of social relations, embodied experiences, resistance and situated knowledge in the rural context and to, from a feminist standpoint, return once more to the issue of materiality in rural studies.

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Author Contributions

Both authors have been involved in all parts of the study, but the lead author of the manuscript has been Elias Andersson.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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