

INVOLVEMENT OF RURAL FEMALES IN DECISION MAKING: A CASE STUDY IN FAISALABAD DISTRICT

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Based on a study of 150 rural women in the Faisalabad district, it was found that the involvement of women in decision-making with regard to farm and family matter vary according to different socio-economic situations. The results showed that the independent variable such as age, education, caste, family type and number of family member had significant association with decision-making regarding the farm activities and family matters.

Key words: farm and family matters, women involvement, decision-making

INTRODUCTION

In the developed societies, female force is being utilized to its maximum potential. Generally, in the developing countries this natural resource is rendered ineffective mainly due to traditional and cultural values, prejudice against females, deprivation of social and economic opportunities, look after of children and with no or low education level. In Pakistan, being an agricultural country, majority of the rural population is engaged in agriculture and related activities. Small scale agriculture makes up the bulk of total population and employment. The rural women make a crucial but silent and invisible contribution to indirectly in agriculture is much larger than that of males but the main reason of their low participation in decision-making regarding farm and family matters is that their status is determined by men.

The decision about getting married receiving proper education, securing gainful employment, receiving proper health care and migrating are all made for her but not by her. The end result of such decisions is that for Pakistani women, The parental and conjugal roles have a high degree of primacy while the occupational and community roles are secondary.

Varma (1992) studied the role of Indian women in agriculture. The scientist invited attention to the plight of Indian rural women work for long periods of time in the market and non-market economy if the total range of women's economic activities are taken into account. It was concluded

that both men and women were unfortunate victims of unrealistic, unreasonable and undesirable social values. A well designed programme of education for both men and women was recommended.

Mohsin (1995) reported that women have been assigned a secondary status in all societies in developing countries. The view that man held about a woman is that she is basically frail, fickle, flower like, lowing but foolish and certainly inferior to man when it comes to knowledge, wisdom and brain. The underlying idea of identification of women's role has been necessitated owing to the quantum or quality of their participation which warrants review and induction of programmes and projects to enhance their output and make maximum utilization of their potential. Main objective of this study was to assess the extent to which women are involved in decision-making with regard to farm and family matters.

MEI HODOLOGY

This study was conducted in the rural area of district Faisalabad. Three villages were randomly selected namely Chak No. 213/R.B. Hari-Singh Wala, Chak No. 213 R.B. Jhok Kharla Wali and Chak No. 30 J.B. (see Table 1). Fifty respondents from each village were selected by using systematic random sampling technique. One rural female from each household was interviewed with the help of a questionnaire. After pre-testing, amendments were made and 150 personal interviews were conducted.

Table 1. Distribution of the sample villages, distance from Faisalabad, level of schools and other facilities

Village Name	Population	Distance from Faisalabad	Level of schools		Other facilities
			Boys	Girls	
213/RB Hari Sing Wala	2500	18 km	Primary	Primary	Dispensary, Electricity, Gas.
213/RB Jhok Kharala Wali	3500	26 km	Middle	Primary	Vety. Hospital, Dispensary, Electricity
30/JB Chak Teece	6500	36 km	Matric	Matric	Vety. Hospital, Dispensary, Electricity

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Relation of Age with Women Participation in Farm and Family Matters: In this study, 28.7 % respondents were included in the category of less than 26 years, 46 % in 27-40 years and 25.3 % in the 60+ years age group. The data (Table 2) revealed that age had significant relationship with decision-making in only storage at the 10 % level of significance while the rest of the farm matter were not statistically related with age. Contrary to the previous research, our data (Table 2) indicated that age had a highly significant relationship with women consultation in decision-making with regard to family matter, like number of children to be born and career of children. There is association in the matter of education of children. The rest of the family matter were not statistically related with age.

Relation of Caste with Female Participation in Farm and Family Matters: In our society every caste has its own traditions and the importance of females varies in different families in our respondents, Rajpoot families were dominant (40 %) compared to other castes in the sample villages. The respondents belonging to Jat and Doggar families were 17.40 and 15.3 %, respectively. The remaining 27.3

% comprised of Gujjar and Mughal families. The data (Table 2) showed that in all the farm matters, caste has significant relationship with women involvement in decision while in family matters, caste has significant relation only in kinship relationship. While in the other matters, caste has non-significant relationship.

Relationship of Family Income with Women Participation in Farm and Family Matters, Income of the respondents determines the economic status of an individual. In our study income means the total gross earning per month from the land as well as other subsidiary resources. It is evident from the data (Table 2) that women participation in decision-making whether farm or family matters has non-significant relationship with their family income.

Relationship of Family Type with Female Participation in Farm and Family matter: In our study, 52.74 % respondents were living in joint families and 47.3 % adopted nuclear family system. The data exhibited (Table 2) that family type has a significant relationship with female participation in decision-making in sowing of crops, purchase of farm machinery, use of pesticides, marriages of children, religious practices and kinship relationship are significantly related.

Table 2. Association between income, age, caste, family type and women in farm and family matters

Activity	Age	Caste	Income	Family type
Farm Matters				
Purchase of farm inputs	7.522NS	22.41**	5.260NS	1.444NS
Sale of crop produce	1.959NS	27.69**	3.207NS	1.394NS
Sowing of crops	5.570NS	17.06**	6.712NS	9.465**
Storage	8.175NS	15.76**	3.909NS	1.076NS
Selling or buying of land	1.257NS	25.74**	5.179NS	5.093*
Purchase of farm machinery	0.027NS	31.07**	2.557NS	6.039**
Use of pesticides	6.403NS	22.80**	3.168NS	5.651*
Family Matters				
Number of children to be born	12.266**	7.92NS	2.723NS	1.707NS
Education of children	7.81**	2.56NS	2.339NS	2.792**
Career of children	10.75**	6.85NS	6.391NS	1.202NS
Marriages of children	3.457NS	4.03NS	4.525NS	5.275*
Purchase of house goods	2.403NS	8.38NS	0.826NS	0.632NS
Religious practices	2.788NS	9.47NS	0.469NS	9.884*
Kinship relationship	3.131**	11.60NS	3.640NS	7.400*
d.f for all rows	4	6	4	2

n = 150, * = Significant at P = 5 %, ** = Significant at P = 10 %, NS = Non-significant at P=10%, d.f. for all row = 4, 6, 4, 2

Female involvement in farm and family matters

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CONCLUSIONS

Age has significant relationship with decision-making with regard to only storage, number of children, career of children and education of children. Caste has significant relationship for all the farm matters and kinship relation-

ship. Family income has non-significant relationship with women participation in farm or family matters. Family type has a significant relationship with female participation of sowing of crop, purchase of farm machinery, use of pesticides, marriage of children, religious practices and kinship relationship.

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