

Role of Women in Decision-making Related to Farm: A study of Jammu district of J&K State

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Abstract- Women are the major contributor of Indian economy. Women participate in all type of farm activities and do more work as compare to male workers but their participation in decision making related to farm and income generating activities is low. Women's active involvement in decision making is considered essential for rapid economic development of the country. A sample of 200 farm women belonging to 3 different villages of Jammu District were selected by random sampling technique with the objective of studying extent of involvement of women in decision making related to farm and income generating activities and have been analyzed in terms of fully independent, partial involvement and no involvement. For data collection interview schedule, field observation and case studies were framed. Many times cross checking and cross questioning techniques for a particular response were also adopted to get qualitative data.

Index Terms- Farm activities, women, decision making, fully independent, partial involvement, no involvement.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural women constitute the most important productive work force in the Indian economy. Agriculture in India contributes about 18% GDP and is predominantly a female activity. About 18% of the economically active women are engaged in Agriculture sector in the country. In dairying and animal husbandry, women far outnumber the men and this sector of agriculture is wholly dependent upon the women workforce. Almost all the rural women in India can be considered as farmers in some senses as almost all of these are directly or indirectly engaged in some agricultural activity such as agriculture labour, working in the family, farm land holding, dairying and animal husbandry etc. As majority of the agricultural work force in the country comprises of the women, their role in the decision making in different agricultural activities need to be properly looked into. Decision –making is a basic process that underlies all functions of family resource management. Rural women in our country share abundant responsibilities and perform a wide spectrum of duties in running the family, maintaining the households, attending to farm labour, tending domestic animals and extending a help hand in rural artisanship and handicrafts. In spite of discharging all these duties her involvement in decision making process specially related to money matters is low (Raju, V.T. and Rani, S. 1991).women play an important role in initiation , control and supervision of farm production, horticulture, livestock and in productive work (Census,2011). Despite women's critical contribution to the family income

through productive activities, no recognition is given to them as an important contributor and their contribution is not recorded. The overview of some of the studies conducted in India showed considerable variation in women's involvement in decision-making process in different parts of the country especially in rural societies. The states like Punjab and Haryana show positive role of women in decision making process in most of the families. But in primitive societies the pattern of participation on decision is traditional where the head of the family or male members make all the decision. In rural families type and size of the family, caste, size of land holding, socio-economic status of the families, education level of rural women, their employment status and rational position effects her involvement in decision-making. Besides this, women's role becomes negligible where the decisions increase in complexity in rural families due to illiteracy of women (Husain et al.,1988; Islam, Maziful and Ahmed, 1988).

Since, women play a key role in production, they should be the first person's to take decisions and make plans. Keeping these in mind, the present study has been undertaken in Jammu district of Jammu division to find out the extent of women's involvement in decision-making related to household, farm, livestock and income-generating activities.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the extent of women's involvement in decision making related to farm management, buying and selling, production and livestock management.

III. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. This study was limited to 3 villages of Jammu district.
2. The sample consisted of only 200 households.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample description: A sample of 200 farm women in the age group of 25-40 years belonging to 3 different villages of Jammu district was selected randomly.

Data collection: - Following tools were selected for data collection.

1. Data were gathered personally by using interview method.
2. A visit was made to each of the selected villages prior to data collection in order to establish a rapport with villages.

3. Many times cross checking and cross questioning techniques for a particular response were also adopted to get qualitative data.

V. RESULT AND DISCUSION

The results of the investigation carried out are presented through summary tables showing the number of women involved

in decision making related to various household and farm activities. The extent of respondent's involvement in decision related to expenditure on farm buying and selling activities, measures to increase production and livestock management were analyzed in terms of fully independent, partial involvement and no involvement. Partial involvement in decision refers to respondent's joint involvement in group decision.

Table 1
Extent of respondents' involvement in Decision Related to Expenditure on farm

Decisions	Extent of Involvement	Frequency	%age
Money to be spent on purchases of machines	Fully independent	-	-
	Partial involvement	6	4%
	Nil	143	95.3%
Money to be spent on purchase of implements	Fully independent	-	-
	Partial involvement	14	9.3%
	Nil	136	90.6%
Money to be spent on purchase of seeds	Fully independent	3	2%
	Partial involvement	41	27.3%
	Nil	106	70.6%
Paying wages to labourers	Fully independent	2	1.3%
	Partial involvement	53	35.3%
	Nil	95	63.3%

The table 1 shows that the major decisions related to amount of money to be spent on the purchase of machines and small agricultural implements by respondents were totally nil. It was found that only 2% of the respondents were fully involved in major decision making about the money to be spent for purchase

of seeds and 27.3% respondents were partially involved. Only 2% of the women heads of the family independently take the decision. Decision related to wages to be paid to labourers was taken independently by only 1.3% respondents and 35.3% of the respondents took the decisions partially.

Table 2
Extent of Respondents involvement in Farm Decisions: Buying and selling Activities.

Decisions	Extent of Involvement	Frequency	%age
Purchase of land	Fully independent	-	-
	Partial involvement	18	12%
	Nil	132	88%
Purpose for which land is to be purchased	Fully independent	2	1.3%
	Partial involvement	32	21.3%
	Nil	116	77.3%
How much land to be purchased	Fully independent	2	1.3%
	Partial involvement	45	30%
	Nil	103	68.6%
Type of machine to be purchased	Fully independent	3	2%
	Partial involvement	54	36%
	Nil	93	62%
Purchase of small Agricultural implements	Fully independent	5	3.3%
	Partial involvement	55	36.6%
	Nil	90	60%
Purchase of insecticides and weedicides	Fully independent	-	-
	Partial involvement	2	1.3%
	Nil	148	98.6%

From the above table it is shown that decisions regarding purchase and sale of land were entirely taken by the male family head and majority of the respondents were not involved in

decision related to purchase of land, buying and selling of surplus land. More than 88% of the respondent women had no say in the decision and remaining 12% had only partial involvement in such decision. The role of women respondents in

the purchase of the farm machinery was almost nil. About 36% of the respondents who were involved partially were heads of the farmer families. The respondents were given no importance especially when decisions were made regarding buying of agricultural implements. Only 36.6% respondents were partially involved in such decision making. None of the respondents were involved when major decisions regarding the purchase of insecticides and weedicides were made. Only 1.3% respondents were involved partially, in this decision process

Table 1.3
Extent of respondent's involvement in Farm Decisions: Measures to Increase Production.

Decisions	Extent of Involvement	Frequency	%age
Level of crop production	Fully independent	6	4%
	Partial involvement	56	37.3%
	Nil	88	58.6%
Cropping pattern to be followed	Fully independent	4	2.6%
	Partial involvement	76	50.6%
	Nil	70	46.6%
Methods to be used for sowing	Fully independent	7	4.6%
	Partial involvement	67	44.6%
	Nil	76	50.6%
Using plant protection measures	Fully independent	2	1.3%
	Partial involvement	34	22.6%
	Nil	114	76%
Types of fertilizers to be used	Fully independent	2	1.3%
	Partial involvement	37	24.6%
	Nil	111	74%
Installation of hand pump	Fully independent	8	5.3%
	Partial involvement	59	39.3%
	Nil	83	55.3%
Installation of tube well	Fully independent	8	5.3%
	Partial involvement	59	39.3%
	Nil	83	55.3%
New implements to be used for production	Fully independent	23	15.3%
	Partial involvement	69	46%
	Nil	58	38.6%

Women's role in the production of crops and harvesting is very important. Analysis of the decision making related to storage of animal fodder and also to a certain extent, decisions related to storage of farm produce were female dominated (Table3). 48.6% of respondents actively participated in the group decisions of the family related to type of grains to be stored for the household consumption while 95.3% about storing animal fodder. In the rest of the activities related to increase to production and harvesting, the involvement of women is almost

nil except 15.3% respondents actively involved in the decision related to selection of new implements to be used for production.

Table 4
Extent of Respondents involvement in Decisions related to Livestock Management

Decisions	Extent of Involvement	Frequency	%age
Buying of livestock	Fully independent	5	3.3%
	Partial involvement	89	59.3%
	Partial involvement	56	37.3%
	Nil		
Number of livestock to be kept	Fully independent	6	4%
	Partial involvement	47	31.3%
	Partial involvement	97	64.6%
	Nil		
Selling of livestock	Fully independent	6	4%
	Partial involvement	15	10%
	Partial involvement	129	86%
	Nil		
Cultivation of fodder for livestock	Fully independent	3	2%
	Partial involvement	36	24%
	Partial involvement	111	74%
	Nil		

The finding showed that women of these areas were dependent on forest as a source of fodder and were bought the fodder for their livestock. The families with large farm, cultivated fodder at their farm. About purchase and sale of livestock, the major decisions were made by male members. 59.3% of respondents were involved in joint decision although final say was of men only. Regarding number of livestock to be kept, 4% respondents heading the family took independent decision and 31.3% were involved in partial decision. Male members in majority of the families took decisions related to selling of livestock and only 10% women respondents were involved partially. Regarding cultivation of fodder for livestock only 2% of the respondents took independent decision and 24% were involved in partially.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Men dominated in majority of the farm decisions in rural families. Decisions related to buying and selling of land, machines and other agricultural implements; improvements of harvest and livestock management were mainly taken by head of the family or husbands.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

Since women's contribution to economic development is vital, there is a need of proportionate increase in her involvement in decision making process, because the success and progress of

any production depends upon the plans made and decisions taken. The following action programmes need to be undertaken by the Government and other welfare organizations.

1. Investment of adequate amount of funds by the Government for conducting programmes related to farm, livestock management and income generation work.

2. The state government needs to arrange intensive literacy programmes for developing essential agricultural skills and farm management.

3. Women should be given experience in decision-making process, including participatory personnel management and budget management.

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