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Role in decision making in household activities among working and non-working women

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Abstract

In role and position of women in Vedic India was not only better rather they occupied a honorable place. Now a days women has equal participation in almost all type of activities. Participation of women in decision making about different activities decides the status of women. In India, there is currently a shift in decision-making pattern of women. The purpose of this study, entitled "Role in decision making in household and farm activities among Working and Non-Working Women " was to discover the decision-making patterns of working and non-working women in household activities, compare the decision-making patterns of working and non-working women in household activities, and identify the situation and difficulties faced by both groups. The present study was conducted to ascertain the participation of working and Non-working women in decision making. The study was conducted on 256 women of two districts i.e. Hisar and Kaithal of Haryana state. Four villages were selected from each district for the rural study and districts headquarters were selected for the urban study. From selected villages, 8 working and 8 non working women were selected and 32 working and 32 non working were selected from district headquarter were surveyed with the help of pre-designed interview schedule as per objective. The participation of working women in household activities was examined on five point scale. It was found that 79.69% of the working women took decision independently regarding cleaning for house followed by caring of children & disable member in rural area (68.75%), welcoming and serving guest (59.38%) respectively. Among the non-working, 21.87% said that only their opinion was considered by their husband or family members.

Keywords: decision making, working women, non- working women, household activities

Introduction

History of human society reveals that in no society of the world, women have enjoyed absolute equality at par with men. Everywhere they were subjected to inequality, discrimination and exploitation. Men and women were treated in different ways and expected to have different behavioral patterns. During the early days, sex roles were clearly laid down like men went out of home for work and women confined themselves to home, looking after children and domestic affairs. Women are one of the most vital and vibrant segments of Indian society, yet they are also one of the most destitute and long overlooked. The position and development of women, on the other hand, are critical to a country's prosperity and success. Women's participation in Panchayati Raj institutions is considered not only for ensuring political participation in the democratic process but also for realizing the development goals for women. It is general fact that women are not lower than man in term of intelligence, thinking, imagination, attitude, courage and activities. Decision making is a process consisting of the activities which results in the choice of an alternative or the commitment to a course of action. Bishop (1985) of Kenya stressed, "Train a man and you train an individual, Train a woman and you build a nation", viewed from these stand points, the position of women in any society is an index of its civilization. Writing in *Young Indian* in 1918, Gandhiji said, woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of the activities of man. She has the same right of freedom and liberty as he (Nair, 1995). Decision making capacity of a human being is one of those criteria which distinguish human being from other species. Baliyan (2014) [4] concluded that around 51.00% women said that family members mostly agree with them in decisions related to domestic affairs. Around 6% women stated that they have taken final decision in these matters and 26.00% women said that male members did not agree much with their decisions. Ahuja and Narayan (2016) [1] that 82% and 53% of the households witness joint decision making in the purchase/ sale and selection of breed of animals respectively.

Regarding fodder arrangement and sale of milk in market, decisions are taken by the female members in around 57% and 55% of households respectively. Maral and Kumar (2017) [7] found that Non-working women have taken 35.7% self decision and 50% decisions were taken by her husband. In savings, non-working women have power of self- decision making (47.9%) and a joint decision-making power (68.8%) by working women. Saravanakuma and Varakumari (2019) [10] found in their study that 73% of women had participated in making household decisions in the rural group while 87% had participated in the urban group and the difference observed was statistically significant. Only 29% of women in rural group had a say in financial decisions in the family against 44% in the urban group which was statistically significant. About 33% of women had decided about the family planning in the rural group while 74% had participated in decision with regard to family planning. With respect to decision on health seeking, about 42% of women in rural group had a say while 68% of women in urban group which was statistically significant.

It is therefore, of vital importance to study the decision making pattern of working and no working women with respect to different domains like household activities, farm activities, money matters etc. and also to give opportunities to realize their position/ status in the society and their rights as a woman.

Thus, Keeping these issues in view, the present study is planned to attain the following specific objective:

1. Compare the role of working and non working women in decision making regarding household activities and to ascertain the extent of women participation in household decision making

Materials and Methods

Selection of districts

The study was conducted in Haryana state.

Two districts were selected purposively on the basis of working women population of Haryana. Hisar districts was selected from higher working women population. From Hisar district, four villages Chanot, Bhatla, Satrod and Aryanagar were selected randomly for the rural study and Hisar district headquarter was selected for the urban study. Similarly From the Kaithal district, Kurar, Kherilamba, Thurana and Devigarh were selected randomly for the rural study and Kaithal district headquarter was selected for the urban study. The study was conducted on the working and non-working women of the Haryana. From the each selected village, 8 working and 8 non working women were selected and 32 working and 32 non working were selected from district headquarter. Thus, 256 women were surveyed with the help of a pre-designed interview schedule as per objectives. Questions were framed regarding socio-economic and personal profile of respondent. First section included background information of the

respondent. Second section was prepared to find out the decision making pattern of the working and the non-working women. The respondents were contacted individually at their residence and work place as per their convenience. The activities were identified for which the decisions were taken as household activities, The respondents were asked to indicate that the decisions taken regarding household daily activities on five point scale i.e. No involvement, Opinion sought, Opinion considered, Joint decision and Independent decision.

Results and Discussion

Contextual matrix of the respondents

The socio- personal and economic profile of the respondents unveiled that 50.78% of the total working women belonged to young age (upto 35 years) and 42.19 percent were non-working women were from upper middle age (51-65) and nearly 80% of the respondents were married in both the categories. Among the total working women (52.35%) and total non working women (55.47%) were belonged to nuclear family. In 65.62 percent cases of the urban women and 17.19 percent of the rural working women were engaged in govt jobs such as teacher, bankers, clerk etc. nearly half of the working women (43.75%) had high mass media exposure.

Rural women participation in decision making about household activities

The participation of rural working and non-working women in household activities was found high. More than three-fourth of the rural working women took decisions independently related to cleaning the house (79.69%) followed by caring of children and disable members (68.75%) and cooking for family (53.13%). Nearly one-tenth of the women (09.37%) had no involvement in welcoming and serving the guest in the rural area. More than one-fourth of the respondents (28.13%) had participation as their opinion was considered by the family members and 40.62 percent and 26.56 percent took decision jointly for other household chores and collection of fuel.

More than three-fourth of the non- working respondents took decisions independently related to cleaning the house (79.69%) followed by fuel collection (57.81%) and cleaning for house (50.00%). More than one fourth of the respondents said that their opinion was sought by the family members in the matter of collection of fuel (17.18%) and welcoming and serving guest (12.50%). More than one tenth of the respondents told that their opinion was considered in welcoming and serving guest (21.87%) and cleaning the house (14.06%) respectively. it was noticed that more involvement of rural working women was found in household decisions as compare to non-working women except fuel collection decisions.

Table 1: Rural women participation in decision making about household activities

Household daily activities	Working women					Non-working women				
	NI (1)	OS (2)	OC (3)	JD (4)	ID (5)	NI (1)	OS (2)	OC (3)	JD (4)	ID (5)
Caring of children & disable member	02 (03.12)	03 (04.69)	04 (06.25)	11 (17.19)	44 (68.75)	03 (04.68)	11 (17.18)	09 (14.06)	06 (09.37)	35 (54.69)
Cooking for family	09 (14.06)	05 (07.81)	04 (06.25)	12 (18.75)	34 (53.13)	03 (04.68)	02 (03.12)	03 (04.68)	24 (37.50)	32 (50.00)
Cleaning for house	10 (15.62)	04 (06.25)	09 (14.06)	04 (06.25)	51 (79.69)	05 (07.81)	02 (03.12)	06 (09.37)	00 (00)	51 (79.69)
Collection fuel	04 (06.25)	02 (03.13)	18 (28.13)	17 (26.56)	23 (35.94)	04 (06.25)	11 (17.18)	08 (12.50)	04 (06.25)	37 (57.81)
Washing clothes for family	13 (20.31)	03 (04.68)	08 (12.50)	10 (15.63)	30 (46.88)	08 (12.50)	03 (04.68)	05 (07.81)	07 (10.94)	41 (64.06)
Welcoming & serving guest	06 (09.37)	06 (09.37)	05 (07.81)	09 (14.06)	38 (59.38)	05 (07.81)	08 (12.50)	14 (21.87)	19 (29.69)	18 (28.13)
Other household activities	03 (04.68)	10 (15.62)	0 (09.37)	26 (40.62)	19 (29.68)	10 (15.62)	09 (14.06)	06 (09.37)	21 (32.81)	18 (28.13)

Urban women participation in decision making about household activities

The perusal of data in table revealed the participation of urban women in household decision making.(Table 2) The urban working women took independent decisions in caring of children and disable members (56.25%), caring for family (50.00 %) and welcoming and serving guest (46.88%). In about one third working women, their opinion was considered for cleaning the house and in 29.69 percent cases, there was joint decision regarding other household activities. While in case of urban non working women 92.15 percent took independent decisions regarding cleaning of the house followed by washing of clothes (64.06%), collection of the fuel (48.44%) and cooking for family (40.62%). No involvement of non-working urban women was found in welcoming and serving guest whereas it was joint decision in 45.31 percent cases. In general among urban women population, more percentage of working women took decisions in household activities as compare to non working women except for caring of children and disable members, cooking for the family and welcoming and serving guest. Traditionally, women bear primary responsibilities for the well being of their families. Yet they are systematically

denied to the resources they need to fulfill their responsibilities, which includes education, health care services, job training and access and freedom to use family planning services (Ahmad and Sabahuddin, 2008) [2]. Decision making in the household activities working and non working women of rural and urban area had more involved because of immemorial time women had responsibilities of the household chores and men’s had outer responsibilities. This study found that women take decisions independently related to cleaning the house (79.69%) followed by caring of children and disable members (68.75%) cooking for family (53.13 %). The present findings are similar to the findings of Hillenbrand (2012), Jahan *et al.* (2015), Mehta and Sarawat (2014) and Baliyan (2014) [5, 6, 8, 4] in matters like decoration of house, purchase of domestic goods, making of chulla/chakki, etc. it is the women of the household who take the main decisions. But in matters related to construction of new house, renovation of old house or whitewashing of house, in less than 50 percent cases decision is taken with consent of female members of the house. Vinod and Chander (2019) [11] found that women were suffering with psychological health problems due to exercise work.

Table 2: Urban women participation in decision making about household activities

Household daily activities	Working women					Non-working women				
	NI (1)	OS (2)	OC (3)	JD (4)	ID (5)	NI (1)	OS (2)	OC (3)	JD (4)	ID (5)
Caring of children & disable member	04 (06.25)	03 (04.68)	09 (14.06)	12 (18.75)	36 (56.25)	07 (10.93)	08 (12.50)	12 (18.75)	17 (26.56)	20 (31.25)
Cooking for family	10 (15.63)	06 (09.38)	11 (17.18)	05 (07.81)	32 (50.00)	07 (10.93)	15 (23.44)	04 (06.25)	12 (18.75)	26 (40.62)
Cleaning for house	14 (21.87)	14 (21.87)	21 (32.81)	05 (07.81)	10 (15.63)	03 (04.68)	00 (00)	00 (00)	00 (00)	59 (92.19)
Washing clothes for family	16 (25.00)	03 (04.68)	08 (12.50)	15 (23.44)	22 (34.38)	08 (12.50)	03 (04.68)	05 (07.81)	07 (10.94)	41 (64.06)
Collection fuel	17 (26.56)	09 (14.06)	15 (23.44)	10 (15.62)	13 (20.31)	06 (09.38)	05 (07.81)	13 (20.31)	19 (29.58)	31 (48.44)
Welcoming & serving guest	02 (03.12)	00 (00)	00 (00)	32 (50.00)	30 (46.88)	00 (00)	04 (06.25)	11 (17.18)	29 (45.31)	20 (31.25)
Other household activities	16 (25.00)	14 (21.87)	12 (18.75)	19 (29.69)	03 (04.68)	08 (12.50)	11 (17.18)	05 (07.81)	16 (25.00)	24 (37.50)

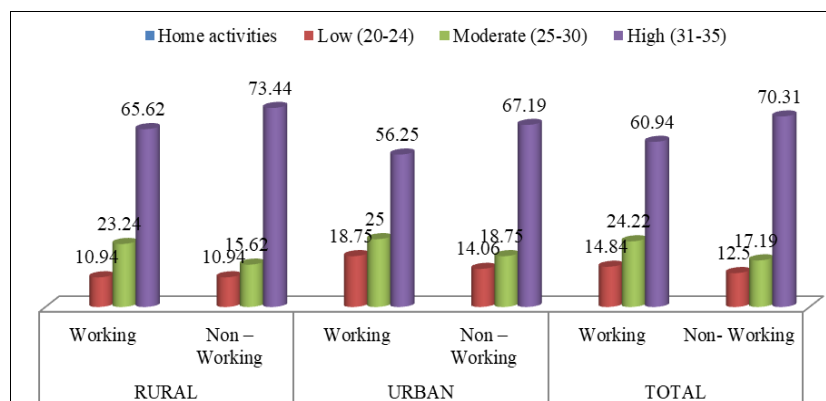
Extent of the women participation in household activities

The results depicts that among the total non-working women, majority of the respondents (70.31%) and among the total working women (60.94%) had high participation in decision making in household. region wise data revealed that 73.44 percent of the rural non working women and 56.25 percent of

urban non-working had high level of participation which clearly indicates that there was more participation of non working women in the household activities as compare to working women. Assefa and Andarge (2017) and Paul and Ready (2018) [3, 9] also concluded that majority of the women took decisions regarding household activities.

Table 3: Extent of the women participation in household activities

Extent of participation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Working	Non –Working	Working	Non –Working	Working	Non- Working
Home activities						
Low (20-24)	07 (10.94)	07 (10.94)	12 (18.75)	09 (14.06)	19 (14.84)	16 (12.50)
Moderate (25-30)	15 (23.24)	10 (15.62)	16 (25.00)	12 (18.75)	31 (24.22)	22 (17.19)
High (31-35)	42 (65.62)	47 (73.44)	36 (56.25)	43 (67.19)	78 (60.94)	90 (70.31)



Extent of women participation in decision making in household activities

Conclusion

It was concluded from the above study that the rural women had more participation in household activities as compare the urban women and non-working women had higher participation in household activities as compare to the working women. Results showed that women took decisions independently regarding household activities. Majority of the rural working and non working took decisions independently regarding caring of the children and disable members, cooking for the family and welcoming the guest. Same trend was found in the urban area. It appears that women enjoy a high degree of independent decisions in household activities but not in financial and other domains.

Recommendations

1. It was recommended that for increasing the participation of women in household decisions family members should be more supportive in household activities which may increase the women confidence.
2. It is recommended that the non-working women should be given the opportunities to take decisions in daily household activities as well as financial activities.
3. New household technologies should be encouraged to reduce women drudgery and health issues.
4. Women decision/valuable advices should be honored.

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