

Extent of Participation and decision making pattern of women in family related activities in rural areas of Telangana

This is an original research article

ABSTRACT

Women are the backbone of the family. They work day and night to fulfill the requirements of their family besides having an active participation in agriculture and allied activities. This study mainly aims at identifying the “Extent of participation and decision making of women in family related activities in the rural areas of Telangana” for a total of 150 respondents selected from 12 villages of Karimnagar, Jagityal and Mancherial districts of Telangana using exploratory research design. The data revealed that the extent of participation was high in purchasing of groceries (88.67 %) and household activities (88.00%) incase of home related activities. While in self related activities, full participation was observed in selection of the institute (74.00%) and incase of children related activities, feeding of the children (86.67%) and recreation of the children (81.34%). Majority of the women had self decision in purchasing of groceries (62.67 %), purchasing of appliances (62.67%) and household activities (60.67%) whereas decisions for occupation of the children (70.00%) and education (68.67%) were made with husband/father and had no decision in their marriage (30.00%) and family planning (26.67%). The study revealed that the participation of women was high but their decision making was limited and most of the decisions were taken with husband/father/friends.

Keywords: Participation, Decision making, House hold activities, Family planning, Education, Marriage, Occupation

1. Introduction:

Women, together with men, are the main actors in the feeding of the world. According to an estimate, women produce more than 50% of the total world food (FAO, 1995). Because many, if not most of the rural women often have the primary or sole responsibilities of the household. The role of women in today's society extends far beyond the home and child-rearing. Women had to fulfill the double function of housewives and earn a salary. In addition, they take care of all the household chores including child-rearing, health care and family management, besides helping in the farm.

Rural women go through different stages of their lives. Before marriage, she was a daughter. After marriage, she was a dependent housewife: the dependent mother later became responsible for all household chores, including cooking, raising children, and caring for her husband and other family members. Many research studies observed that the average rural

woman worked between 25 to 35 h per week in household activities excluding child care (World Bank, 1990; Alderman & Chishti, 1991 & Ahmad et al., 1993). Due to social and traditional barriers, rural women cannot work outside their homes. Full participation in economic and household activities is impeded by cultural and legal constraints, which limits women's participation by women's relative lack of time and mobility due to their workloads and multiple roles (World Bank, 1995). She plays an important role in household activities. It is often claimed that her contribution is undermined and that decision-making power is very limited (Saikia, 2021).

The role of women has always been multidimensional and important, as women have done well in the case of agricultural, domestic and pursue multiple livelihood activities. Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural or other rural enterprises, collecting fuel and water, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes (Team & Doss, 2011; Arshad et al. 2010; Pal, 2013). But the majority of women have not yet given due importance to decision-making around agricultural and household activities (Baba, et.al, 2015). Most decisions are made by the male head of the family. Women do not enjoy high degree of autonomy in making decisions or giving suggestions in the family in spite of having significant contribution to economic activities (Baliyan, K. 2014). 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 affect their involvement in decision-making (Pal, et.al., 2016). Sometimes they themselves are not very interested in making different decisions about aspects of the home, but sometimes despite their interest in different aspects, they do not feel important in the process of participation and decision-making. The process of participation and decision-making is an important part of every family because the job of managing family resources depends on the effectiveness of the decision-making process (Saikia, 2021). Therefore, the participation and decision-making of women was of great importance in family and household activities since women play an important role in all activities related to the household and achieve excellent results most of the time. The timely participation and decision-making capacity of the family has a direct impact on the development of the agricultural sector and economy of the family. Keeping the above facts in mind, the present study was conducted to find out the participation and decision making of rural women in various household and family activities in the selected area.

Objectives:

1. To study the extent of participation of rural women in family related activities
2. To study the decision making pattern of rural women in family related activities

2. Research methodology:

The study was conducted in Karimnagar, Jagityal and Mancherial districts of Telangana state which were selected purposively as there are many rural women actively participating in all activities and the researcher was well known of the dialect and area. The study was conducted in January to February, 2020. Two mandals (local government area, similar to a tehsil, in parts of India) were selected purposively from each district and from each mandal, two villages were selected randomly which constitutes a total of 6 mandals and 12 villages. Thus, a total of 150 respondents were selected randomly. Exploratory research design was used. The data was collected by the investigator herself through personal interview with the help of a well structured interview schedule in the local language (Telugu).

For extent of participation, a schedule was developed by the investigator which consists of 18 statements which were divided into home related activities with 7 statements, individual/self related activities with 5 statements and children related activities with 6 statements. A score of 2, 1, 0 was assigned for “full participation”, “partial participation” and “no participation” responses of the respondents, respectively.

Decision making is the process to decide upon each cause of action and choose wisely among the alternatives (Narayan, 2010). To measure the decision making pattern of rural women, a schedule was developed with 18 statements which were divided into home related activities with 7 statements, individual/self related activities with 5 statements and children related activities with 6 statements. A score of 2, 1, 0 was assigned for “Self decision”, “Decision with husband/father/relatives” and “No decision” responses of the respondents, respectively.

Frequency and percentage are used to interpret the results. A total score earned by adding score of all selected aspects was calculated for individual respondents. Then the respondents were classified into 3 different categories i.e. low, medium and high role in extent of participation and decision making about family related activities, on the basis of mean and standard deviation.

Table 1. The overall categorization of participation and decision making of the respondents was done as follows

Category	Score
Low	< Mean - S.D.
Medium	Mean- S.D. To Mean + S.D.
High	> Mean + S.D.

3. Results and discussion:

3.1 Extent of participation of rural women in family related activities

Activity wise participation of rural women in various family related activities were worked out and presented in table 2 and 3.

Majority of the respondents had full participation in purchasing of groceries (88.67%), household activities (80.00%), feeding of children (86.67%) and purchasing of the appliances (82.67%). Most of them had partial participation in purchasing of land for home (27.34%), construction of home (26.67%) and medical treatment (22.00%). There was no participation in repairing of house (17.33%) and occupation (15.33%).

Similar findings were also reported by Chouhan (2016). He reported that majority of the women had full participation in cleaning of home and buying goods/ groceries for home while partial participation was observed in buying and selling of home appliances. They had No participation in decoration of the house.

Mihiret, M. and Tadesse, A. (2014) also reported similar findings that majority of the women had participation in looking after family members, house hold activities, child care and shopping/ buying food items.

Table 2: Distribution of rural women according to their extent of participation in family related activities

Sl. no	Type of activity	Extent of participation (n = 150)		
		Full Participation	Partial participation	No Participation
A. Home related activities				
1	Purchasing of land for house	96 (64.00 %)	41 (27.34 %)	13 (08.66 %)
2	Construction of house	96 (64.00 %)	40 (26.67 %)	14 (09.33 %)
3	Repairing of house	94 (62.67 %)	30 (20.00 %)	26 (17.33 %)
4	Household activities	132 (88.00 %)	15 (10.00 %)	03 (02.00 %)
5	Purchasing of groceries	133 (88.67 %)	14 (09.33 %)	03 (02.00 %)
6	Purchasing of appliances	124 (82.67 %)	24 (16.00 %)	02 (01.33 %)
7	Purchasing of vehicles	109 (72.67 %)	27 (18.00 %)	14 (09.33 %)
B. Self related activities				
1	Education	116 (77.34%)	26 (17.33 %)	08 (05.33 %)
2	Selection of institute	111 (74.00 %)	29 (19.34 %)	10 (06.66 %)
3	Occupation	102	25	23

		(68.00 %)	(16.67 %)	(15.33 %)
4	Marriage	108 (72.00 %)	24 (16.00 %)	18 (12.00 %)
5	Family planning	115 (76.67 %)	18 (12.00 %)	17 (11.33 %)
C. Children related activities				
1	Education of children	114 (76.00 %)	29 (19.34 %)	07 (04.66 %)
2	Medical treatment	110 (73.34 %)	33 (22.00 %)	07 (04.66 %)
3	Occupation of children	108 (72.00 %)	26 (17.34 %)	16 (10.66 %)
4	Feeding of children	130 (86.67 %)	14 (09.33 %)	06 (04.00 %)
5	Marriage of children	113 (75.34 %)	22 (14.66 %)	15 (10.00 %)
6	Recreation of children	122 (81.34 %)	22 (14.66 %)	06 (04.00 %)

3.2 Overall participation of rural women in family related activities

The data in Table 3 revealed that 78.00% of rural had medium extent of participation while 14.67% of the rural women had low extent of participation and 07.33% of the rural women had high extent of participation.

Table 3: Overall participation of rural women in family related activities

Sl. No	Category of rural women	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (less than 23.26)	22	14.67
2	Medium (23.26 to 37.06)	117	78.00
3	High (more than 37.06)	11	07.33

3.3 Decision making pattern of rural women in family related activities

Activity wise decision making of rural women in various family related activities were worked out and presented in table 4 and 5.

Majority of the rural women had self decision in purchasing of groceries (62.67%), purchasing of appliances (62.67%) and household activities (60.67%) while most of the women had decision with husband/father/friends in medical treatment (70.00%), purchasing of land

(69.34%) and education of the children (68.67%). There was no decision of the women in marriage (30.00%), family planning (26.67%) and occupation (26.67%).

Similarly, Chouhan (2016) reported that women had self decision in food for family and in clothing while they had decision with husband /father regarding education of family, and construction of house. They had no participation in financial activities.

Bhalerao, V. S., Kulkarni, D. N. (2007) also reported similar findings that majority of women had decision in household activities, purchasing of groceries, education, recreation of children and feeding of children.

Table 4: Distribution of rural women according to their decision making pattern in family related activities

Sl. no	Type of activity	Decision making pattern (n = 150)		
		Self-decision	Decision with husband/Father/ relatives	No decision
A. Home related activities				
1	Purchasing of land for house	28 (18.66 %)	104 (69.34 %)	18 (12.00 %)
2	Construction of house	28 (18.66 %)	103 (68.67 %)	19 (12.67 %)
3	Repairing of house	31 (20.67 %)	96 (64.00 %)	23 (15.33 %)
4	Household activities	91 (60.67 %)	54 (36.00 %)	05 (03.33 %)
5	Purchasing of groceries	94 (62.67 %)	53 (35.33 %)	03 (02.00 %)
6	Purchasing of appliances	94 (62.67 %)	53 (35.33 %)	03 (02.00 %)
7	Purchasing of vehicles	81 (54.00 %)	66 (44.00 %)	03 (02.00 %)
B. Self related activities				
1	Education	55 (36.67 %)	66 (44.00 %)	29 (19.33 %)
2	Selection of institute	54 (36.00 %)	64 (42.67 %)	32 (21.33 %)
3	Occupation	53 (35.33 %)	57 (38.00 %)	40 (26.67 %)
4	Marriage	44 (29.33 %)	61 (40.67 %)	45 (30.00 %)
5	Family planning	38 (25.33 %)	72 (48.00 %)	40 (26.67 %)
C. Children related activities				

1	Education of children	33 (22.00 %)	103 (68.67 %)	14 (09.33 %)
2	Medical treatment	33 (22.00 %)	105 (70.00 %)	12 (08.00 %)
3	Occupation of children	32 (21.33 %)	105 (70.00 %)	13 (08.67 %)
4	Feeding of children	78 (52.00 %)	65 (43.34 %)	07 (04.66 %)
5	Marriage of children	33 (22.00 %)	106 (70.67 %)	11 (07.33 %)
6	Recreation of children	76 (50.67 %)	66 (44.00 %)	08 (05.33 %)

3.4 Overall decision making of rural women in family related activities

The data in Table 5 indicated that majority 69.34% of the rural women had medium extent of decision making while 18.00% of the rural women had high extent of decision making and 12.66% of the rural women had low extent of decision making in family related activities.

Table 5: Overall decision making of rural women in family related activities

Sl. No.	Category of rural women	(n=150)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (Less than 14.40)	19	12.66
2	Medium (14.40 to 30.40)	104	69.34
3	High (above 30.40)	27	18.00
Mean = 22.40		S.D. = 8.00	

4. Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that women had high participation and self decision in case of household activities, purchasing of groceries, feeding and recreation of the children. But when we look into the activities involving financial aspects their participation was low and they had decision making with husband/father/ friends. Sometimes they had no participation and decision making. This pattern should be changed. Women should be empowered about various schemes which improve their economic status, economic conditions and should given opportunities to participate and take decisions in the activities of importance to them. Empowering the women in decision making was a current need in an agricultural country like

India where most of the workforce was contributed by women. Education and improvement in their economic independence will help in increasing women's involvement in decision making.

5. Limitations of the study

Though, all possible efforts were made to make the study objective and precise, certain limitations still existed. The present study, being part of the Master's programme, had the normal limitations of time, funds, cooperation by the respondents and other facilities commonly faced by a research student. These limitations led to the purposive selection of only three districts as the locale of the study and were limited to 150 respondents. Generalizations made based on the findings of the study may not be directly applicable to other areas and need to be substantiated with other studies.

6. Recommendations:

On the basis of conclusions drawn from the research study, following recommendations have been formulated:

- For economic empowerment of the women, government should impart different trainings programmes through female extension agents with the collaboration of NGOs, and other rural development agencies.
- Educational level of rural females should be increased through adult and non-formal educational programmes.

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