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RURAL WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

Dr. Smt. S. D. Soraganvi

Associate Professor, KLE's SCP Arts, Science and D.D.S. Commerce College, Mahalingpur-587 312,
Karnataka State.

Abstract

The study analyses the existing rural livelihood systems in Bagalakote district of Karnataka state in terms of roles played by men and women in farm and non-farm activities, men and women disparity in wage earning and decision making. The multistage random sampling technique was employed to select 120 respondents comprising equal number of landless, marginal, small, medium and large farmers of the study area. Primary data required for the study were elicited from the respondents by personal interview method using well-designed and pre-tested schedule. For processing the primary data to draw meaningful results, descriptive analytical tools and Student's 't' test were employed.

The present study revealed that in all the major livelihood options, the participation of the Men members was the highest in crop production. Women participation was found to be high in dairy and farm wage employment activities. The disparity in wages between Men and Women was higher in farm activity than in non-farm activities. The labour wages of Men over Women in farm activity were higher by 77.68 per cent while the corresponding figure in non-farm activity was 57.58 per cent. In farming, nearly 76 per cent of the decisions related to selection of crops/varieties were taken by Men, while about 80 per cent of the financial decisions were taken by the Men. In most of the household's decisions related to education of family members, both men and women had almost equal participation in decision making, while in social matters like marriage of son/daughter, more than 70 per cent decisions were taken jointly.

Introduction

Rural Men and Women, especially in poor households engage in diverse and multiple activities to improve their livelihoods by maximizing income, while minimizing vulnerability and risk and achieving other household objectives (improved health, nutrition and education, etc.). These activities may include farm, non-farm and other non-agricultural activities, often linked with other activities carried out by rural as well as non-rural households. The effectiveness and profitability of these diverse livelihood systems will vary depending on the general development environment, each household member's access to and control of the asset base, their productive and reproductive roles and responsibilities, their capabilities and their linkages with other rural and urban sectors.

In our country women play a pivotal role in the family and the community, shouldering all the responsibilities providing for the needs and comforts of the Men members of the family and the children, thereby running the household, managing within the limited budget. In the days gone by, the Women was born into a well defined community of women within her particular family. Her tasks were cut-out, to be trained in learning the mandatory skills of household work, cooking, rearing and bearing of children, not to step out of this discrete feminine and domestic sphere of activity. She had to learn the virtues of womanhood and consciously inculcate culturally designated feminine roles. She is trained to a lifetime of service and self-denial and to lead a life of dependency through. They although provide these services round the clock without any payment and yet they are considered economically dependent on their husband.

Women have been given a secondary status in social life. Women's work includes agriculture, animal husbandry, industrial and household enterprises, all are productive but neither are they adequately paid nor is their contribution accounted in the national income. Women contribute more than half of the duties and responsibilities of the household but are hardly empowered to participate in decision making process. They were not given any rights; they were supposed to do domestic work and to look after children. It is a common knowledge to all of us that the roles of women in both decision making at household level and economic contribution to household income are insignificant, particularly in developing countries. In developing countries, society is, in general, Men dominated in terms of participation in household decision making as well as in terms of economic contribution. It is a traditional belief that generally Men make all major

household decisions and at the same time they contribute to household income more than Women and thus, our society is highly Men dominated, which is popularly known as "men and women bias" against Women.

Objectives of the Study :

In this context, the present study was carried out with the following objectives:

1. To analyse the role of men and women in farm and non-farm activities in terms of work participation.
2. To estimate the wage disparity by men and women in major livelihood activities.
3. To analyse the role of men and women in decision making.

Data and Methodology:

For the study conducted in Karnataka, two taluks, namely, Mudhol and Jamakhandi were randomly selected. From each taluk, six villages, and from each village, 10 respondents were selected cutting across five land-size groups, namely, landless, marginal (up to 1 ha), small (> 1-2 ha), medium (> 2 - 4 ha) and large (> 4 ha), making a total sample of 120 farmers.

The data were collected from the sample respondents by personal interview method using a well-structured and pre-tested schedule. The data were collected on existing livelihood systems, activities performed by men and women and decision-making aspects were collected from the selected farmers.

Analytical Tools

For data analysis, descriptive analytical tools and Student's "t" test were employed.

Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analysis was done to study the existing livelihood systems and to analyze the role of men and women in decision making. These were documented using sums, averages and percentages.

Test of significance

The students't' test was carried out to know the significance of difference between wage earned by Men and Women as well as between farm and non-farm sectors.

Results and Discussion:

Men and women work participation in Livelihood Activities

Table 1: Men and Women Work Participation in Livelihood Activities

Sl. No.	Activity	Household members engaged (No.)	
		Men	Women
1	Crop production	153 (68.00)	96 (64.00)
2	Crop production + orchard plantation	1 (0.44)	0.00 (0.00)
3	Crop production + dairy	2 (0.89)	4 (2.67)
4	Crop production + non-farm wage employment	23 (10.22)	17 (11.33)
5	Crop production + petty Business	2 (0.89)	1 (0.67)
6	Crop production + farm wage employment + non-farm wage employment	9 (4.00)	8 (5.33)
7	Farm wage employment	2 (0.44)	3 (2.00)
8	Non-farm wage employment	7	4

9
10
11
12

Note: Figures in p

A perusal of Table 1 : crop production activi employment + non-fa farm wage employe The Women particip (11.33%), farm wage employment + non- employment (2.00%)

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Wage disparity by

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Note: **

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		(3.12)	(2.67)
9	Rural artisans	3 (1.33)	0.00 (0.00)
10	Petty Business	1 (0.44)	0.00 (0.00)
11	Farm wage employment + rural artisans	2 (0.89)	2 (1.33)
12	Farm wage employment + non-farm wage employment	21 (9.34)	15 (10.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicated the percentage.

A perusal of Table 1 revealed that the Men members of the sample households engaged mostly (68%) in crop production activity, followed by crop production + non-farm wage employment (10.22%), farm wage employment + non-farm wage employment (9.34%) and crop production + farm-wage employment + non-farm wage employment (4%).

The Women participated more than men in the activities like crop production + non-farm wage employment (11.33%), farm wage employment + non-farm wage employment (10.00%), crop production + farm wage employment + non-farm wage employment (5.33%), crop production + dairy (2.67%), farm wage employment (2.00%) and farm wage employment + rural artisans (1.33%).

Apart from crop production, Women participation was found to be high in dairy and farm wage employment activities. The possible reason could be that the culture of the Indian women particularly in rural areas encouraged them to perform Women oriented activities. The Women worked on the family farm and even on others' farms. Some of the crop production operations were simple and non-skill oriented which motivated the Women respondents to practice the farm activities. In certain operations the participation became inevitable to augment the labour force and complete the operation in time.

Wage disparity by men and women in farm and non-farm activities

Table 2: Wage Disparity by Men and Women in Farm and Non-Farm Activities

Particulars	Wages earned in rupees (per/day)			
	Farm activities		Non-farm activities	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Mean	177.36 (77.68)	99.82	170.71 (57.58)	108.33
SD	35.55	14.33	40.46	28.86
t-value	19.8516**		8.1104**	

Note: ** Significant at 1 per cent probability level

* Significant at 5 per cent probability level. Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages over corresponding Women wage rates.

Table 2 presents the wages earned by Men and Women in farm and non-farm activities.

The mean wage earned by Men respondents per day in farm activities was Rs.177.36 as against Rs.99.82 by Women respondents. This difference was significant at 1 per cent probability level as indicated by the student 't' value (19.8516).

Similarly, in the case of non-farm activities, the Men wage rate (Rs.170.71) was higher than the Women wage rate (Rs.108.33) and the wage differential was statistically significant as evidenced by the student 't' value (8.1104).

The plausible reason for this could be that the farmers generally perceived that the Men was physically more powerful than that of Women and in addition, Men spent more time in farm activities than in non-farm activities. Further, Men could turn out more strenuous works. Hence, the wage rates for Men were much higher than those for Women.

Role of men and women in decision making

Table 3: Decision Making in Farming

Sl. No.	Activity / Decision	No. of households involved in decision making		
		Men	Women	Both
A.	Agriculture			
1.	Selection of crops	72 (75.79)	1 (1.05)	22 (23.16)
2.	Selection of varieties	72 (75.79)	1 (1.05)	22 (23.16)
B.	Animal husbandry			
1.	Selection of breeds while purchasing cows/buffaloes	25 (50.00)	5 (10.00)	20 (40.00)
2.	Selection of breeds while purchasing bullocks	62 (92.53)	0 (0.00)	5 (7.46)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicated the percentages to row totals.

The results presented in the tables 3 and 4 indicate the areas of decision making by Men and Women in farm, financial and household activities. Each major area of decision making included a series of sub-areas. Decision making in farming

In farming sector, nearly 76 per cent of the decisions related to selection of crops and selection of varieties were taken by Men members of the sampled households, while about 23 per cent of the decisions were jointly taken by men and women (Table 3).

The decisions regarding selection of breeds while purchasing bullocks were mostly (92.53%) taken by Men members, followed by decisions on selection of crops and selection of varieties (76%), selection of breeds while purchasing cows/buffaloes (50%). It was encouraging to note that considerable decisions were taken by both the Women and Men members in the case of selection of breeds while purchasing cows or buffaloes (50%).

It could be justified that the Men respondents had more knowledge and experience about improved farm practices than Women. Hence, farm related decisions were taken by Men members.

Decision making in financial activities

Table 4: Decision Making in Financial Activities

Sl. No.	Activity / Decision	No. of households involved in decision		
		Men	Women	Both
1	Investment decisions	96 (80.00)	6 (5.00)	18 (15.00)
2	Borrowing decisions	97 (80.83)	6 (5.00)	17 (14.17)
3	Choosing the source of borrowing	97 (80.83)	6 (5.00)	17 (14.17)
4	Spending:			
	a) Household expenses	98 (81.67)	6 (5.00)	16 (13.33)
	b) Children's education	95 (79.17)	6 (5.00)	19 (15.83)
	c) Medical expenses	98 (81.67)	6 (5.00)	16 (13.33)
	d) Social ceremonies	94	6	20

	(78.33)	(5.00)	(16.67)
e) Religious ceremonies	93 (78.15)	6 (5.04)	20 (16.81)
f) Entertainment (going to movies, etc.)	97 (80.83)	6 (5.00)	17 (14.17)
g) Touring/picnics	98 (81.67)	6 (5.00)	16 (13.33)
h) Children's marriage	93 (77.50)	6 (5.00)	21 (17.50)

Note : Figures in parentheses indicated the percentages to row totals.

Table 4 reveals that the percentage of total decisions taken by Women on financial aspects was negligible. The financial decisions were mostly taken by Men members. Nearly 80 per cent of the decisions related to investment, borrowing and choosing source of borrowing, were taken by Men members of the sample households, whereas remaining decisions were taken jointly by Men and Women members.

In terms of spending, again Men members dominated the decision making process. Nearly 80 per cent of the decisions were taken by Men members, whereas remaining decisions were taken jointly (15%) by Men and Women members of the household and by Women members (5%). It was encouraging to note that considerable decisions were taken jointly by Men and Women members on issues related to children's marriage, religious ceremonies, social ceremonies, children's education, investment decisions and equal per cent in borrowing decisions and choosing the source of borrowings and entertainment.

This could be due to the fact that the Men members were looking after the whole family as a head of the household and hence monitored all the things related to financial matters.

Decision making in household activities

The results presented in the Table 4 revealed that in most of the household's decisions, the Women involved either independently or jointly with the husband. In matters like marriage of son or daughter 72.88 per cent decisions were taken jointly by Men and Women, followed by choosing a bride or bridegroom, sending daughter or son abroad/far-away places for education or job, adopting son or daughter, starting a business, to educate children or not, whom to educate (son or daughter), selection of school or college, selection of course and level of education and choosing a job for son or daughter. In the case of social functions, more than 70 per cent of the decisions were taken jointly because the both the parents were responsible for the future of their children and for the success of a social function. Regarding education, Men were taking independent decisions without consulting to their wives as most of the rural Women were illiterate and lacked knowledge on education and they were not aware of what was happening in and outside the world. Therefore, Men were involved in independent decisions.

Conclusions:

The study has found that in all the major livelihood options, the participation of the Men members was the highest in crop production. Women participation was found to be high in dairy and farm wage employment activities. The possible reason could be that the culture of the Indian women particularly in rural areas encouraged them to perform Women oriented activities. The mean wages earned by Men respondent per day were significantly higher than the Women wage rates both in farm and non-farm activities. However, between farm and non-farm activities, the difference in wage rates of Men was insignificant. Similar was the case with Women wage rates. Decision making pattern of the men and women in farm, financial and social activities revealed that the proportion of decisions taken by Women out of the total decisions was negligible, in general. Farm and financial related decisions were mostly taken by the Men members of the household. The Men member looked after the whole family and was socially accepted as the best judge for the purchase and expenditure related decisions. Hence he took independent financial decisions. On the other hand, the household related decisions were taken jointly by Men and Women members of the household.

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Abstract

National Education Commission (NEC) has recommended the growing economy of India should be of the highest quality. Commerce and industry are the sectors like manufacturing and finance is the new sector. The current education system lacks the practical opportunities. Technical skill and analytical skills in commerce and industry. Stakeholders can meet the future challenges.

Keywords: National Education Commission, Quality Education, Commerce and Industry, Finance, Stakeholders, Future Challenges.

Introduction

A Nation's progress is measured by the quality of its human resources. India. The need for a new education system was felt by the then government. In 1985, the government constituted a 17 member National Education Commission (NEC) to study the national and international educational trends and to recommend the future course of action. The NEC was approved by the Parliament in 1986.

A new National Education Policy (NEP) was formulated in 1986. The NEP of 1986 is the first NEP since the NEP of 1968. The NEP of 1986 is the first NEP which is a comprehensive document.

The NEP of 1986 has recommended the following changes in the foreign universities: (i) establishing a new system of education, (ii) discontinuation of the existing system, (iii) curricular, (iv) experiential learning.

In a new system, the new NEP (Phase I) 8-11 (also familiar as 'schooling till Class 5') is the first phase. The second phase is the continuation of the schooling till Class 5.

The second phase of several years of theoretical and practical research, and the third phase is the continuation of the schooling till Class 5.

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