

REVIEW
OF
LITERATURE

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Women's involvement in production, particularly in food production and animal husbandry is much more significant than is widely known or acknowledged. Women play an important role in crop production, horticulture, vegetable production, as well as in livestock along with household management. But when the women's involvement in decisions in productive activities is observed, it becomes negligible particularly where the operations increase in complexity. The decision making role of a woman in household and farm would indicate the extent to which a particular woman is able to exercise influence over family's management of work and other matters. It is customary to believe that the head of the family normally makes important decisions pertaining to the household economy and well being of the family members, but in certain cases, women too make decisions on important matters.

There exists a variety of literature regarding women's involvement in decision making process in various areas and also their extent of participation in various activities in the household of which only the most relevant aspects have been presented under the following broad heads.

- (1) Extent of Involvement of women in decision making related to;
 - i. Management of household
 - ii. Farm

- iii. Livestock
 - iv. Income generating activities
- (2) Factors influencing the decision making involvement of women in Household and farm.
- i. Effect of variables on household decisions.
 - ii. Effect of variables on farm decisions.
- (3) Initiation and participation in;
- i. Household activities.
 - ii. Farm related activities.
 - iii. Livestock related activities.
 - iv. Income generating activities.
- (4) Factors affecting the participation of women in various activities.
- (5) Decision making power of the women in the family.

1. Extent of women's involvement in decisions making.

Today, more than ever before, there is an emphasis on planned and desirable change, specially in the rural societies of developing countries in the form of rural development. But the success of planned change programmes largely depends on the rational decision making by rural families. The farm families had been approached by the agricultural sector review (1988) in order to know women's decision making pattern, because women's ability to take decisions related to farm business, had not been recognized.

Therefore, it is necessary to bring forth the rôle of women in decision making related to home and farm affairs.

1.a STUDIES CONDUCTED ABROAD

To know the extent of women's involvement in decision-making process in different countries, researches conducted in India and abroad have been reviewed.

Decisions related to household management

Decision making pattern of the rural women of Philippines related to household revealed that it is more egalitarian than patriarchal. Among lower class of rural families women exercised greater influence in matters related to household chores, care of children and allocation of monetary resources (Licunen and Gonzalaz, 1976). Whereas the decision making pattern of the villages of Thai families in north and central Thailand indicated that decisions in families were generally made jointly. About 58 per cent of couples decided jointly the future of their children and 36 per cent wives had to decide alone about the future of their children. Regarding borrowing of money 50 per cent families made joint decisions and 40 per cent husbands alone decided about whether to borrow money or not (Nantanee, et al., 1977; Sajogga et. al., 1980).

Decisions related to farm management

Decision making practices of the farm families studied by Wilkening, (1959) revealed that the role played jointly by

husbands and wives under 45 years of age was more in various farm decisions made than those who were above this age. It was also found that as the level of education increased, the joint decision making practices of husbands and wives also increased. As far as the question of who made more decisions is concerned, it was observed that in Wisconsin the husbands dominated the farm decisions regarding the amount of fertilizer to buy, trying out of a new crop variety, machines to be purchased and the sale of livestock. Whereas the major decisions pertaining to buying or renting land, borrowing of money and buying farm equipments tended to be joint decisions of the husband and wife (Wilkening, 1960). In Ontario Canada, Abell, (1961) studied the decision making pattern of farm women and revealed that onethird of the farmers consulted their wives while making farm plans like purchase of farm machines and equipments.

According to Sajagya et al., (1980) in Indonesia and Gasson, (1981) in England, the role of the women in farm decisions were usually joint, where they shared with men intervening in agricultural and economic fields. Decisions related to purchase and sale of land were taken jointly, though the husbands' decision was the final say. Further, it was encouraging to note that farm women participate in major farm policy decisions and share equal responsibility with their partners for long term farm decisions. Women have greater influence over short and medium farm management decisions. But Dixon, (1982); Ruth, Dixon and Muller, (1985)

reported that in general majority of the decisions related to farm like, buying and selling of land, ploughing, irrigation, and cash crops to grow, were taken by husbands. Whereas decisions related to sowing, weeding, harvesting and transportation of crops were frequently taken after consultation with wives.

Decisions related to livestock management

Studies conducted by Dixon, (1982) Dixon and Ruth, (1985) on the role of women in case of livestock revealed that majority of the husbands decided about the selling of animals and women were playing substantial role in such decisions. But women took decisions related to care of animals, and collection of fodder.

1.b STUDIES CONDUCTED IN INDIA

Decisions related to household management

It is usually assumed that mostly household decisions were made jointly by husband and wife. According to Craven, (1963) all household decisions were made jointly at all economic levels, indicating interaction between husband and wife in relation to decision making process. Whereas in Arya, (1964) study it was reported that decisions related to daily food articles was found to be exclusively a female decision, but in case of food articles on festivals and special occasions, males dominated. Males also dominated in decisions related to purchase of clothing, and household

articles. But the decisions related to social obligations showed relatively more involvement.

Puri and Deshpande, (1968); and Puri, (1971) reported that all major decisions with respect to home making activities were taken by the husband in consultation with wife and grown up children. Decisions regarding expenditure on food, education, marriage, clothing, house construction and repair was made by the male head of the family. The male head decided about savings and loans to be taken. Whereas, in case of education of the children, the whole family took decisions. The decisions regarding adoption of family planning measures was taken by both husband and wife. The maximum incidence of consultation of the women in decision making was in case of decisions relating to marriage and education of children. Women took independent decisions regarding food management and child care activities in the household. The literature on the expenditure pattern of the rural families from villages of Nagpur showed a joint decision making trend towards purchase of clothing for the family. The findings of the study revealed that, the need for clothing for the family was decided jointly by both husband and wife where they had small children. On the contrary, the parents who had grown up children, their view point were considered equally for the purchase of clothes for the family (Hudder, 1971).

Dube, (1972); Rajgopal and Janghare, (1972), Rani and Bhawe, (1981); Giriappa, (1981); Awasthy, (1982); Singal and

Munjal, (1986); Singh and Sharma (1988); Giriappa, (1988) concluded that in most of the major decisions related to household, male members dominated. In some cases they consulted women and grown up children. There was comparatively less interaction between the male and female members regarding decision making in joint families than in nuclear families. In some of the rural families it was observed that most of the decisions were made by males alone and females were only consulted. Individual decisions commonly attributed to the homemakers in rural and urban area were with regard to food and clothing and joint decisions were confined to financial matters in rural areas. Contribution of some of the employed rural women of Karnataka were found to be substantial in decision making process. Similarly some of the rural women of areas of Jammu had a say in spending of the family income but their decision making was limited to purchase of articles of food consumption, clothing, and such other decisions related to basic needs of the family. As far as the female dominated decisions were concerned, it was found that mostly the female heads of the family took major decisions related to household management. Therefore their extent of involvement in decision making process in joint decisions taken along with other male members was found to be low. The proportion of female participation in religious activities, health, hygiene and house maintenance was very high. But proportionately it was less in savings plans and decisions

related to occupation of the children (Badiger and Rao, 1980).

Women took part in taking decisions on important family matters, i.e., settlement of marriage, improvement and construction of house, etc., though the decision of the elderly male members was accepted in most cases. In selecting job for women themselves, or for other members of the family, women expressed their opinions which got due weight. Though mother's opinion regarding education of the children was generally not sought in the interior villages, such opinion or decision played significant role in villages where some mothers took decisions related to education of the children (Kaur, 1981). While studying the changing role of farmer's wife in decision making in the context of effect of technology on extent of participation break through in agriculture, it was revealed that farmers' wives played a vital role in taking decisions, about the educational level of their children, choosing service careers for daughters, and decisions about kitchen articles to be purchased. Home makers acted as independent decision makers in 22 per cent of total decisions (Sandhu and Renuka, 1981).

All India coordinated project, (1981) on role of farm women in decision making reported that majority of the household decisions in selected village families of Punjab were taken jointly by husbands and wives, along with in laws and other members of the family. A few of the household decisions were also taken by son or daughter alone in the

family. In another study of Sangrur district of Punjab it was reported that women participate in decision like purchase of food products, health practices, sanitation, neatness and cleanliness, family size, spacing between children, completion of family with male or female child and child rearing practices. But their say in the money matters like keeping money in fixed deposits, giving money on interest, and buying of durable goods was low. Women had less say in decisions like going to fairs, festivals and going to movies etc. (Bajwa, 1983). Similarly in ideal homes of rural families of Madhya Pradesh, all major decisions were taken by the husband in consultation with wife and grown up children. In rare cases wife had no say in home affairs. But in joint families women had little say in the decisions (Singh, 1984).

A study was conducted by Verma, (1984) to analyse the role of women in the beneficiary group i.e. those who had undergone a training programme and the non beneficiary households i.e., those who did not participate in training programmes. The respondents were daughters and daughters-in-law. The daughter-in-law was found to have greater say than the daughters in the process starting from recognizing the problem/need upto the final decision. Decisions relating to property were taken jointly but finally the matter was decided by males. About the purchase of furniture, purchase and sale of household durable goods there was difference between beneficiaries and non beneficiaries. Decisions

regarding the construction of house, taking of loans and savings initially women consulted but final decision was taken by males. Again decision as to whether to take up a job or not, lay chiefly with the men. Decisions relating to measures with regard to family planning were taken jointly by husband and wife but very few wives reached upto the final decision making. In decisions related to number of children to have and their education, very few respondents of both groups reached the stage of final decision. But regarding the age of marriage the decisions were taken jointly in majority of the families.

Singal and Goel, (1985) carried out a study in Hissar to find out the decision making practices of employed housewives and reported that decisions related to expenditure on food, clothing, education, savings, investments, recreation, family ceremonies and festivals were taken jointly by husband and wife in majority of the families. A few households took independent decisions regarding various items of household expenditure except those connected with observance of hygienic practices. Yet in another study on the extent of women's involvement in decision making process, it was found that 72 per cent of female heads took major decisions related to household management and 3 per cent took equal decisions along with other male members. The proportion of female respondents in making major decisions was 11.3 per cent and 18.4 per cent accounted for joint decisions. The female respondents had role to play in

deciding on the nature of work along with other family members (Giriappa, 1988).

In a similar type of study Kataria, (1989); Gupta and Sudhar, (1990) reported that majority of the respondents took part in decisions related to family expenditure specially for education and marriage of the children. Decisions related to food were generally taken by the housewife or jointly with family members. But for clothing, health and recreation joint decisions were taken. It was interesting to note that women were given a chance to give their views though the final decision was arrived at by the mutual consent of the husband and wife.

Findings of the study by Verma, (1992) indicated that there was only one area in which wives were the major decision makers i.e., child rearing which was exclusively a female domain. In some of the decisions related to children's growth and development wives took joint decisions with family members. In house maintenance 52 per cent took decision, in money matters only onethird were consulted and in social and religious activities again the joint decisions were taken by majority of the wives.

Decisions related to farm management

In Punjab farm women play an important role in management of farm. About 41 per cent women were involved in different decisions related to farm (Kahlon and Brar, 1967). Whereas in an another study Radhudkar and Jonghare, (1962);

and Puri, (1971); reported that men dominated in majority of the farm decisions i.e., 80 per cent were exclusively male centered as these were highly technical. Level of agricultural technology was found to be negatively associated with women's say in decision making.

The decision making practices of the farm women in villages of Ludhiana district were studied by Kahlon, (1971). The study revealed that the farm homemaker had emerged as an independent decision maker in 7 per cent of the total decisions. Her role in decision making increased from 41 per cent to 61 per cent. Consequently, decisions made by the farmer alone declined from 49 per cent to 32 per cent. The homemaker had gained importance in such types of decisions as quasi-fixed investment and where large amount of money was being spent. It was established that due to rapid technological development, the role of the homemaker in the process of decision making for the farm had gained considerable importance.

Agarwal, (1971) reported that 30 per cent of the farm housewives were consulted regarding the choice of crops to be grown, variety of seeds, fertilizer application, number of irrigations to be given, quantity of grains to be marketed and the place of marketing. Besides this, the decision making data of farm women regarding improved agricultural practices revealed that 50 per cent women took decisions relating to application of insecticides and pesticides, 45 per cent related to use of chemicals, fertilizers and 95.62

per cent about the use of improved methods of seed storage (Malik, 1972). Women of hills of Kumaon had a positive role in decision making but it was the men who played a dominant role in decision making (Devadas 1975). Whereas (Devadas, Arora, 1978) observed that farm women took decisions with regard to farm operations and practices, in many of the farm families in Coimbatore.

Decision making pattern of the farm women of Dharwar district of Karnataka indicated that the extent of women's participation in farm decisions was mainly related to storage of grains and application of fertilizer (Badiger, 1979). Whereas a massive survey of the farm families of the hills and the western plains of Uttar Pradesh, revealed that in farmholds of the hills, men were associated with agriculture mainly at the time of ploughing and marketing operations. Women had a positive role in decision making. Men played a major role in farming decisions related to money matters. Only about 29 per cent of the decisions were taken by women (Singh, 1981).

Decision making pattern of farm women showed that women's role became negligible where farming operations increased in complexity and they were confined to physical household work only. Women played significant role with family members when decisions were made on the type of crops to be sown. But in some decisions related to purchase of land, amount to be spent on seed, purchase of farm power and farm implements, male members were the leading persons in

taking decisions (Dhillon, 1980; Rani and Bhawe, 1981; Singh, 1981 and Verma, 1984).

While in a study on decision making pattern of farm women of Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh (Giriappa, 1988) it was revealed that majority of women were consulted in decisions regarding seed storage, seed selection, time for selling farm products purchase of implements, cropping pattern, taking loans for farm, application of fertilizers and manures, use of weedicides and pesticides (Sharma, 1981). The decision making role of women related to farm business in the most progressive and least progressive villages of Hissar in Haryana state revealed that in majority of the cases wives were consulted about storage of farm produce, farm credit and selection of seeds (Yadav, 1983). But women's involvement in financial and technical decisions related to farm operations was low in Haryana (Kaur, Sharma, 1983). In another study conducted in some of the villages of Karnal District revealed that women participated in joint decisions related to farm although men were the dominant decision makers. There were also a few women who took independent-decisions. (Singal and Munjal, 1986).

Women's role in farm decision making was studied by Khan, (1981). It was found that in decisions relating to purchase and sale of plot, rearing of cattle, purchase and sale of grains, women's involvement was only at the initial stage when decision was made and by the time decision reached to final their involvement becomes nil. At the final stage,

women were excluded. Women's participation was more in decisions regarding social matters than in economic matters. Number of women participating in economic decisions particularly decreased drastically as the process reached the final stage.

All India coordinated project report on rôle of women in Ludhiana, (1981) revealed that in decisions regarding farm, majority of the small land size farm families took joint decisions, where husband, wife and other family members were involved. In case of medium land size farm families husband and children, husband and wife or husband, wife and other family members were involved in joint decisions. In large land size farm category, decisions regarding purchase of fertilizers, land, marketing of agriculture produce were taken jointly by husband and wife.

Nimbalkar and Thorat, (1984) studied the decision making process of the rural families of Maharashtra and reported that majority of farm decisions were taken by the head of the family alone, in consultation with sons. Wife was not involved in independent or joint decisions on farm related matters. The decision making practices related to livestock management by tribal women of Ranchi also showed that among 55 per cent of the families, head of the family took the decision regarding purchase and sale of land (Verma, 1984).

Dak et al., (1986) concluded that female participation in agriculture is wide spread and can be seen in a large number of activities which are either central or preparatory and supportive to agriculture. But their role in decision making was either joint or low in farm management. Extent of participation of farm women of Kerala in decision making related to farm was joint specially regarding purchase and sale of land and care of animals, whereas independent decisions were made by the women for storage and marketing of produce (Seema, 1986).

Ghosh, (1987) and Kaur, (1987) reported that decisions directly related to crop producing operations were taken by head of the family. About 50 per cent of women had no participation related to farm management, about 30 per cent were consulted while decisions were made but none of the women were involved in final decision making and were not consulted in decisions related to borrowing of money, trying of new crop variety and plant protecting measures. A small percentage of women were consulted for grain storage. Regarding taking of loans and borrowing of money mostly husband alone took decisions, and very few husbands consulted their wives. In decisions regarding transplantation, time of weeding, amount to be spent on hiring farm labourers, time of harvesting and storage of grains women's involvement was high.

Singh and Sharma, (1988) undertook a study to find out the differential proportion of women managed farm-holds of

144 families in hills and the western plains of Uttar Pradesh and reported that women had a positive role in decision making where about 29 per cent decisions were taken by women. But in most of the villages of Almora district, Uttar Pradesh, men associate themselves with agriculture mainly at the time of ploughing and marketing operations, all the other operations had been carried out by women only (Singh, 1988).

Sawar, (1988) reported that decisions related to money matters in almost all the rural families of selected villages of Koakhali district were taken by men only who sometimes consulted children or wife. The reason was that most often men retained control over the income of the family from all sources. In about 60 per cent male headed households men alone sell the crops, and controlled the income, women only get chance to share the income in the family.

There was high involvement of farm women in agricultural operations in Maharashtra state. Women were directly involved in decisions related to farm. In agriculture 50 per cent women were consulted in decisions related to harvesting, and about 50 per cent women were consulted for maintenance of plant population, 40 per cent were consulted for work like ploughing, staple collection, application of farm yard manure, selection of crops to be sown, and decided distance between plants/sowing lanes. In other operations rural women were not consulted since majority of these operations were highly technical and required hard work (Nikhade and Nimje, 1989). With the

advancement of technology women has started playing a positive role as the decision maker in farm related tasks. In tasks like decisions related to marketing and storage of produce women took joint decisions. Also in such decisions which demanded huge financial burden, women played joint role (Kataria and Oberoi, 1989).

In some of the developed state like Haryana, storage of farm produce was one of the major dominating activities performed by majority of the women. Therefore they participate in all the decisions related to storage of farm produce. With the increase in farm size, participation of women in decisions related to occupation has also increased (Punia, 1990). Another study conducted on decision making role of women in agriculture in Prakasam district revealed that males dominated in decisions like cultivation, purchase of the seed quantity, place of purchase of insecticides and frequency of spray. Women were active in taking decisions like choosing crop variety and frequency of irrigation. In small size families women actively participated in decisions. Women were consulted in decisions regarding employing the number of labourers and wage payment to the labourers. Though women did not participate directly in the marketing of paddy, their role in taking decisions regarding various aspects of marketing was considerable and varied with the size of holding, time of sale, cash requirements when produce was not disposed off immediately. Passive participation was observed in decisions such as cultivation, quantity of seed, quantity .

of fertilizer to be purchased and irrigation aspects in cotton based cropping (Raju and Rani, 1991).

Puri, (1992) studied the work roles and decision making pattern of farm women and men in rural areas of Delhi, and reported that almost all the decisions pertaining to the farm were mān centered and women had very little say. About 45 per cent families made joint decisions related to the selection of high yielding variety of seeds and spending of additional income from farm.

Decision related to livestock management

Generally it was observed that women played significant role in decisions related to care of animals. Badiger and Rao, (1980); Bhave, (1981) Verma, (1984) reported that women's decision in the care of animals was very frequent whereas Khan, (1980) revealed that the respondent's participation in decisions related to cattle rearing was only at the recognition stage, but few reached the final stage of decision making.

Ahilan, (1981) studied the role played by the women in decision making in villages of Chidamberanar district and found that 78 per cent respondents participated frequently in decisions related to rearing of animals, 26 per cent occasionally and 16 per cent rarely participated in decision making. Sharma, (1981) carried out a study in some of the villages of Uttar Pradesh and reported that head of the families were the main decision makers in majority of the

animal husbandry practices. Women exercised a significant decision making influence in feeding and marketing of animals. The joint decisions were made about the purchase and sales of animals (Yadav, 1983). The decision making practices related to livestock management by tribal women of Ranchi also showed that among 55 per cent families, head of the family took the decisions regarding vaccination of animals, 18 per cent took decisions about feeding of minerals and vitamins to animals. About 57 per cent of the families took joint decisions about the artificial insemination, 53 per cent on feeding of balanced diet, 50 per cent on exercise of animals, 42 per cent on disinfection of shed, 32 per cent on isolation of sick animals and 18 per cent on deworming of animals. Therefore, women on the whole played joint role in decisions (Verma, 1984).

Decisions related to management of income generating activities

In income generating activities women were more emotionally involved in decision making than men. Women of low income group families were making joint decisions but some of high income group took independent decisions also Badiger and Rao, (1980).

2. Factors influencing the decision making involvement of women in management of household and farm

Participation of women in decision making process and its extent depends on many variables. Study conducted by

Arya, (1964) and Menon, (1983) reported that women's involvement in decision making is associated with their education. Mostly the women having higher education participated more frequently in decisions regarding children's education, career, family budget, buying property, clothes and household articles than the women with low education. Type of family had also affected the decision making in household area. In nuclear families the involvement of women in all family decisions was found to be more intensive than in joint families. But in majority of joint families most of the decisions were made in group. The independent decisions both in joint and nuclear families were in the area of clothing and recreation. There was a difference between the percentage of independent decisions taken by homemakers in joint and nuclear families. The association was found among the women in village of Punjab in decision making participation, where it was found that in nuclear families women were more consulted in making joint decisions with husband and family members specially regarding education and occupation of children. In most of the joint families, decisions were taken jointly in all aspects except education and occupation of children. (Parimala, 1964), (Agarwal, 1979), (Kaur, 1981) and Bajwa, (1983).

Another factor affecting the household decision making of the women was age. Number of home makers taking number of independent decisions increased with the increase in their age. Old women had more say in decisions related to age at

marriage, selection of groom and dowry to be given (Parimala, 1964) (Mulay, 1967) (Agarwal, 1974).

Gill, (1972) studied the changing role of 120 farmer's wives in the context of technological break-through in Agriculture in district Ludhiana and observed that in case of illiterate wives joint decisions were less common. But women who had formal education had more say in decisions. The middle aged homemakers took decisions independently, but among younger age groups, there were more joint decisions. In nuclear families, wives took more independent decisions where as in joint families most of the joint decisions were taken. Wives in nuclear families decided about daily food articles to be purchased, but for the purchase of household articles, money to spend on food, clothing for the family, furnishings, ceremonies and festivals, joint decisions were taken with grown up children. Decisions related to education and marriage of children, savings and investment were taken by both husband and wives (Kahlon et. al., 1973) and (Baltej, 1976).

Factors affecting the extent of decision making of respondents in farm activities was also studied and it was found that age of the woman affected positively her say in relation to decisions. Number of homemakers taking large number of independent decisions in farm management increased with the increase in their age (Arya, 1964), (Parimala, 1964) and (Dhillon, 1980). Whereas Arya, (1964), reported that education of the women positively affected their say in

decisions regarding the major farm related matters. Mulay, (1967) and Dube, (1981) reported no relationship between the two land holding groups as far as women's involvement in decision making was concerned. Education of women was found to have no association with the extent of their involvement in decision making process (Dubey 1981).

Dhesi et al., (1975) found that relational position of the women has an association with the extent of their participation in farm decisions. Daughters-in-law were found to have very little say in farm decisions.

There was an association found between the land size and the extent of involvement of respondents in decision making. In small land holding group more joint decisions were made between husband and wife. The women of marginal and low farm size households make agricultural decisions more often than the women of large farm size households (Dhillon, 1980), (Kaur, 1986) and (Halim, 1986).

The type of family also affects extent of decision making of women. In nuclear families they were given more chance to participate in farm related decisions. Therefore there was difference between the percentage of independent decisions taken by homemakers in joint and nuclear families (Dhillon, 1980) and (Kaur, 1981). Women of nuclear families were consulted to a significantly greater extent with respect to cropping pattern, adoption of improved agricultural practices, agricultural marketing, and agricultural financing

than women in the joint families (Badiger and Rao, (1980). Dhillon, (1986) reported that farm women of low income group were more likely to make decisions jointly than the families of high income group.

Sunita, (1987) Kaur, (1987), reported that age, education, type of family and size of land holding was positively related to the extent of respondents' participation in farm decisions. But there was no significant relationship between women's personality traits and their role in decision making.

3. Initiation and participation of women in various activities

Women constitute nearly half of the human resources in India. According to census of India, (1991) the total female population was 405,518,417 millions (57.93 per cent) of which 304,041,448 millions (77 per cent) belonged to rural areas and the major occupation of 51704828 rural women was agriculture. A large number of women workers performed every kind of field work, animal husbandry and many other productive work and contributed to the development of the rural household.

The official statistics do not always reveal fully the actual power and role of women in agriculture, animal husbandry and other productive work but such data provide adequate insight for the economic analysis and policy decisions in agricultural planning, food security,

alleviation of rural poverty, rural development and agrarian reform.

3.a STUDIES CONDUCTED ABROAD

Women had traditionally done most of the subsistence farming and today also they continue to do so besides in carrying the burden of most of the cash cropping including animals' care, a job formerly under the exclusive domain of men. Badran, (1972) made a survey on 144 rural women in Egypt and indicated that 44 per cent of adult rural women were involved in production, which was approximately half the proportion of rural males. Rural housewives frequently undertook field work, food processing, animal husbandry, cutting, weeding and application of fertiliser. Similarly Okala and Makey, (1975) studied the participation of farm women in agriculture in Southern China to compare the position of men and women in agriculture sector and pointed out that women between the age group of 25 to 44 years, performed all operations at farm and home. They assisted on farm and supervised the farm work. Muller and Fleisher, (1976) analysed the position of women of German Democratic Republic in agriculture and mentioned that 10 per cent of the female labour force worked in agriculture and about 15 per cent of women working on the land had license to drive heavy vehicles and tractors and they were qualified to use large machinery and milking equipments.

In east Nepal women worked with men in the fields during planting, cultivation and harvesting. Both men and Women use hose to smooth out the earth, tidy the fields, repair terraces, plant seeds, transplant rice and weed (Jones and Jones, 1976). Around 600 rural women in the northern, eastern and western parts of Nigeria, were interviewed to find out their extent of involvement in agriculture and it was found that farming was the most important activity performed by majority of the women. They perform almost all farm operations by themselves, even heavy work such as land cleaning or ridge making. It is further revealed that the socio-economic status of women was lower than that of men (Adeyok, 1980).

In most of the south East Asian countries where convention prevents women from working outside the home, storing of harvested crops, care of animals and other productive work at home, provided them the opportunity of contributing material to the family income (Whyte and Whyte, 1982).

Women are primary farm managers and farm labourers in rural areas. They play important role in agricultural production. They are mainly engaged in food production. Man have come to monopolise new agriculture technologies, and methods and used them while women have not been given a chance to use new methods and continue to use traditional methods (Abhott, 1985) and (Whyte and Whyte, 1982).

3.b STUDIES CONDUCTED IN INDIA

Initiation and participation in household activities

Mies, (1987) carried out a study among 130 agricultural women labourers in three villages in Nagaland district and reported that female work participation was 48.7 per cent, while male work participation was 66.7 per cent. Women were found to be losing out as cultivators, but not significantly as agricultural labourers.

The household activities comprise of several tasks including general fragmented tasks. A comprehensive picture of the task components can be obtained from the research studies conducted in India. Sandhu, (1970); Aujla, et al, (1984) Kaur, (1986); Gill, (1988); Kaur, (1969) revealed that wives were the major performers of all activities except economic functions, followed by daughter-in-law. Sex oriented task distribution was observed in almost all the households.

Saudhu, (1972); Grewal, (1980); Munjal et al., (1984); Saudhu, (1985); Kaur, (1986); Gill (1989) reported that the participation of women in making of budget, saving and investment plans was low. Most of the women took joint decisions in matters related to finance.

Saudhu, (1976); Kamalamma, (1981); Aujla, et.al., (1984); Kaur, (1986); Gandhi and Singh, (1987); Kashyap, (1988); Gill and Miglani, (1988); and Singal, (1989) reported that women were involved in tasks like food preparation, care

of children and family, care of house including care of utensils and clothes, shopping and miscellaneous activities. Mukherjee, (1981); Aujla, (1984) reported that the activities shared by both males and females were fetching of water, repair and maintenance of various possessions. Shopping was found to be largely performed by male members, husband or sons.

Kaur, (1982), Saikia, (1985); Devadas, et. al., (1988) reported that women perform all types of activities at home, except making of savings plans and budget plans, which was done by few women because of illiteracy among rural women.

Dhillon, (1981); Sundhu, (1985) and Kaur, (1986) reported that preparing of food and carrying of food to farms was an important activity, women had to do daily. Women fetched water and firewood, participated in productive work along with other household chores. All heavy domestic work was performed by them (Waghmare and Choudhari, 1983), (Mukhopadhaya, 1984) and (Bhati and Singh, 1987).

Kaur and Sharma, (1987) reported that half of the respondents were engaged in fetching of water and fuel, besides activities like precooking, washing and cleaning. Only 20 per cent respondents were involved in stitching of clothes and child care.

Initiation and participation in farm activities

Women's involvement in agriculture, particularly in food production is much more significant than is widely known or acknowledged. Women play an important role in crop production, horticulture, and other productive works. Despite evidence indicating that women make important agricultural decisions and perform most agricultural tasks alone or jointly with men, they are not yet recognized as farmers. Alli, (1970) reported that women made a significant contribution to agriculture production particularly, agricultural commodities such as dairy / poultry products, and vegetables. Women operated the farm independently but their contribution is not accurately recorded due to socio-cultural reasons.

It was women who first domesticated crop plants and there by initiated the art and science of farming. Agriculture is still a family endeavour and women continue to play an important role in it, but still they are not classified as 'farmers'. Census, (1971) reported that in village Bhangir taluk, bulk of women were engaged in agricultural work. Their participation rate for agricultural operations was high. But all new agricultural implements and tools were possessed by men. Whereas for women, old traditional implements were available. There was a quantitative and qualitative difference between the tools controlled by men and those in the control of women. Men's tools were based on the use of other than human source of

energy. Women's tools were usually dependent on their own physical energy.

After examining the situation of 180 women in agriculture and animal husbandry. Verma, (1978) stated that although rural women participated in a variety of economic activities their potential was still underutilized. Rural women shared abundant responsibilities and performed a wide spectrum of duties in running the family, maintaining the households, attending to farm and farm labour. Yet their work was not recognized.

Women's main means of production is their own body, their hands for most agricultural operation like sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, threshing, grain processing etc., their heads for transporting all sorts of burdens, their feet to walk through the mud during transplantation, to level the surface of field etc. It is obvious that women's tools imply more labour intensive work than men's. The women had more control over production of the means of subsistence in the sphere of the house but the house itself was not their property (Verma, 1978).

A study was carried out by Altekar, (1978) on the position of women in agriculture and it was reported that although women's participation in agriculture was greater, they have less access than men in agricultural inputs. The demand for female farm labour had increased because males migrated out for jobs.

In agriculture production women perform a variety of tasks in rural areas besides the household and productive work. Census of India, (1981) estimated that 78 per cent of economically active women were engaged in agriculture. Sharma, (1978); Dhar, (1978) Sisodia, (1981) Mies, (1984) carried out a study to find out the role of farm women in agriculture in Morena district of Madhya Pradesh and reported that traditionally work done by the farm women in the region in order of importance were mainly harvesting, threshing, hoeing, weeding, winnowing and other miscellaneous works.. About 15 per cent of the total family labour was engaged in preparatory and supportive activities of agricultural production and processing. Nearly 32 per cent of the work relating to processing and marketing was shared by women with men, which showed that women's role was significant right from sowing till marketing.

Rural women participated in various activities in the fields. About 70 per cent of the farm work was performed by rural women. On their small patches of land or farms, they stood shoulder to shoulder with men. They constituted the backbone of the rural economy. Women also participated in activities like planting, irrigating, manuring, growing vegetables, planting fruits as well as in collecting and drying dung for fuel. Rural women were engaged in agricultural pursuits for 120 days in a year (Singh, 1981). Similarly in Haryana women participated in all types of agricultural production i.e. transplanting, sowing, weeding,...

harvesting, winnowing and threshing etc. They also helped the men in preparing the field, hoeing, picking cotton, plucking maize cobs and millet earheads, stripping sugarcane before crushing, carrying heavy load of fodder crops on their heads to the home, storing the food grains and looking after these to avoid any pilferage (Sharma, 1981).

In Maharashtra also some of the activities like weeding and stubble collecting were exclusively carried out by the women. This was reported by Dangat and Yadave, (1981) and Sharma, (1981). It was also found that the participation of female was also large in operations like harvesting, threshing and winnowing. For these operations 31 per cent of the females participated and 30 per cent participated in activities like looking after the ready produce and applying of fertilizer.

Sangwan and Munjal, (1988) found that in villages of Haryana storage of farm produce was the major activity performed by almost all the farm women, besides all other activities. Lowest participation of women was found in irrigation of field, application of fertilizers and chemicals, insecticides, pesticides and weedicides. In no case ploughing was done by women. With the increase in farm size participation of farm women in farm activities decreased. Women's participation in large farms was restricted to lighter farm operations. On small and marginal farms, farm women constituted about equal labour force and on

medium and large farms they were generally replaced by hired labour.

The Bangladesh Ministry of Agriculture and forests, (1982) examined the contribution of rural women in production and processing of crops and identified sowing, weeding, cleaning, washing, picking, harvesting, ground preparation, watering, irrigation and insect prevention were the main production activities which were performed by Bangladesh farm women. It was interesting to note that women of Bangladesh took part in irrigation and application of pesticides which was less noticed among women of other states. These women actively performed processing activities like threshing, winnowing, soaking, drying, storing, husking, seedling and seed preservation, cutting, grinding and preparation of by-products. Women of Andhra Pradesh perform 70 per cent of the farm work (Devi, 1982). Activities such as transporting of rice, weeding crops, sowing, scaring birds, reaping, winnowing, threshing, storage of seeds and food grains, preparation of compost and manure pits and other farm operations were also mainly carried out by women in Andhra. Dhillon, (1982) studied the farm management practices of rural women in some of the villages of Punjab and reported that preparing of land, harvesting, separating seeds, putting fertilizers, sowing, weeding were some of the popular agricultural activities performed by them. Whereas in Tamil Nadu Shanta, (1983) found that operations like manuring, transplanting, weeding and harvesting were exclusively female ..

dominated activities but activities like irrigation, spraying, dusting of pesticides, transport and storage of food grains belonged to the male domain. On the whole 60 per cent of the farm operations were done by the women only. In hills of Uttar Pradesh the level of women's participation was statistically higher in farm activities than that of the men. Of the total 1.953 farmholds of hills, 58.52 per cent were managed by men and 16.59 per cent by women and the rest 24.88 per cent were managed jointly. The women were mostly involved in repetitive and monotonous operations like rice transplanting, harvesting and threshing. Some of the hill women even dug small plots of land with small local spades where ploughing was not feasible and necessary (Singh and Sharma, 1983). The women of hills of Himachal Pradesh contributed towards operations like land preparation, sowing, application of fertilizer, manuring, harvesting and threshing operations (Guleria and Agnihotri, 1983).

In a report on women in agriculture Bardhan, (1983) stated that women in north and western India did vast amount of work necessary for farming. Rural women carried out extremely labour and skill intensive operations crucial for crop production and processing.

According to Waghmare and Chaudhari, (1983) tribal women today have a very important and crucial role in the farming system through their role performance at various stages of crop production. About one half to two-thirds of the manual labour in farming is done by tribal women. They

perform activities like raising of seedling, sowing, transplanting, cleaning of seeds and preparation of land. Few were found in activities like bird watching and plant protection measures due to illiteracy and lack of knowledge.

Mukhopadhyay, (1984) and Azad et. al., (1985) investigated the extent of women participation in agriculture and reported that agriculture had become the family's important source of income. They participate in all types of activities related to crop production. The participation rate of daughters-in-law was different, where women participated in activities like transplanting, weed processing, storage and supervision. But their participation in traditionally defined economic activities was found to be low.

All India co-ordinated Research project in Home Science, (1985) studied the time disposition pattern of rural women in three districts of Haryana and revealed that rural women participated in farm activities like planting and raising of nursery, weeding, hoeing, irrigation, fertilizer application and plant protection. There was joint involvement of both males and females in harvesting and post harvesting activities. Whereas in plain region of Madhya Pradesh the rate of female labour participation was higher than males, specially the younger daughters-in-law of the family had to bear the heavy burden of agricultural activities like transplanting, weeding, harvesting, threshing and winnowing operations. (Mitra, 1985)

Pathak, (1985) and Bhati and Singh (1987) reported that participation rate of female labour was high in agriculture. Majority of them were engaged in operations like weeding and hoeing, harvesting, threshing and winnowing. Therefore 61 per cent of the total farm work was carried out by women. Besides some of these important farm operations they watered the horticulture plants, small plants in kitchen garden, prepared manure for farm. They helped in the construction and repairing of field channels for irrigation.

Whereas women in hill regions specially women as the head of the family, perform all types of work at farm. Women whose husbands migrated outside the villages for jobs also had to work a lot. At many places women have even started ploughing and sowing the fields. The deteriorated land was also managed by women in hills (Bhati, 1987).

Chen, Rath, Sharma and Singh, (1988) reported that in crop production, women played the main role as most of the operations were exclusively done by them. On the whole men associated themselves with agriculture mainly at the time of ploughing and marketing operations, whereas all other operations were carried out by women only. Women were also incharge of kitchen gardening. Except in Chen's, (1981) study, it was reported that harvesting was done jointly by the women with husband and other family members. It was also found that preparation and application of organic manure was also a women dominated operation whereas in many studies it was reported to be performed by men.

Deshpande and Ward, (1988) studied the interaction of women's work and family roles and reported that in many parts of the world, women had been the primary producers, providing upto 70 per cent of the food supply. But the men controlled the distribution of the food or the profits from the selling and trading of the food. Therefore, women had little control over the products of their labour. They had minimum access to farm resources i.e., implements, tools etc., which were needed to increase yield to feed the family.

On an average percentage participation of women workers of Dwarghat block of Almora district of hills of Uttar Pradesh was found to be more than that of the average of their male workers of the hill regions. In majority of the families men and women had more employment in crop production than in livestock. Women had to walk a long distance to collect fodder for the animals (Singh, 1988).

Verma, (1990) found that transplanting and storage of grains were found to be exclusive domain of women, whereas weeding, harvesting, carrying of head load, threshing and winnowing were performed jointly. But women were not involved in activities like irrigation, ploughing, sowing, application of manure, fertilizer and marketing. Women's contribution therefore in cultivation of major crops was 40 per cent.

Similarly Verma, (1991) also reported that pesticide dusting which is a little technical work and ploughing were performed exclusively by men. It is observed that generally

in developed states like Punjab and Haryana due to technical development number of activities like ploughing and harvesting have been mechanized. Thakur, (1991) also conducted a study on farm female workers of Himachal Pradesh and reported that women were confined to household, agricultural and allied activities. They helped their males at farm in crop production. They performed all types of work including care of crops.

Initiation and participation in livestock activities

Women make a significant contribution in animal husbandry like care of animals, animal milking and disposal of milk and milk products. Besides this they also contribute to agriculture, particularly in producing poultry, keeping goats and sheep, marketing of dairy and poultry products, (Alli, 1970). Also while studying the role of women in animal husbandry Sharma, Verma, Singh, (1978) reported that women do all the work of domestic animals. They were totally involved in animal based tasks, like feeding of animal, chaffing the fodder, cleaning of animals, making of cowdung cakes, milking of animals and ghee making etc. Sisodia, (1981)

Dhillon, (1981) studied the dairy practices of rural women in Ludhiana and reported that dairy activities had been a major concern for the rural women of Punjab. They play a significant role in meeting the milk requirement of the family, thereby reducing expenditure of family and increasing ..

the income of the family. They prepare fodder and work for animals (Bardhan, 1983). Tribal women today have a very important and crucial role in the farming system through their role performance at various stages of crop production, animal husbandry and poultry keeping.

According to Waghmare and Choudhari, (1983) activities performed by women were, providing water to animals, grazing the animals, feeding animals, milking, selling of milk and milk products in the market or nearby places, cleaning of cattle shed and medicate the animals. Regarding birds keeping, feeding of birds, collection and selling of eggs, maintenance of birds' shed and health care of the birds were some of the activities performed by women.

Azad et. al., Pathak and Sailabala, (1985) found that women were actively involved in maintenance of their milch, cattle and procurement of fodder, milking and disposal of milk. Chen, Rath and Das, (1988) found that 40 per cent of men attended animal husbandry work and 60 per cent women performed activities like fetching of fodder, feeding animals, milking etc. Men's job was mainly grazing animals, cutting of fodder for cattle, bathing etc. Women had to walk a long distances to collect fodder. Deshpande and Singh, (1988) reported that daughter in law specially the younger daughter-in-law had to bear the heavy burden of care of animals. But Verma, (1990) revealed that animal husbandry is predominantly a male affair in case of upper socio-economic

group and it is pre-dominantly a female affair in case of farmers of medium and low socio-economic status groups.

Initiation and participation in income generating activities

In a report on women in agriculture and productive work Bardhan, (1983) stated that women in north and western India did vast amount of work necessary for income generation like growing of vegetables, preservation of food etc. They also carried out laborious and skill intensive operation crucial for productive work like beekeeping, mushroom growing etc.

Devadas, Sundaram and Sithalakshmi, (1985) conducted a study on participation of women in income generating activities in Coimbatore district and reported that women participated in activities like poultry, use of agricultural products, making incense sticks, brooms, candles, chalk, fans, pickles, masala powder, baskets and did weaving and tailoring. They could earn Rs. 100-250 per month through parttime participation in income generating activities.

To know the contribution made by the women in homestead production and use of income, a study was carried out by Islam and Ahmed, (1987) and it was found that homestead had been a regular source of both family food production and consumption. The contribution of homestead crop to total food produced had remained largely invisible. Women performed the major roles in homestead farming system.

In rural areas of Bangladesh, in most of the villages homestead crop cultivation was carried out on a small scale. Over 86 per cent households were involved in homestead vegetable production which was one of their sources of additional income. Homestead cultivation was three times more among large farm households than among landless, small and marginal farm households. About 97 per cent of the women respondents were engaged in vegetable cultivation in the developed villages compared to 63 per cent of the women of less developed villages. On an average women in landless households were found to spend more time on homestead vegetable production than other household work. The involvement of large land owning households was lower as they hired labour for work (Ahmed, 1987).

Besides the household and farm activities women's participation was found to be significant in many other productive works. Role of women in sericulture enterprises in Bangalore district was significant. The study was carried out in three talukas from where 3 villages were selected, where women participated with men in sericulture. Their contribution in loading, carrying, supervision etc. was high (Asuri Mahadevappa, 1991).

4. Factors affecting extent the participation of women in various activities.

Farm activities

Singh and Rani, (1979) carried out a study in Karnal, on landless, marginal and small size farm households. It was reported that the female labour employment was the highest in bringing fodders and grass followed by chaff cutting and cleaning operations of dairy enterprise accounting for about 19, 18 and 17 per cent of the total female labour use of three land size categories respectively. Thus on an average, female labour participation rate was about 65 per cent in dairy enterprises. Women's participation in farm labour force depended on the size of the farm which affected the income of the family. Female labour participation increased when males took up part time work elsewhere. With the rise of the land size there was rise in farm income which generally decreased the participation of women in the farm (Aruon, 1981).

In semi arid tropics region of India, the women were the major source of labour input for crop production in families with small land holding and there was an inverse relationship between farm size and proportion of female labour availability (Ghodke and Ryan, 1981).

Saikia, (1981) conducted a study to find out the effect of cropping pattern and work participation of farm women in Jorhat and Sibsagar district of Assam and reported that work

participation rate of females was dependent on cropping pattern, crop intensity and economic compulsion to engage in farms activities. The average work participation rate of females was 59.29 per cent but it was higher on marginal farms groups. Transplanting and harvesting of paddy were done exclusively by small land holders. Gadre and Mahalle, (1981) studied the participation of female farm women in changing agriculture in Vidarbha. The study revealed that the participation of women increased from 0.15 per cent to 20 per cent, which showed that an increasing number of female workers found to work on farms were from marginal land holders or small land holders. Female farm workers of marginal land holding families were observed to be more dependent on the farm for employment. When overall participation of 44.22 per cent of female among all three land holding groups was observed, it showed high variability.

Economic status of the family was found to be associated with the extent of participation of women in agriculture. Nandwani, (1982) in a report on the role of women in rural development, reported that although woman was a farmer, a grower of food, and confined to the house and to the farmyard. The poorest and the most deprived women goes to work in the fields. They were allowed only to perform the activities like threshing and husking the rice, weeding, transporting, harvesting and irrigating the field crops.

A study was carried out by Dangat, (1981) on the women's participation in agriculture and it was reported that

women of all strata of the peasantry participated in all agricultural production, but there are important variations among socio-economic strata in the activities and tasks which women perform. They perform activities such as processing of agricultural products and marketing. The measure of women's agricultural involvement increases significantly.

The study of women's involvement in agriculture in Maharashtra showed that the size of the family's land holding affected the participation of women at farm. Their participation increased with the increase in the size of the holdings in all the land holding groups. The participation of women in care of animals was more or less equal in all land holding groups (Nandwani, 1982).

Extent of women's participation was found to be different in different regions of Haryana. Kaur, (1982) conducted a study to find out women's participation in agriculture on 300 women selected for the study. The study revealed that 72.6 per cent of the females were participating in the work force and this participation in the work force was highest in backward regions and went on decreasing with the increasing progressiveness of the region. Educational status of women was most significantly related with participation of women in work force, followed by level of agricultural mechanization, family income and caste.

Rajula Devi, (1982) investigated the extent of women working in rural industries in Madhya Pradesh and reported

that women constitute 60.85 per cent of the labour force whereas in other developed countries it ranged from 30 to 45 per cent. The work participation rate of females increased from 15.9 to 23.09 per cent in rural areas, showing increase of participation of women in economic activities. She also reported that every fifth woman was a worker as against every second man.

Another study was conducted by Awasthy, (1982) on farm women of village of Jammu tehsil and it was reported that women of all communities participated in agriculture. Among the scheduled castes, and carpenters, 100 per cent women made a contribution to agricultural activities. For Brahmin and Rajput women, participation in agricultural activities was between one to four months while the carpenters women were tied to land for longer period. A large number of women were found to be looking after the dairy. Fifty three per cent of the farm women from villages of Bangalore district of Karnataka were involved in all processes of labour except ploughing. Scheduled caste women constituted the bulk of women labour in agriculture, (Khan and Agesha, 1982).

Changing role of rural women of Ludhiana district of Punjab showed that women's contribution to agriculture was declining as they were unable to cope with the technological advancement. They continued doing certain monotonous chores of farm work associated with harvesting and processing of food grains (Dhillon, 1982). As far as the size of family's land holding and extent of participation of women was

concerned, it was reported that respondents with larger land holdings devoted less time, whereas the respondents with smaller land holdings devoted more time (Kaur, 1983).

Singh and Bhati, (1983) conducted a study on farm women of hill regions of Himachal Pradesh and revealed that among the farm workers the proportion of females was higher than that of males. About 2/3 of their time was utilized for tending of cattles, 1/3 for crop production activities and the rest for household chores. In crop production activities, women's work accounted for 66 per cent on marginal farms, 55 per cent on small farms and 57 per cent on medium size farms. In tending of cattles, women's share in total work was 71 per cent on marginal size farm, 67 per cent on small and 66 per cent on medium size farms. On the whole, women's share in total farm work was 62 per cent on marginal, 57 per cent on small and 59 per cent on medium size farms. Another study was conducted on tribal women engaged in agricultural activities in villages of Delhi, (Waghmare 1983). It was reported that tribal rural women played a very important and crucial rôle in the farming through their role performance at various stages of crop husbandry, animal husbandry, poultry keeping and management of household activities. Most of the tribal women were involved in all types of farm activities and the size of land holding had a significant association with crop production.

Education and technology had direct affect on the involvement of the women in farm activities. Kaur and

Sharma, (1983) conducted a study on the women and work in the rural society of Haryana villages and revealed that the employment status of females was found to be different in different socio-economic strata. Educational status of women and technological development were most significantly related factors with participation of women in work force. It was found that as the educational level of the respondents increased, their participation in work force decreased. Similarly, level of agricultural mechanization and family income negatively associated with the female work force participation. Majority of the respondents i.e. 98.8 per cent were engaged in agriculture either as agricultural labourers (37.90 per cent), or as cultivators (60.9 per cent) whereas only 0.90 per cent of working females were engaged in service. In one block of Bhiwani which was least developed the women were responsible for more activities while in the developed block of Karnal the involvement of women was low due to technological development in agriculture.

Goyal and Bajwa, (1984) carried out a study on women working in the fields in Barnala Block of Sangrur district in Punjab and reported that women from non farm families participated more in the farming operations on the other's farms. The participation of farm families was low. Age, education, socio-economic status were some of the factors which negatively affected the extent of women's participation in farm activities. However, size of the family in case of farm owning families was related to the role performance and

was statistically significant at 5 per cent level of significance.

Laxmi Devi and Reddy, (1984) studied the role expectation and role performance of rural women in farm activities in three villages of Gannavaram block of Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, she reported that the performance in all agricultural activities was higher among women of low income group. Allied agricultural activities were performed by most of the high and medium income group families. The factors positively associated with the farm role performance of the rural women were, leadership, status and family norms and the factors negatively related were education, landholding, material possession, socio-economic status, caste, urban contacts. Thus women belonging to low income group had low possession of above said characteristics and therefore involved themselves more in farm activities.

There was higher participation and concentration in farm work among lowest caste women and concentration in nonfarm work among the upper ones in West Bengal. The female share of farm employment and relative wage were found to rise more in agriculturally developed areas and in areas with little agricultural growth and spare cropping pattern, the female unemployment was likely to be severe and female rate relatively declined (Bardhan 1978 and Kaur, 1984).

The pattern of women's participation varies greatly among regions, different land size and socio-economic

factors. The extent of participation of rural women in farm operations was effected by the socio economic and personal characteristics of the respondents (Sirohi, 1985). It was revealed that the farm operations practiced by rural women depended upon age. The participation was found maximum in those cases where the age of the respondents ranged from 25-40 years, specially in activities like sowing, harvesting, threshing and storing of food grains. Regarding marital status married women mostly were involved in activities like storage, harvesting and sowing and unmarried women in plant protection, irrigation and threshing. No association was found between type of family and type of farm operations performed. Women of large families participated in harvesting, threshing and storage and small in sowing irrigation and plant protection measures. Women of families belonging to low income group performed activities like sowing, irrigation, storage and harvesting and families getting Rs. 20-50 per month participated in threshing and plant protection measures. Similarly women of high caste families only take care of storing of food grains. Women of backward caste, in plant protection, sowing and storing activities and women belonging to schedule caste were engaged in threshing, harvesting and irrigation in majority of cases.

In another study Agarwal, (1985) stated that factors like economic class and caste affected the supply while technology affected the demand for women's work participation outside the house. Due to prestige issue women in better off

households usually did not undertake manual work on fields. She also noted that the agricultural tasks done by men and women are determined on the basis of culture rather than biological basis.

Ghosh, (1985) studied the pattern of employment of rural women of West Bengal and reported that a large increase in women work force was observed in household industry and cultivation, which accounted for 186 and 102 per cent respectively. A large number of them worked as paid workers and field workers. Majority of schedule caste women remained engaged in multiple activities such as day labour, agriculture labour, care of animals, collection of fodder and fuel, growing of vegetable and fisheries' work.

Dutta and Sharma, (1985) conducted a study to evaluate the contribution of female labour vis-a-vis male labour in agriculture of Ranchi district in Bihar and found that the percentage of female labour input was significantly higher in small and medium sized farms. Women performed lighter work like transplanting of paddy exclusively, weeding and harvesting jointly with male labour.

Mitra, (1985) studied the women and their work from historical data and reported that the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women worked as agricultural labourers, while the upper caste women in the rural areas largely supervised the work. The major factor which affected women's participation in agriculture was the technological...

development i.e., modern methods of cultivation which have replaced women labour. Similarly position of the employment of the women of three religious groups viz. Hindu, Muslim and Christian in Andhra Pradesh also showed that there was not much difference among three groups. Excepting that employed Hindus were a little more than employed Muslims, the employment position of female was found to be lower in all cases. -In all groups they were far less than the males.

Maurya, (1988) and Verma (1990) reported that household activities were predominantly performed by women irrespective of their socio-economic status. Women had to perform dual role of taking care of home and farm.

Women of tribal society of Phulbani of Orissa were found to work more than men as reported by Rath and Das, (1988). They played important role in crop production, who prepared the land, irrigated and protected the plants. They performed all the farm activities and were incharge of kitchen gardening and poultry keeping. Their involvement in agriculture therefore was 80 per cent, and of men's was 20 per cent.

Chattopadhyay, (1985) reported that the declining trend of female work participation over the years was a area of understanding the dynamics of operations of the female labour force in agriculture. Women's participation in agriculture actually increased even in relative terms. But in some states due to technological changes--their contribution had...

declined, particularly in advanced states, like Haryana and Punjab. Women's contribution in cultivation was less compared to male labour. Activities like harvesting and carrying of crops, interculture and transplanting were performed by high percentage of female family labour as well as female hired labourers.

Kaur and Sharma, (1985) carried out a study on command and machines, driving women to drudgery work and reported that except ploughing and carting, women in Haryana participate actively in all agricultural operations, including soil preparation and irrigation. About 77.6 per cent of Haryana women work outside their homes. The ratio of economically weaker was more in participation. In the backward region of Bhiwani district 94.5 per cent of the women were found in labour force. Their participation decreased progressively with an increase in the advancement of the district and 59.9 per cent in the most highly advanced region of the advanced district of Karnal. Therefore due to technology advancement there has been increasing attitudes of ignoring the contribution of women in agriculture, inspite of the fact that majority of them participated in the operations like harvesting, transporting of crops, storing of food grains and also processing of grains which was men's work. The contribution of women in farm activities in Kerala villages was found to be high due to no technology. It was reported that scheduled caste women carryout the physically exhaustive field work i.e. transplanting, . .

winnowing and threshing, whereas the participation of high caste women was found to be low.

Pandey et. al., (1986) examined the crop wise as well as operation wise participation of women in agriculture in Hissar district and indicated that female labour was more employed for operations such as weeding, and hoeing, harvesting, threshing and winnowing. Size of operational holdings and percentage of cash crops to the total cultivated area were positively related with the rural women's employment.

Participation of scheduled tribes and backward classes who even participated in land preparation, irrigation and marketing was higher than of other classes. The female labour utilization was higher than that of males in almost all the operations among the weaker sections in villages of Karnal of Haryana state. The women's participation of 70 per cent in the category of landless labourers was the highest followed by marginal and small farmers, Rani and Singh, (1986). The contribution of farm women in agriculture was studied in two districts of Baramulla and Kupwara of Kashmir, and it was revealed that the female labour force participation ratio was 94.81 in case of progressive farms, and 97.87 per cent in non progressive farms. Their employment decreases with the increase in the size of holding for both progressive as well as non progressive areas Bhat, Khan and Kaul, (1987).

Azad and Prasad, (1987) studied the participation of 200 farm women in agriculture and allied work in ten villages of Bidhana block district Etawah in Uttar Pradesh and reported that the role of women in the farm operations is of immense importance. There was significant difference between the proportion of women engaged on their own farms and wage earners. Participation rate was highest i.e. 71.4 per cent among backward caste and 36 per cent among upper caste. Women working on big farms and in allied activities were scheduled caste, where transplanting was the most important activity followed by weeding and harvesting.

Strategy for development of farm women specifically emphasised the working of women engaged in rice farming and reported that the percentage of their contribution varied from 31 to 72 per cent. Women were engaged in various agricultural operations such as sowing nurseries, uprooting seedling, transplanting, intercultural operations, weeding, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, cleaning and packing (Thakur, 1988).

Srivastava, (1981) and Maurya, (1988) reported that women's participation in agriculture was highest among tribals, scheduled caste and hill people. There is, however, difference in participation of women in different farm allied activities from farm acquiring families compared to women from nonfarm families, share-croppers and landless families. Other factors affecting women's participation in agriculture were their duties at home, their literacy and educational

level, social status, land size, age, economic condition of the family and migration of male member.

Singh, (1992) studied the participation of women in agriculture of marginal farmers of 10 villages of Kalyanpur block of Kanpur city. The study revealed that besides actual participation in field, Women took part in other activities such as watering, making farm yard manure and carrying collection of fodder, to the fields, transportation, storage and processing of farm products.

Sinha, (1992) studied the participation of women headed farmholds of two regions i.e. hills and western plains of U.P. and revealed that majority i.e. 70 per cent of the women farmers of both regions had higher participation in agriculture than that of males in all activities. Level of the females' participation in hills was statistically higher than their counterparts in plains in all activities except household activities. However male participation was poor in activities like paddy transplantation and vegetable cultivation, fuel and water but their participation was higher in wheat and fruits' cultivation.

Livestock activities

The participation of women in cattle care showed that there was more or less equal participation of women in all the selected regions of Maharashtra. (Nandwani 1982). Caste was another factor studied to find out its association with extent of participation in livestock activities. It was

found that caste was positively related with the participation. The percentage of women participated in animal husbandry was highest in lower caste followed by middle and the upper class. (Singh and Bhati, 1983 and Kaur, 1984).

Kaur and Sharma, (1983); Kaur, (1984), Rath Das, (1988) reported that in about 60 per cent of the cases women alone were responsible for the care of animals and very few families performed this activity jointly. In most of the nuclear families more women took care of animals single handed whereas in joint families joint effort was found.

5. Decision making power of the women in the family

5.a STUDIES CONDUCTED ABROAD

Thompson, (1963) studied the power of women in decision making in Sweden and reported that married women's decision to work was influenced not only by their personalities, but by the attitudes of other family members. Besides this the socio-economic background of the family also mattered. The effect of mother's employment was different in families where the tradition was for a woman to stay at home from those in which women worked in different places.

Silver, (1977) while discussing about the power and status of women in France indicated that in the rural sector the participation of the women is essential for the functioning of the farm and the economic survival of the

family. The farm women had to take a number of decisions related to household and farm for the development to take place at home and farm. She always had an important economic function as a producer of goods and often she had also been incharge of the finances of the rural enterprise.

Spencer, (1981) conducted a study to find out the power of women in a developing economy in West Africa, and found that women played a minor role in agricultural decision making but they were found to be playing an important role in household decision making as well as in decisions related to the borrowing of money.

5.b STUDIES CONDUCTED IN INDIA

As far as the power status of women in work is concerned Jain, (1975), in a report on the position and power of women, stated that women enjoyed a high position, supervised number of farm activities and performed of more complicated activities at farm which were men centered. Her position in the present time was much better compared to post vedic age during which women had no freedom to participate in social and religious activities. Women's rights were depending entirely on their husbands and they declared that she was not man's equal in her own right. On the other hand. Mazumdar, (1989) in her radio talk delivered on women's involvement in agriculture, reported that although among agricultural participants women outnumbered men and still remained a major partners in agriculture; their power in

decision making was hardly visible. Growing of food for the family consumption was entirely the responsibilities of women in rural areas but the entry to legal ownership appears to favour either the state, large corporation or to men, not to the women.

On the other hand (Sithalaxmi, 1975) in a report on women power in decisions, stated that on some of the predominantly agrarian villages of Coimbatore district it was found that women were consulted in making decisions with regards to all farm operations. They supervised all activities on the farm and also make all the arrangement of the sales of the produce. Activities like storage of produce, sowing and transplanting which requires special attention and knowledge were performed by women. At the same time in some of the villages of Himachal Pradesh while studying the power status of women and their role in the development of economy. It was revealed that 95 per cent of farm women worked side by side with men in their own fields or as a wage earners in farm and factories, and participated in decision making process. Like men, they lead an economically independent life and took financial decisions (Singh, 1981).

In order to decide the status of women, it was important to find out to what extent they have control over resources at home and farm. Ghai, (1981) studied the power of control of women over resources, and reported that land was identified as a significant production resource over which women had little control. Women had no power to participate

in decisions like credit, loans, access to sophisticated resources for the farm and household and getting training in agriculture etc. Women have no right to own land, and if they had legal right, customary law, family traditions, inheritance system and their acceptance of sub-ordination often prevent women to ask for their rights.

Sethi, (1982) carried out a study on the power of women to assess the effects of women's employment on the power relations in decisions taken in the family of women of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. It was found that only 16.09 per cent women had the power to take all the decisions, whereas 39.08 per cent had to join their husbands while major decisions were made in the family. Women making independent decisions were gainfully employed. Majority of the husbands decided about the education and occupation of the children while only 18.09 per cent had the power to take decision solely. As the crux of the power dimensions in the family lies with the person who controls the property, it was found that only 9.20 per cent of wives took the decisions.

A few studies were conducted in India with reference to power of women in decision making and their power in relation to participation in various farm and household activities. Kaur and Sharma, (1983) carried out a study on women and work in rural society, to integrate rural women in the total framework of development, an appraisal of the role played by them in home, farm and dairy, for which 401 respondents were selected by stratified sampling method from the villages of

Haryana district. It was reported that women had no power to take independent decisions related to household and farm tasks, rather they were taken jointly in majority of the cases. The involvement of women in financial decisions and technical farm operations was very low. In a similar type of study (Talwar, 1984) while judging the power status of the women in the family through their participation role in household decision making reported that women had say in decisions related to household management. It was found that one fifth used to take decisions about family matters alone and one third with their husbands. Thus no significant difference was found in the power of both categories. The working women were significantly more powerful than their husbands, and the major decisions about the purchase of durable good were taken more by working women who were powerful than non working women.

Devi Lalitha, (1984) studied the power status and employment of women in India. The study revealed that there is a relationship between employment and money centered decision power of the women in the family. Also with the increase in age the decision making power of both employed and unemployed women increases. For the education and money centered decisions making power, the association was found to be negative showing no relationship between education and financial decision making power. Also there was no association between the type of family on the financial decision making power of the family. As far as influence of

family income on power of money centered decision making is concerned no association was found. In order to investigate more on power status, Devi (1985) studied the role performance and decision making of the educated and uneducated wives selected randomly from 160 families in Andhra Pradesh, and reported that the education and occupation of the women affected her power in participating in decisions. Education of women helped in neutralization of male dominance in 13 out of the 20 decisions studied within the family. Employed wives' dominance was clearly manifested.

Another study was carried out on power status of the women in the family and their extent of involvement in decisions (Agarwal, 1986). It was found that women in the nuclear families made more decisions than women in joint families. A positive relationship was found between education and decision making. It was more in those families where their education was higher or equal to their husbands, and it was partial where husband was more educated. Women's voice was low, where husband's income was high. Power of money was important factor in decision making. Regarding wives' participation in money centered decisions, 65 per cent were consulted and 35 per cent were not. Most of the wives were not free to spend their own earning and were directed by their husbands.

Sinha and Prabha, (1989) investigated the status equilibrium of working women and reported that power of the

women could be judged on the basis of their extent of participation in decisions. It was found that husband generally did not interfere in household decisions except money matters, in which the role of wife decreased with the increase in husband's interference. Most of the decisions were joint and in some cases husbands enjoyed the upper hand. In a traditional society where patriarchal family system prevailed, the father enjoyed a dominant position and exercised the exclusive right of decision making. The homemaker's confinement to the four walls of the house, killed her ability of making decisions. The rural homemaker was always considered as inactive in the decision making process but the fact remained that she did not get involved directly in all family decisions. With the change in the educational level and occupation her role and power in decision making was also increased. She was participating in all sorts of affairs in and outside the home. She was consulted for all sorts of matters (Miglani, Oberoi and Sandhu, 1991).

Shah and Banerjee, (1991) reported that the decision-making power regarding farm and household of the women working at agriculture in majority of the rural areas was very low. In spite of the fact that they were involved in all types of operations relating to crop production and household management, men dominated in making decisions. There was no scope of other kinds of work for the women except work at farm and home. In spite of their contribution to economic

activities they were economically weak and had no control over money thus the status was low.

From an overview of the literature reviewed, it is clear that for the successful management of household and farm, involvement of the women in decision making process is essential. There is a need to recognize the importance of women in decision making. Home economists, extension workers and other female organizations can play a critical role in helping women to be actively involved in decision making and implementation.

To assist families to be actively involved in decision making, it is essential to know the role women play in decision making for the management of household and farm. Hence, the need for the present investigation was considered imperative.